High Tech, High Touch

Campus-Based Strategies for Student Success

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Campus-Based Strategies for Student Success

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MVP NATIONAL DEGREE COMPLETION AWARD APPLICANTS

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THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS:

The MVP Awards are made possible through the generous support of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Office for Access and Success (OAS) Advisory Board.

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ABOUT THE OFFICE FOR ACCESS AND SUCCESS ADVISORY BOARD

The main purpose of the Office of Access and Success Advisory Board is to advise APLU's Vice President, OAS on all matters pertaining to strengthening the capacity of the office to meet its stated goals and objectives. In particular, the Board shall advise OAS in the following areas: (1) improving the identity, visibility, and distinctive capabilities and overall competitiveness of OAS; (2) engaging the philanthropic, business, government, military, homeland-security, and education communities in the financial support of key initiatives launched through the OAS; (3) improving the ability of OAS to assist the nation in reaching its goal of having the highest proportion of college graduates by the year 2020; and (4) encouraging public-private investments in OAS.

Project Degree Completion

To reclaim the United States' position as the world leader in degree attainment, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) last year created Project Degree Completion. This initiative consists of pledges by nearly 500 four-year public colleges and universities to collectively boost college completion by 3.8 million bachelor's degrees between 2013 and 2025 (from an estimated 14.6 million degrees to 18.4 million) so that 60 percent of U.S. adults will possess a college degree.

The Project Degree Completion pledge is broadly consistent with the efforts of the Obama administration, the Lumina Foundation, the College Board and other prominent educational organizations to increase U.S. degree attainment levels and enhance the nation's global competitiveness.

Project Degree Completion is an unprecedented initiative that will help drive the instructional agenda of public universities and colleges in the years ahead. Never before have public colleges and universities formally come together around such an important and sustained effort. This initiative directly impacts the economic future of the country as public universities are committed to finding innovative and creative ways to reach this important national goal.

While access remains an important goal for the colleges and universities across the nation, it is increasingly important that students graduate with a degree. States have begun to link appropriations for colleges and universities to outcome metrics such as graduation and employment, and President Obama outlined a national plan to create a college rating system that would connect federal financial aid to student performance metrics. The importance of creating campus-wide initiatives that allow universities to admit, retain and graduate students has never been more important. The purpose of this report is to provide colleges and universities with examples of promising campus-based strategies that improve success for all students, especially those from underrepresented, low-income and first-generation backgrounds. This report draws lessons from and showcases the strategies used by the Most Visible Progress National Degree Completion Award applicants to improve success on their individual campuses.

Most Visible Progress National Degree Completion Awards: A Project Degree Completion Initiative

As part of the Project Degree Completion initiative, APLU established the Most Visible Progress National Degree Completion Awards (MVP Awards) to recognize APLU member institutions that have made significant progress in successfully retaining and/or graduating students. The awards serve as one way to galvanize universities toward the goal of degree completion for all students, especially those who have been historically underrepresented and underserved. To reach the goal of the United States once again becoming the leader in educational attainment, public universi-

The purpose of this report is to provide colleges and universities with the promising campus-based strategies to improve success for all students-especially those students from underrepresented, low-income and first-generation backgrounds. This report showcases the strategies used by the Most Visible Progress National Degree Completion Award applicants to improve success on their individual campuses.

ties must find innovative solutions to ensure access and success for all students. The awards recognize public universities for successfully retaining or graduating students and provide the university community with promising program models and strategies. While access is a significant milestone, these awards are weighted to reward universities that have shown progress toward successfully retaining and/or graduating students.

There are two categories for the MVP Awards. The MVP Trailblazer Award will be given to one APLU university that has made exceptional progress with increasing retention toward or completion of bachelor's degrees during the last three years. The MVP Opportunity Award will be given to one APLU university that has made exceptional progress with increasing retention toward or successful completion of a bachelor's degree for historically underrepresented and underserved students during the last three years. The Most Visible Progress National Degree Completion Award is made possible through the generous support of the APLU Office of Access and Success Advisory Board. Corporate sponsors for the award include: Educational Testing Services; Enterprise Holdings; Geico; Monsanto; the Siemens Foundation; and USA Funds. While 21 universities applied for the MVP Awards, only two institutions in each category were named finalists.

THE FINALISTS ARE:

| **Trailblazer Award**	**Opportunity Award**
Georgia State University	Florida International University
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	San Francisco State University

One university in each category will be presented with the award during the APLU Annual Meeting on Tuesday, November 12, 2013. Each award winner will receive a sculpture and a $20,000 prize to be used to further advance the institution's degree completion initiatives. These awards will be given annually.

High Tech, High Touch: MVP Award Applicants' Campus-Based Strategies for Improving Student Success

While each of the 2013 MVP Award applicants implemented different programs on their respective campuses, there were several similarities in the approaches taken or the processes used to implement these initiatives across applicants. This common methodology taken by the 2013 MVP Award applicants can be described simply as "High Tech, High Touch." The High Tech, High Touch approach emphasizes the use of data and technology to provide real-time information about students diverging from the path to graduation and increases the ability of institutions to use proactive and personalized interventions to get students back on track. This approach was overwhelmingly used by MVP Award applicants that provided data and information about campus-based efforts to increase student success regardless of the specific initiatives or programs.

The High Tech High Touch approach had six common steps designed to increase student success: 1) Intentionality, 2) Analyze Data, 3) Student and Faculty Feedback, 4) Knowledge (Best Practices) 5) New Ideas (Innovation) and 6) Finances and Resources (fig 1). These six steps were an integral part of implementing effective and sustainable student success initiatives and programs.

FIGURE 1: THE HIGH TECH, HIGH TOUCH APPROACH USED BY MVP AWARD APPLICANTS
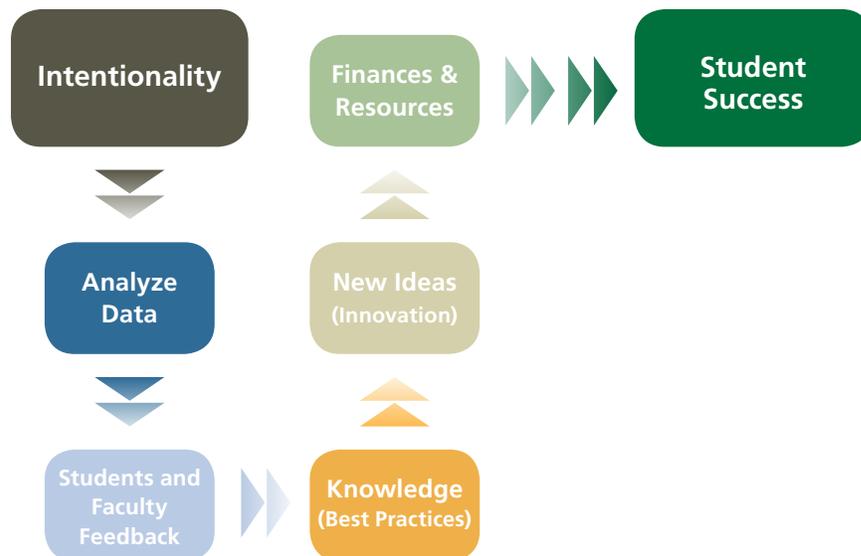
Source: Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Step 1. Intentionality

Intentionality is an important first step of the High Tech, High Touch approach taken by 2013 MVP Award applicants and served as the catalyst for success in each of the subsequent areas. Intentionality began when the senior level university administrators committed to increasing student success on their campus and when this goal was articulated broadly to students, faculty and staff. The intentionality of increasing student success was visible at every level of the university with the leadership of the university committing resources to ensure the appropriate implementation of the initiative or program. In most cases, this involved the formation of a campus-wide committee to address the challenge of increasing student success.

Step 2. Analyze Data

While intentionality served as the catalyst for the effective implementation of initiatives or programs for MVP Award applicants, the identification of the underlying problem began on all campuses with analyzing institutional data. Specifically, universities used student outcome data (e.g., retention, graduation, credit accumulation, grade point average, etc.) disaggregated by important student variables (e.g., race/ethnicity, income, first-generation status, housing status, student classification, commuter status, etc.) to identify which outcomes were not being attained and which students were not on track to make timely progress toward a degree. Universities spent a significant amount of time going over the data to better understand the underlying issues, and potential barriers, and identify patterns that would guide the development of an effective solution for their particular campus.

Step 3. Students and Faculty Feedback

While the data was important to identify barriers to student success and hone in on groups of students having problems (correlation), it did not provide administrators with the definitive reason why the problem existed (causation). Engaging students was an important part of the process in formulating a solution to helping students in reaching their goals. University leaders engaged students through surveys, targeted focus groups and other methods to give university leaders a deeper understanding of the underlying issues and patterns identified by the data and helped leaders formulate solutions that worked with the students they serve. Many MVP Award applicants noted that it was essential to include faculty, staff and other personnel in the process to better understand what was happening across universities. Many institutions noted that increasing degree completion could not be achieved by universities without incorporating faculty and staff into the mix.

Step 4. Knowledge (Best Practices)

While some universities crafted organic "homegrown" solutions to increase student attainment on their campus, many more used proven approaches that were already in place at other universities. In a time of tight budgets and increasing college costs, it was important for MVP Award institutions not to "reinvent the wheel" and find solutions that had already been beneficial. Utilizing an approach from another campus context required administrators to develop in-depth knowledge of the approach in question, the critical elements for implementation, and circumstances under which the approach yielded successful results. Acquiring detailed knowledge about best practices within a particular area was an important step because not every approach works for every college or university. MVP Award applicants chose the approach that was appropriate to the problem they were experiencing and to the students they served while taking into account the institutions' local context.

Step 5. Innovation (New Ideas)

While knowledge of best practices was an essential step in finding solutions to student success challenges, those best practices were not always suitable due to local contexts or particular challenges faced by a university. Institutions were innovative in adapting models to their individual campus and students. Both the knowledge and innovation approaches required constant feedback and adaptation over time to ensure successful outcomes from the initiatives or programs being implemented.

Step 6. Finances and Resources

Every student success program and initiative implemented by MVP Award applicants required an investment of financial resources. While the investment required for some programs and initiatives were more than others, all university leaders made financial commitments to student success programs and projects. Many universities funded programs and initiatives through existing university resources while others utilized grants, federal, state and local research funding, and other sources of money to finance student success programs and initiatives. It is important to note that campus initiatives and efforts to improve student success do not exist in a vacuum. Many universities coordinated these investments to maximize success while minimizing costs.

Assessing Institutional Initiatives

The High Tech, High Touch model used across 2013 MVP Award applicants provides a framework for other universities to use when developing and implementing programs and initiatives designed to increase student retention and success. In addition to the model framework, an array of common approaches were taken by MVP Award applicant universities (fig. 2).

FIGURE 2: COMMON APPROACHES BY MVP AWARDS APPLICANTS, 2013

Approach	Description
Advising	Hire more advisors and provide more training. Mandatory and intrusive Advising.
E-Advising	Invest in integrated data platforms to provide proactive and intrusive support.
Degree Maps	Require Degree Maps for freshman to graduate in four years.
Finish in 4 Campaigns	Choosing majors quickly and taking 15 hours.
Peer Mentoring	Mentors from similar backgrounds to help new students. Circular Benefits to both.
Orientation and Bridge Programs	Use to receive more one-on-one attention and to strengthen academic and non-cognitive skills.
Course Re-design	Re-design of gateway courses to improve success.
Learning Communities	Cohorts provide structure and peer-to-peer support.
Financial Support	Scholarships, books, and other supports for students'. True cost of school attendance.
Pipeline Mentality	Connect to likely source of students to improve future transitions.

Source: Richard Laine, Division Director, Education Division, National Governors Association, derived from Project Degree Completion MVP Awards Applicants

The approaches outlined in Figure 2 were successful at several MVP Award applicant universities. A critical component of successful implementation was the integration of an assessment process to provide feedback and to guide necessary modifications and improvements to a particular program or initiative to achieve the stated goals.

The MVP Award applicants assessed change through the process depicted in the graph below. Universities generally began degree completion initiatives by identifying and setting specific goals for degree completion outcomes. These broad goals resulted in universities analyzing and disaggregating data to understand what students should be targeted by the initiative or program and the university designing a set of solutions aimed at the identified group (e.g. students, faculty, department, course, advising program, etc.) that the program would seek to change or improve. Each university community then strategized about how they could best reach the desired outcomes for the target populations. The critical points in the process for universities are to determine how to assess the results of the initiative and to identify what resources are necessary to implement the initiative or program. Universities then went through an iterative, multi-year process to examine the return on investment for each approach and to assess the outcomes of the initiative. Many institutions implemented subsequent programs upon using this process or replaced programs that were not shown to be effective. The Cycle of Assessing Institutional Initiatives is an important part of ensuring continued effectiveness of campus-based initiatives.

FIGURE 3: CYCLE OF ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES FOR 2013 MVP AWARD APPLICANTS

Source: Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Case Studies for Improving Student Success

Ten universities were chosen as programmatic examples to be included in this publication based on the success of the initiatives implemented and the unique approaches to increasing student success. The universities that are showcased represent a diverse set of APLU institutions:

- Alcorn State University
- California State University, Fresno
- Florida International University
- Florida State University
- Georgia State University

- San Diego State University
- San Francisco State University
- University of Arizona
- University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
- University of Louisville

The universities that are showcased in this publication have implemented student success initiatives and programs that have shown evidence of being effective in increasing student success. While the data presented are not causal, the results show that these universities have made progress in increasing student success. These university profiles serve as promising examples of initiatives and programs that are being implemented at institutions. Each profile:

- Identifies Degree Completion Efforts
- Describes the Goals, Strategy, and Implementation
- Presents Initiatives / Programs & Outcomes
- Discusses the role of technology
- Provides Program Costs
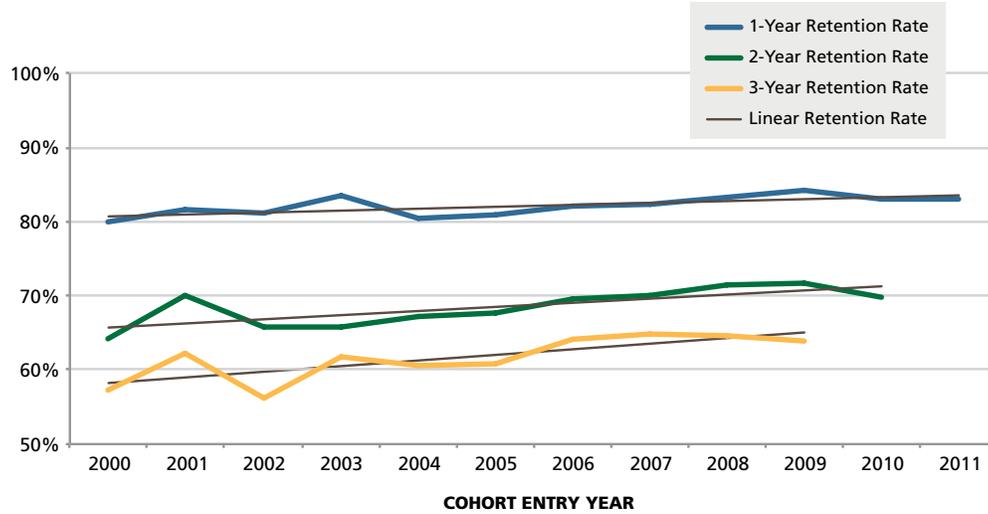- Delivers Data Outcomes & Results

PROFILE 1: MVP TRAILBLAZER AWARD FINALIST

Georgia State University

Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Established: 1913
Enrollment: 32,161 (Fall 2013)
Undergrads: 24,862 (Fall 2013)
President: Mark P. Becker

FIGURE 4: GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2000–2011 COHORTS

Source: Data compiled from the GSU Data Warehouse; computed rates available at https://warehouse.gsu.edu

FIGURE 5: GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002–2008 COHORTS
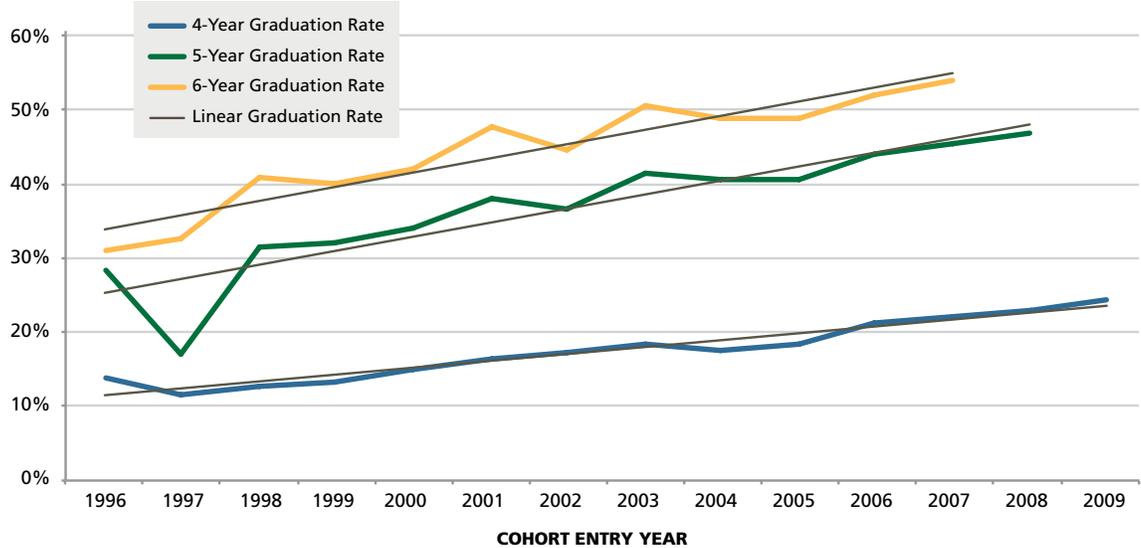
Source: Data compiled from the GSU Data Warehouse; computed rates available at https://warehouse.gsu.edu

FIGURE 6: GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR
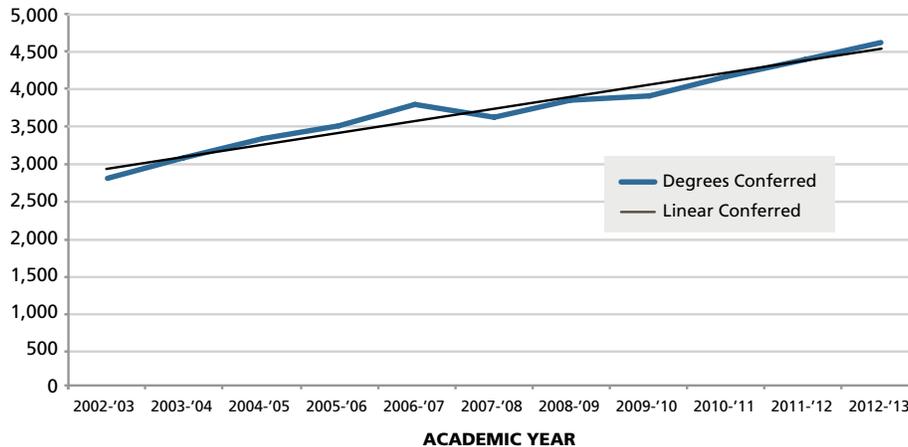
Source: Data compiled from the GSU Data Warehouse; computed rates available at https://warehouse.gsu.edu
Note: Academic year includes summer, fall, and spring (ex: 2006-'07 includes summer '06, fall '06, spring '07)

Target Population: All Undergraduate Students

Georgia State University (GSU) enrolls more African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, first-generation students and Pell students than any other four-year university Georgia. Georgia State enrolls 20,000 undergraduates—80 percent of its total undergraduate population—who are first-generation, Pell eligible, nonwhite, or have unmet financial need.

Eliminating the Achievement Gap: Student Success at Georgia State University

Ten years ago, Georgia State's institutional graduation rate stood at 30.5 percent, and under-served populations were foundering. Graduation rates were 25 percent for Latinos, 27 percent for African Americans, and 18 percent for African American males—rates 10 points or more below our numbers for white students. With an undergraduate student body that is 30 percent first generation, 87 percent on federal financial aid, 53 percent Pell recipients, 60 percent nonwhite, 58 percent transfer, and 26 percent adult learners, Georgia State University is not only a micro-cosm of the emerging postsecondary demographics of the nation, it is also a collection of the very populations that higher education has traditionally failed. The university identified unique challenges including:

- 43 percent of students were receiving grades of D, F or W in the pre-calculus math classes that they were taking to satisfy the math requirement for non-STEM majors.

- 51 percent of students who entered Georgia State on the state's HOPE scholarship were losing it due to their GPAs slipping below 3.0,

- Only 20 percent of those who lost the scholarship were graduating.

- Losing hundreds of the more than 14,000 undergraduates with unmet financial need — all fully qualified academically—every semester at the time of the fee drop because they lacked sufficient funds to pay their tuition and fees.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOALS:

- Double the number and amount of need- and merit-based scholarships

- Reduce the negative impacts of unmet need

- Decrease the negative effects of the loss of the HOPE scholarship

- Overhaul academic advising

- Deploy Transition and Graduation Advisors

- Redesign courses with high DFW rates

- Expand supplemental instruction

- Institute a summer success academy for at-risk freshmen

STRATEGY: One by one, the university mined the data to locate the most significant obstructions to student success and then piloted interventions, ran data, refined the programs, and scaled them up. The key to this process was setting focused, incremental goals that were defined not by what Georgia State wished it could achieve in an ideal world but by what the data indicated was actually doable at Georgia State. With this model in place, Georgia State University began to make gains and long-stagnant student-success numbers began to move in the right direction. Change came when the institution turned its focus from the undifferentiated and potentially overwhelming goal, "raise graduation rates," to a series of incremental goals that addressed specific problems that the data evidenced were preventing large numbers of our students from progressing

IMPLEMENTATION: Positive movement in Georgia State's success numbers came only when we were able to enact a change in campus culture. Through a multiyear, campus-wide and data-driven process involving the Strategic Planning Committee, the University Senate, Administrative Council, deans and department chairs, hundreds of faculty and staff, and the Student Government Association and led by President Mark Becker and Provost Risa Palm, Georgia State has made a commitment to student success as its highest institutional priority. The broad dialogue has also involved other important stakeholders including members of the GSU Foundation Board, alumni, donors, business and political leaders, representatives from K-12, and leaders of private foundations. The biggest step was when large numbers of faculty and staff began to accept and act on the commitment to student success. This came about when, through the careful use of data

to identify problems and to design interventions, they began to see that success programs could make a real and significant difference in the lives of our students.

GSU Initiatives

PANTHER RETENTION GRANTS PROGRAM (2011) — With a large increase in the number of Georgia State students dropped for nonpayment in recent terms, Georgia State initiated the Panther Retention Grants program. Within hours of the fee drop, personnel in enrollment services proactively reach out to hundreds of students who have just been dropped, offering small grants to bring students back into their classes.

KEEP HOPE ALIVE INITIATIVE (2009) — Offers students $500 a semester for the first two semesters after they lose the Georgia HOPE Scholarship. In return for the funds, students sign a contract agreeing to attend a series of academic skills and financial literacy workshops and to meet with their academic advisors regularly during the year.

OVERHAUL OF ACADEMIC ADVISING (2011) — Georgia State has hired 42 additional academic advisors to bring our student-advisor ratio to the national standard of 300-to-1. It has established a common record system, common training, and a campus-wide University Advising Council. In August 2012, Georgia State went live with a cutting-edge, web-based GPS Advising system based on seven years of RPG data and over two million Georgia State grades. The system, which monitors 30,000 students with nightly updates from Banner, uses 700 markers to track when students go off path academically and offers predictive analytics for how each student will do for every major and every course in the curriculum.

DEPLOY TRANSITION AND GRADUATION ADVISORS (2010) — Georgia State has been hiring a team of advisors dedicated to specific challenges faced by groups of students collectively. Six-year graduation rates for students who change majors after the completion of 75 hours, for instance, are 20 points lower than overall rates. Transition and Graduation Advisors worked with students and departments to help ease the students' transition between majors and to resolve roadblocks to graduation.

REDESIGN COURSES WITH HIGH DFW RATES (2007) — Georgia State piloted a hybrid model in which students attend a one-hour lecture each week and spend two hours in a math lab with their class, working online with adaptive-learning exercises while the instructor monitors results and answers questions.

EXPAND SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (2008) — With many additional courses with high DFW rates and limited resources, Georgia State decided to tap into one of its competitive advan-

tages: large numbers of federal work study students. The university scoured the rosters of courses with high failure rates for work study students who had done well in those same classes. Rather than assign these students to work in the library or cafeteria, it hired them to go through training and attend the course again (getting to know the instructor's approach and the students currently enrolled) and offered structured tutoring sessions to the students taking the course multiple times each week. Supplemental instruction now supports multiple sections of more than 20 freshmen and sophomore courses.

SUMMER SUCCESS ACADEMY FOR AT-RISK FRESHMEN (2012) — Georgia State piloted a Summer Success Academy in 2012. Students were admitted for the fall on the condition that they attend the Academy, a seven-week, seven-credit-hour program in which all students are enrolled in Freshman Learning Communities (that extend into fall and spring) and are exposed to intensive academic support, including Supplemental Instruction, our early-alert system, one-on-one advisement, and financial literacy workshops. All courses are regular college-level courses rather than remedial.

OTHER PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES — Georgia State has implemented other student success programs that space does not permit be discussed here: degree maps for every undergradu-

ate major, a National Science Foundation funded STEM initiative, a nationally ranked Freshman Learning Community program that touches 2,500 students a year, a faculty-led initiative to review academic requirements and to remove obstacles to progression, funded undergraduate research assistantships, a large Early College program created in partnership with several City of Atlanta public high schools, an early-alert system, and even a program to lower the costs of dorm rooms as a way of reducing unmet need.

Role of Technology

Technology has played a crucial role in the progress made at Georgia State. Georgia State's early alert system takes feedback from over a thousand instructors each semester about which students are not attending class, which students are struggling academically, and which students are struggling behaviorally, and it immediately cross-checks the data to identify students who have been designated as having problems by multiple instructors. Georgia State's GPS advising system utilizes two million Georgia State historical grades to create predictive analytics and markers for when students go off path and then interfaces with the Banner student data system to provide updates 365 days a year. The system automatically sends alerts centrally and to the students' advisors when problems emerge. Issues that were caught semesters later—a student registering for the wrong course—are now resolved within 24 hours, saving the students time and money wasted on taking courses that do not apply to their programs.

Program Costs

The overall costs of the student success programs that Georgia State has implemented over the past decade are roughly $6 million a year. The largest expenses came from doubling the number of academic advisors on campus and the development of our GPS Advising tracking system ($1.7 million per year) and a large increase in discretional need-based aid funding (which has grown by $2 million per year since 2010).

It is important to point out that the $2 million increase in need-based aid has not come from the university budget per se but from increased gifts to scholarship programs by donors and foundations, many of whom were prompted to give due to our ability to show via data-based evidence the difference their funds would make in the lives of students. This is one way that the programs have helped to pay for themselves: by increased need-based scholarship contributions to the university.

A second important point is that Georgia State has not been historically well resourced, and hence, most of the programs that we have initiated have only modest costs. Our large Supplemental Instruction (SI) program, for example, redeploys Work Study and other already-supported students from their old assignments in the library, cafeteria, and administrative offices to tutor their fellow undergraduates who are struggling in courses with high DFW rates. We

hired a small staff to help train and monitor the tutors, but we were able to serve 9,600 students through the program last year with administrative costs of $130,000.

The Keep HOPE Alive program emerged from the realization that we did not have sufficient funds to replace the lost HOPE scholarship dollars for students whose GPAs dip below 3.0. Instead, we have developed a targeted program featuring small incentive grants of $500 per semester that, in turn, require students to participate in preexisting academic skills and financial literacy modules. The program has helped us to raise the HOPE retention rate on campus from 49 percent in 2008 to 75 percent in 2012. The total cost of the program is about $90,000 per year.

Return on Investments

The return on investment differs for each program, though part of the purpose of piloting programs before scaling them up is to ensure that the benefits significantly outweigh the costs. The clearest example of such an analysis is the Keep HOPE Alive program. Keep HOPE Alive costs $90,000 per year and enrolls 70 students. Overall, 8.6 percent of nonprogram students gain HOPE back again; last year, 62.5 percent of Keep HOPE Alive students won the scholarship back. This means that 37 more students gained HOPE back because of the program than would have been the case if the program did not exist. Each student who gains the scholarship back receives $13,600 ($6,800 per year for two years) from the state pool of lottery profits. So, for the investment of $89,000, the program returned $503,200 to the students last year, all of which came back to the university as tuition payments.

Outcomes and Results

- Disbursements to students from institutional scholarships and grants increased 263 percent since 2011. In its first year of operation, the new scholarship database was used by more than 9,000 students.

- Last year, over 60 percent of the students in the Keep Hope Alive program recovered Hope by their next check point. HOPE retention rates on campus increased from 49 percent in 2008 to 75 percent last year and has proven so effective that the Goizueta and the Coca-Cola foundations directed funds to the initiative as part of recent gifts to Georgia State.

- In its first 10 months of operation, the GPS system was used in almost 15,000 advisement sessions. More than 2,450 students were converted from off path to on path for graduation, and 900 had their schedules corrected during registration when markers were triggered, indicating that they had signed up for wrong or inappropriate courses.

- In the first two years of the program, the advisors saved more than 700 students from having to enroll extra semesters in order to graduate.

- This past academic year, 7,500 students took their mathematics requirement in this

hybrid format, including every student who enrolled in College Algebra. The DFW rate for the course has dropped from 43 percent to 21 percent. Our newly founded Center for Instructional Innovation is helping to expand such pedagogical innovation across the curriculum with seed grants to departments and faculty to explore new approaches in the classroom.

- The average course grade for those students who attend at least five SI sessions is almost half a letter grade higher than for those who do not attend, and the program now supports 9,600 students every year.

- Georgia State's institutional graduation rate has risen 22.6 points in the past 10 years (to 53 percent in 2013). Rates are up 28 points for African Americans (to 55 percent), 41 points for African American males (to 59 percent), and 41 points for Latinos (to 66 percent). Pell students are as successful as non-Pell students. The total number of degrees conferred annually has increased by 65 percent, and Georgia State now leads the nation among non-profit universities in bachelor's degrees conferred to African Americans.
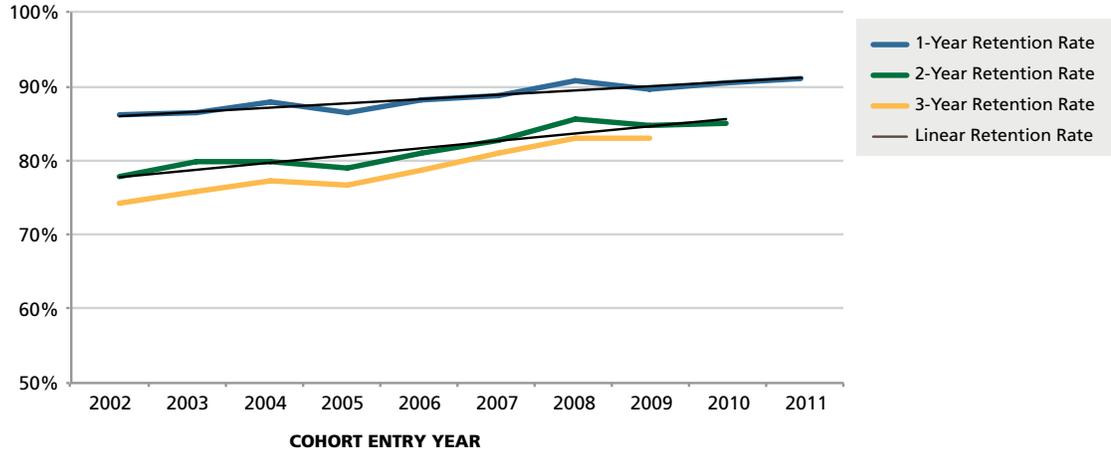
PROFILE 2: MVP TRAILBLAZER AWARD FINALIST

University of Minnesota–Twin Cities

Location:	Minneapolis and Saint Paul, MN
Established:	1851
Enrollment:	51,853
Undergrads:	30,375
President:	Eric W. Kaler

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

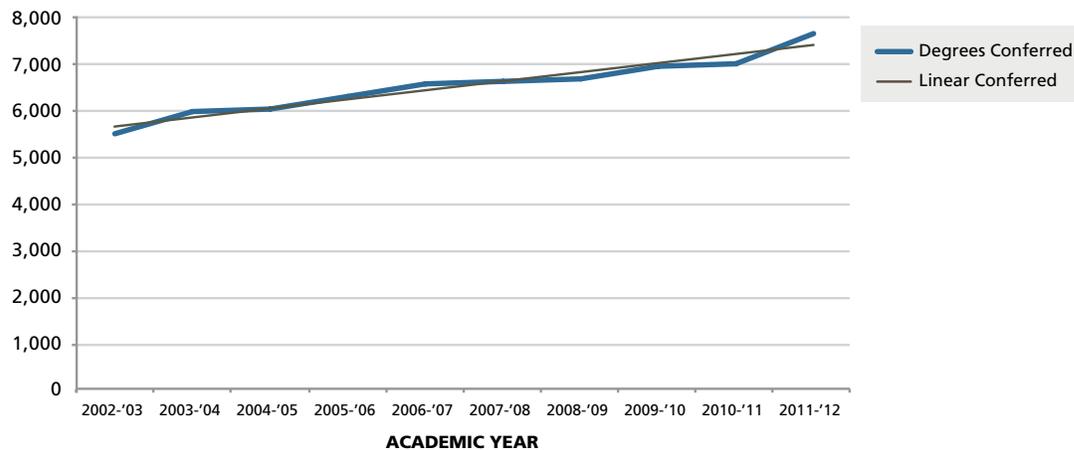**FIGURE 7: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TWIN-CITIES FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2002–2011 COHORTS**

Source: University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, 2013

FIGURE 8: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TWIN-CITIES GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002–2008 COHORTS
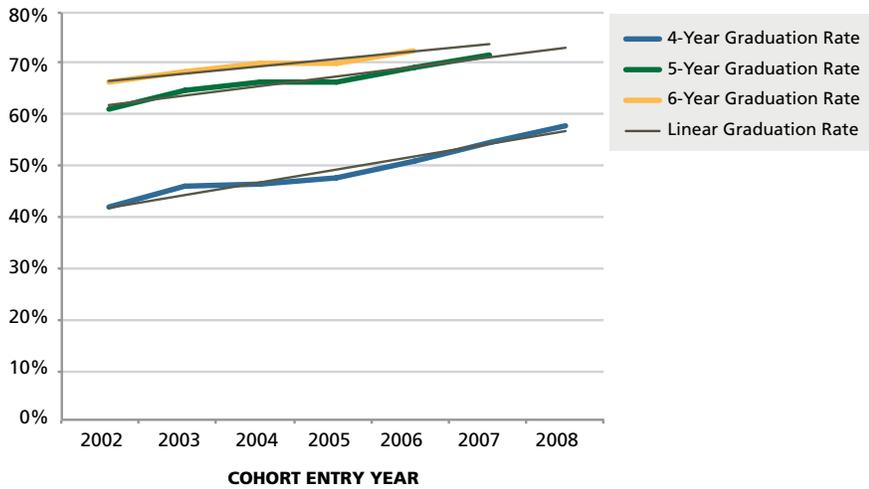
Source: University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, 2013

FIGURE 9: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TWIN-CITIES BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Source: University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, 2013
Note: Academic year includes summer, fall, and spring (ex: 2006-'07 includes summer '06, fall '06, spring '07)

Target Population: All Undergraduate Students

The Undergraduate Student Success Initiative focuses on creating a culture of student success for all undergraduates. The University of Minnesota–Twin Cities enrolls over 30,000 degree-seeking undergraduates in 149 academic programs. Reflecting the university's commitment to access and excellence, its components include programs calibrated to varied student populations, including students of color, first-generation college students, honors students, students from low- and middle-income families, and students in the College of Liberal Arts, which has the largest concentration of undergraduates.

University of Minnesota–Twin Cities Undergraduate Student Success Initiative

The Undergraduate Student Success Initiative is a comprehensive university-wide effort to improve the retention and timely graduation of undergraduates on the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus. A 2001 report by a campus-wide task force noted that the Twin Cities campus had five- and six- year graduation rates substantially behind those of peer universities; although progress was being made, the six-year rate of 51 percent was among the lowest in the Big Ten. The task force, which included academic and student services staff from across the campus, systematically examined the reasons for persistently low retention and graduation rates and identified the need for "a conscious, focused effort" that would transcend short-term strategies and span multiple fronts across the institution. The university set out a decade ago to reverse those trends through strong institutional commitment, innovative strategy implementation, and sustained

culture change. The effort emphasizes multifaceted initiatives implemented, enhanced, and sustained over an extended period of time. It focuses on initiatives designed to strengthen structures and practices and, most critically, make them part of a university-wide culture supporting student success. In addition to sending a clear and consistent message to students about the University's expectations, this effort would enlist faculty and staff, especially academic advisors, in making timely degree completion a priority.

Efforts have been driven by strategic emphasis on improving academic advising, enhancing the academic experience, setting strong graduation norms and policy, and ensuring student financial support. The effort is aligned with aggressive student graduation goals set by the Board of Regents in 2006: 60 percent of University of Minnesota–Twin Cities undergraduates earning degrees in four years; 75 percent within five years; and 80 percent within six years.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOALS:

- Four-year graduation rate of 60 percent
- Five-year graduation rate of 75 percent
- Six-year graduation rate of 80 percent

STRATEGY: The Undergraduate Student Success Initiative reflects a change in focus from discrete interventions to broad institutional buy-in and campus-wide engagement. Over the past decade, concerted efforts have reshaped all aspects of undergraduate student life at the university, creating a high-expectations "student success environment" to achieve significant and sustained degree-completion gains.

The Office of Undergraduate Education has concentrated on strategies to reshape student attitudes, with the first-year experience a key focus. The goal of graduating in four years, not just at some point, is explicit in University policy and a persistent message in every encounter with students.

IMPLEMENTATION: The biggest challenge the university faced was that of creating and sustaining culture change broadly across our large and highly decentralized institution. For that reason, we made "changing graduation norms" an implementation category in its own right, one of four focus areas along with enhanced advising, curricular improvements, and financial support. Diversified strategies, including policy-level strategies, have promoted the completion of 30 credits per year as a normal expectation for undergraduate students. In addition to sending a clear and consistent message to students about the university's expectations, we have made a point of directing resources to strategies enlisting faculty and staff (especially academic advisors) in making degree completion a priority.

Student-success expectations loom particularly large for deans, who in the last few years have been made directly accountable for meeting goals in six areas critical to degree completion:

- First-year retention rates
- second-, third- and fourth-year progress toward degree
- Four-year graduation rates
- Structure of degree program requirements
- Effective curricular scheduling
- Quality of instruction

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Initiatives

1. Improving Academic Advising

Enhanced first-year programs—including expanded freshman and transfer orientation programs and a freshman Welcome Week—which began in 2008.

- Center for Academic Planning and Exploration (CAPE, opened in 2010)
- Graduation Planner (ongoing development since 2007)
- MyU Student Portal (developed 2006 with update now under development)
- APLUS, an innovative advising tool developed at the university to keep advisors continually updated on students' academic progress (launched in 2010).

2. Enhancing the Academic Experience

- The SMART Learning Commons, diversified academic support located within three different campus libraries.
- Expanded Freshmen Seminars: small classes on varied topics taught by senior faculty.
- First-Year Writing Program: close contact with instructors in small classes, begun in 2007.
- Writing-Enriched Curriculum: major initiative building on first-year writing program; launched in 2007 with a four-year pilot phase spanning 20 academic units.
- Access to Success (ATS) program: intensive advising, peer mentoring, and community building for students whose experiences and records indicate potential for success but whose rank and test scores suggest need for additional support, begun in 2008.
- Student Learning Outcomes set clear expectations for students, guide faculty course planning and academic advising, and provide a meaningful framework for assessing what students know and do. Implementation began in 2007–2008 after a four-year planning process.

- Liberal Education Curriculum requirements took effect in 2010.

- Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP): one-to-one student-faculty experiences that deepen undergraduate engagement with the richness of a comprehensive research university.

- University Honors Program launched in 2010.

3. Setting Strong Graduation Norms and Policy

- University policies mandating that all academic programs have four-year curricular plans based on 15-credit norms and actively promote them to students.

- Monitoring curriculum requirements and adjusting course scheduling to ensure that students have access to the courses needed to fulfill requirements and graduate on time.

- Full-time enrollment incentives including tuition banding, which sets tuition at a flat 13-credit rate for 12 or fewer credits and at free above 13 credits.

- Midterm alerts, providing feedback to students when performance is falling below a C average.

4. Improving Financial Support

- Need-based financial aid, including UPromise Scholarships launched in 2007.

- Scholarship Tracking and Reporting (STAR) system (2011) - organizes financial information about scholarships to optimize the use of available funds and to effectively measure the impact of scholarship fundraising for students.

- Financial literacy programs to educate students and parents about actual and opportunity costs of taking longer than four years to graduate and the importance of "living like a student now so you don't have to live like one later."

Role of Technology

Many key initiatives and programs encompassed in the university's effort have been technology-driven. This has been especially true of interactive tools to better support advising, student planning, student engagement, and scholarship administration. These include the Graduation Planner, the MyU Student Portal, and the APLUS advising tool. Another technology-driven innovation, the Scholarship Tracking and Reporting (STAR) program, has greatly enhanced financial aid strategies in support of undergraduate student retention and graduation. The STAR program provides detailed planning analytics for $125 million of institutionally committed aid from 5,000 different sources, as well as management tools that optimize delivery of funds and measurement

of impact for 28,000 student aid recipients. Emphasizing the right money to the most deserving recipients, the program makes possible more aid and higher aid awards, with 25 percent more in scholarship funds awarded to students since the STAR system's launch in mid-2011.

Program Costs

The APLUS development cost about $300,000 over three years and requires $40,000 each year to maintain. The STAR system required a $200,000 non-recurring development cost. However, many initiatives were implemented to achieve outcomes beyond the timely completion of degrees.

Outcomes and Results

The most recent results (IPEDS data) show retention rates at their highest level in the past decade; the second-year retention rate showed slight exception, dipping incrementally from the previous year. One-year retention was 91 percent, up nearly 12 percentage points in a decade. The most significant retention gains have been among students of color, who make up over 18 percent of the undergraduate student population on the Twin Cities campus. The gains have since 2009 nearly closed a gap that had persisted between students of color and white students. The first-year retention rate for students of color has increased from 79.5 percent for students who entered as first-year students in fall 2000 to 89 percent for those who entered in fall 2010; the gains close a long-persistent gap between 84.1 percent and 90.5 percent, respectively, for white students. For Chicano/Latino students, the first-year retention rate increased by 14.2 percentage points, from 71.6 percent to 85.8 percent. American Indian students also saw a large increase in first-year retention rates, from 61.3 percent in 2000 to 83.6 in 2010, a jump of over 20 percentage points. The gains in graduation rates have been dramatic.

The Twin Cities campus' four-year graduation rate has increased significantly, trending steadily upward over a decade and scoring a large three-year gain. The four-year graduation rate for the most recent class (entered in 2008, graduated in 2012) is above 58 percent—up 11 percentage points in three years, 21 percentage points in seven years, and double the rate of a decade ago. The gains put the university within striking distance of the 60 percent goal set by the university's Board of Regents. The five-year and six-year rates also are up; the five-year rate of 72.1 nears the 75 percent goal, and the six-year rate of 72.3 percent is on track toward the 80 percent target. The four-, five- and six-year graduation rates for students of color have also improved, and the achievement gap has narrowed. Data show that 55 percent of undergraduate students of color graduate in fewer than 5 years. Improvements are most evident in the four-year rate for Chicano/Latino students: now at 46.1 percent, up from 26.9 percent five years ago.
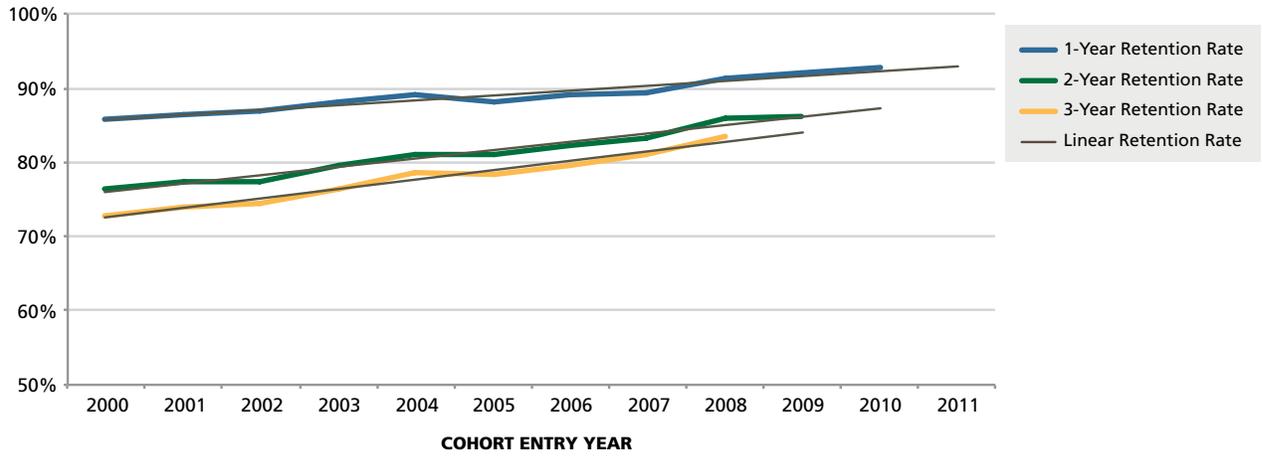
PROFILE 3: MVP TRAILBLAZER AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

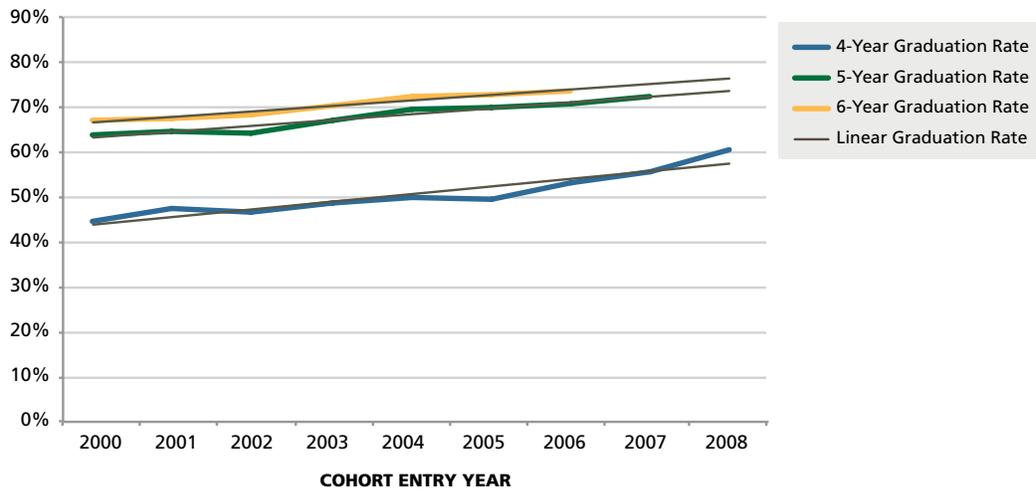
Florida State University

Location: Tallahassee, Florida
Established: 1851
Enrollment: 41,710
Undergrads: 31,851
President: Eric J. Barron

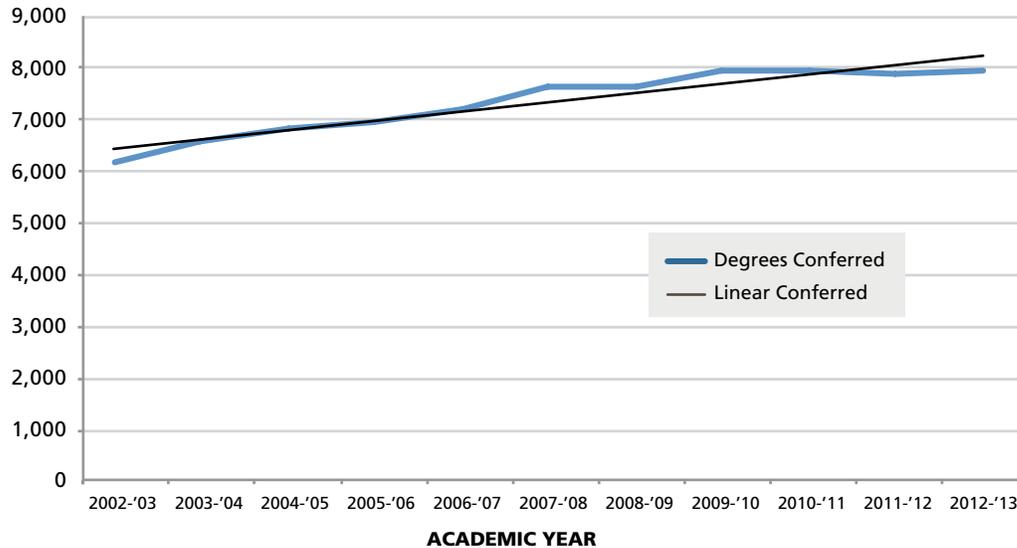**FIGURE 10: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2000 - 2011 COHORTS**

Source: Florida State University, 2013

FIGURE 11: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002 - 2008 COHORTS

Source: Florida State University, 2013

FIGURE 12: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Source: Florida State University, 2013

Target Population: All Undergraduate Students

Advising First advisors serve approximately 25,500 undergraduate students (of a total undergraduate population of approximately 31,000), and during the 2011-2012 academic year, they logged over 1.3 million contact and outreach attempts (e.g., meetings, emails, phone calls, Facebook posts, etc.)

Advising First

Within Advising First, the developmental advising and coaching model ensures that the advisor-student and coach-student relationship is at the center of the practice. Adhering to the developmental advising model, advisors and coaches provide holistic, in-depth support to students. There are six elements to this theory-based approach. The advising and coaching sessions aim to be informational, relational, goal-oriented, holistic, integrative and continuous. These capture the consistent message found within the retention research establishing that the quality of the student-advisor/coach interaction is as critical as the information exchange. This message is infused throughout the culture of Advising First. All advisors are trained on the elements of developmental advising and each semester they are observed and scored on how well each element is exhibited throughout their advising sessions. Coaches are also extensively observed and rated on the specific applications of the coaching model.

Over half of the Advising First advisors are placed in departments and colleges and work directly within their sites to create and deliver an academic advising system that meets the specific needs of the students in that area or discipline. In some sites, advisors work with freshmen through seniors; in other sites, the focus is on freshmen and sophomores while full-time departmental advisors or faculty advisors work with the upper-division students. In addition to the academic advisors who are placed in sites across campus, Advising First has three main centers: the Center for Exploratory Students, the Center for Academic Planning, and the Center for Success Coaching. The Center for Exploratory Students focuses on first-year students who are undecided about their major upon entering the university. Academic advisors working with exploratory students (now the largest major for incoming freshmen) provide a structured major-selection approach that includes five mandatory meetings. Students are led through an intentional process that involves self, major, and career exploration; and throughout the freshman year, they complete several actions that move them from indecision to major declaration. The Center for Academic Planning provides additional assistance to sophomore and above exploratory students, individuals who are needing to change their major, and any other students who require additional advising assistance. The Center for Success Coaching, staffed by 15 coaches, offers a more intensive student support program designed to enhance engagement in and out of the classroom and address a broad range of issues that have been linked to attrition. Success Coaches serve as accountability partners and knowledgeable resources on campus, helping students develop goals for the future and plans for achieving those goals. Success Coaching is offered at no charge to specific students who have been identified historically to be at risk of nonretention at the university. Currently, approximately 1,500 freshmen, including all from out of state and selected students living off campus, receiving Pell grant funding or bringing in a large amount of accelerated credit from high school are receiving coaching services. In addition, 330 sophomores, the majority of whom are first in their family to attend college, are being coached. Coaches meet twice a month with the 110–115 students on their rosters to discuss a number of topics and issues known to affect student success and retention (e.g., finances, academic efficacy, and campus engagement).

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: Provide a network of professional academic advisors and success coaches who support students as they establish and realize their personal, academic, and career goals at The Florida State University.

STRATEGY: In 1998, The Florida State University Provost launched a strategic initiative to address the first to second year retention rate at the institution. Convening a committee of campus leaders and activating an ambitious agenda, a goal was established to increase that number to 90 percent. Through collective efforts and a corresponding allocation of resources, this group identified several student-centered initiatives that have become the hallmark of the Florida State

University campus culture. Among those initiatives, a small network of academic advisors within the Division of Undergraduate Studies was established in 2001 to provide a consistent delivery of advising services.

IMPLEMENTATION: When Advising First was established in 2001, the university retained 85.8 percent of its freshman class. Through a broadly-based initiative led by the Florida State University Provost, that number has risen steadily over the past decade reaching 90.9 percent for the 2011-2012 academic years. During this time span, several campus programs were instituted including an Enrollment Management Committee with broad representation from campus, a university mapping program, a tutoring center, Freshman Interest Groups and a course designed for probationary students. Academic advising and success coaching were strategically placed in the center of this retention initiative as the system for supporting all students and integrating them into the academic and extra curricular realms of the institution. Over time, the provost continued to foster program development by allocating additional advising and coaching lines. Today, the program has grown to a team of fifty-five academic advisors and success coaches managed by seven program leaders.

Florida State University Initiative

Advising First advisors and coaches use a variety of creative strategies to reach out to their student populations. Several events are offered, including Meet Your Advisor events every fall and spring, New Student Welcomes, Open Houses, Major/Career Fairs, and presentations in a number of classes across campus. The Center for Exploratory Students, working in partnership with the Career Center, offers "Pizza & a Major" workshops, Major and Occupational Career panels and a Declaration Celebration for students who declare their departmental major by the end of their first year. The Center for Success Coaching facilitates a number of workshops and events for their coaching students, such as Ice Cream Socials, Speed Friending nights and a Student Success Conference that takes place every fall.

Role of Technology

Advising first utilizes technology to connect with students on a regular basis. Advisors and coaches reach out to their students daily through email, phone, text, Facebook, Twitter and a blog.

Program Costs

The cost to the university has mostly been in advisor and coach salaries.

Outcomes and Results

As mentioned earlier, our institutional first to second year retention rate was 85.8 percent in 2001 and our first-year retention rate has steadily increased over the past twelve years reaching 90.85 percent for the 2011-2012 academic years. Beginning with the 2001 cohort, both the university's four and six-year graduation rates have improved. In 2001, the four-year graduation rate was 47.4 percent. Among the 2008 cohort, that number rose to 60.9 percent. A similar trend is observed in the six-year data. In 2001 that number stood at 68.4 percent and in 2006 (the latest published data), it rose to 74.9 percent. In 2008, Advising First adopted an intrusive approach to address the retention rate for undecided students after discerning that this cohort was 5.27 percent below the overall freshman population. After three years of implementing mandatory advising and a structured major selection system based on theory and research, for the 2011 cohort, that gap has shrunk to .46 percent. Approximately 70 percent of Exploratory freshmen now declare a departmental major by the end of the freshman year and 98 percent have done so by the end of their sophomore year. This has been accomplished even as the overall number of Exploratory Students has steadily increased.
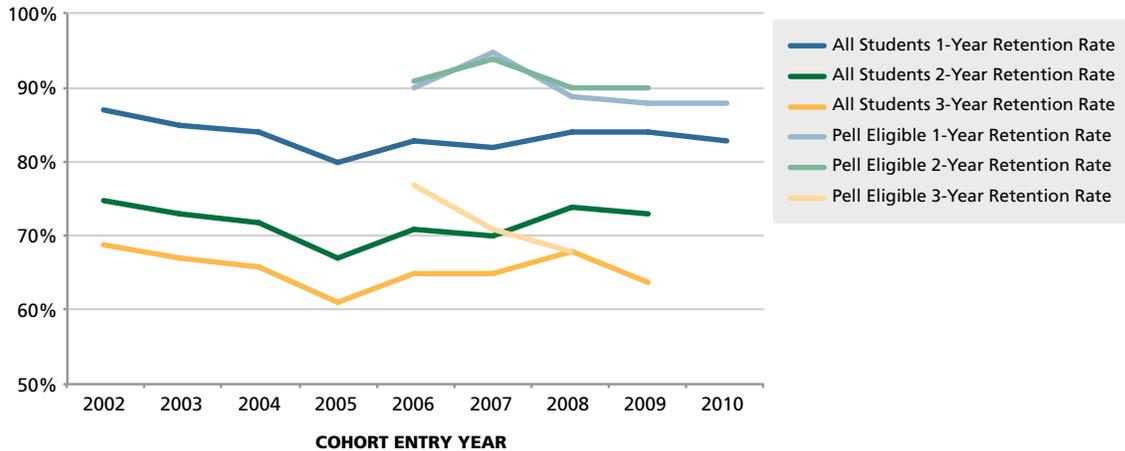
PROFILE 4: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD FINALIST

Florida International University

Location: Miami, Florida
Established: 1965
Enrollment: 52,634 (Fall 2013)
Undergrads: 38,212 (Fall 2013)
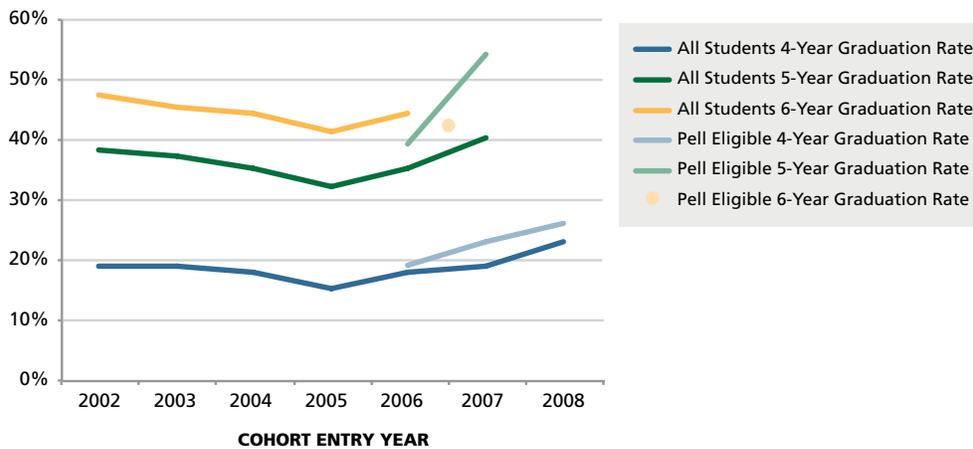President: Mark B. Rosenberg

FIGURE 13: FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2000 - 2011 COHORTS

Source: Florida International University, 2013

Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records manage-
ment system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid
information.

FIGURE 14: FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FTIC GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002 - 2008 COHORTS

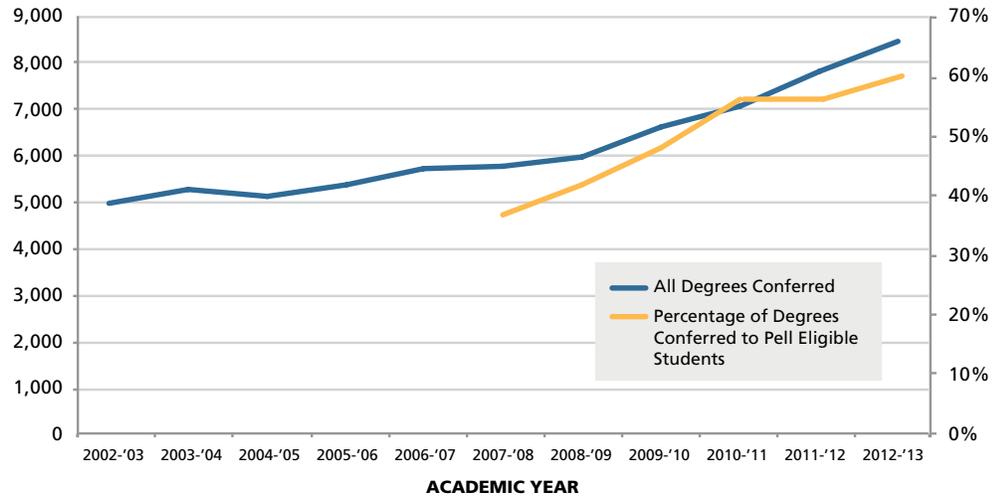Source: Florida International University, 2013

Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records manage-
ment system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid
information.

FIGURE 15: FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Source: Florida International University, 2013

Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records management system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid information.

Target Population: Low-Income Student Populations

The target population comprises all undergraduate students at Florida International University (FIU), 87 percent of which are underrepresented student populations (61 percent, Hispanic; 13 percent, Black; 13 percent, other) and 13 percent are White, non-Hispanic.

Graduation Success Initiative: Access Is Not Enough, Serving the Underrepresented in New and Effective Ways

The Graduation Success Initiative (GSI) is a comprehensive, university-wide set of innovations that transform how the undergraduate curriculum is administered to re-orient it toward student success. In its first year alone, the GSI contributed to a 6 percent increase in the on- time graduation rate for First-Time-In-College students at Florida International University, the largest increase in FIU's history. In its first two years, the GSI has produced a 9 percent increase, from its historic low to its historic high. The basic conceptual framework of the GSI is to:

- Help entering undergraduates to identify an appropriate academic goal (a major that suits their abilities, background, interests, and goals) as early as possible, preferably at admission.

- Provide students with a clear, semester-by-semester path, or a "Major Map," to the goal of on-time graduation in their appropriate major.

- Provide immediate feedback to students if they stray from their Major Map.

- Reduce barriers and increase supports to students' progression on their Major Maps.

■ Honor the fundamental agreement with students that if they stay on-time (if they stay on their Major Maps) the university will offer the courses on those maps on-time.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: The overarching goal is to improve the academic success of FIU's undergraduate students (87 percent of which are underrepresented populations) as measured by retention and on-time graduation.

STRATEGY: Over the past 20 years, FIU has instituted an array of first-year retention strategies including mandatory two-day freshman orientations, mandatory first-year experience courses, a common reading program, global learning courses, learning communities, online and face-to-face tutoring, and targeted efforts to reach underserved and "at risk" populations. As a result, FIU boasts a high first-year retention rate (consistently over 80 percent) for FTICs when compared to its peer institutions. Also, student success within the majors has been excellent. Among the students who were admitted to a major, in 2009, 78 percent would graduate on-time. However, between the first-year and the major has been a "Bermuda Triangle" in which many students were lost. In 2009, among students who dropped out, 75 percent had never formally intended a major. At the end of Fall semester, 2009, when FIU began to address seriously the problem of on-time graduation, over 5,900 students (21 percent of active undergraduates) had earned more than 60 credits but were not yet admitted to a major. These students were at risk of not persisting or taking an exorbitant amount of time to graduate. The conventional 2 + 2 model, in which students were not fully admitted to their majors until the end of junior year, was clearly not working. The means to achieve that goal is the http://gsi.fiu.edu.

IMPLEMENTATION: By far, the biggest challenge has been changing the fundamental paradigm of undergraduate education at FIU. Change theory and research teaches us that normally people do not change unless they have to. In a university, intentional change becomes possible when the leadership makes it clear that doing business as usual will no longer be permitted. In the case of FIU, the provost, with the strong support of the president, made it clear at the annual summer deans' retreat in July 2010 that as of fall 2012, all FIU students would enter majors at admission and that the way in which the undergraduate curriculum was administered would change to support student success. The existing on-time graduation rates were indefensible, and the deans understood the need to change. The provost charged the dean of undergraduate education to take the lead on what would become the GSI.

The GSI Campus Communication and Training Task Force developed and executed an extensive and detailed communication campaign aimed at students, faculty, and staff, which included an intentional brand development of the program (GSI, to mimic the popular CSI branding). Regular trainings and online tutorials have been developed regarding the many technological tools related to the

new advising system and are mandatory for new and current advisors and advising supervisors. Also vitally important is GSI's emphasis on data-based accountability, vertically and horizontally.

The biggest step for any institution considering implementing the GSI, partially or entirely, is putting undergraduate student success first. Taking the perspective of undergraduate students and organizing policies, procedures, and resources around student success is easier said than done. At most institutions, other perspectives compete with, and prevail over, the perspective of student success. What to do to promote student success and where to find resources become significantly easier once the primacy of this perspective is firmly in place.

Florida International University Initiatives

IDENTIFY STUDENTS WHO ARE WELL POSITIONED TO GRADUATE ON-TIME AND PROACTIVELY FACILITATE THEIR GRADUATION — The university has transitioned to an all-professional-advisor model where each student is assigned to a professional advisor who is dedicated to facilitating the success of a specific caseload. Also, FIU has hired 59 new professional advisors in the last four years, and the student/advisor ratio is now 380:1, which achieves best practice as established by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). The Office of Retention and Graduation Success (ORGS) provides the names of the students who are well positioned to graduate to their professional advisors, to the supervisors of the professional advisors, and to the unit Deans. The professional advisors actively reach out to these students in order to schedule a graduation planning session to map the path to the students' on-time graduation.

MAJOR MAPS — Beginning in late 2009, factor analyses were performed using on-time graduation as the dependent variable in order to identify critical indicator courses and performance levels for each undergraduate major. For example, it was discovered that only 18 percent of journalism majors who earned a grade less than a B- in their initial English composition course graduated on time, while over 60 percent of journalism majors who earned a B- or higher in this course graduated on time. Performance in this first-year class predicted risk for not graduating within six years.

MYMAJOR — Using empirical studies of FIU students, the university directed each academic unite to create Major Maps for each FIU major. Four workshops for personnel in the academic units were held in February, 2011, to assist in the construction of effective Major Maps, and all Major Maps were produced and vetted for deployment by October 1, 2011. For each undergraduate major, MyMajor includes the following information: (1) a non-technical, student-friendly, program description; (2) admission requirements; (3) career opportunities; (4) contact information; and (5) semester-by-semester Major Maps for FTICs and Transfers (see http://mymajor.fiu.edu).

ADMIT STUDENTS DIRECTLY TO APPROPRIATE MAJORS — Students now receive integrated academic advising and career development prior to admission. Two online tools help students to

identify their appropriate major at admission: MyMajorMatch and MyMajor. MyMajorMatch is a 10-minute online assessment (Kuder, http://www.kuder.com) that helps applicants to identify their vocational interests. Working with Kuder, the assessment instrument has been rebranded for FIU and customized to link FIU majors (MyMajor) to the 79 vocational interest pathways of MyMajorMatch. In one seamless, online process, applicants learn more about their vocational interests, which FIU majors go with those interests, and exactly what those majors entail.

MY_EADVISOR — My_eAdvisor is a powerful tracking tool that allows students and advisors to monitor academic progress via the Major Map. The Major Map shows semester-by-semester expectations of what courses need to be taken, what grades need to be earned, and what milestones need to be achieved in order to graduate on-time. Both students and advisors have My_eAdvisor dashboards with important summaries and quick access to functionalities.

ALTERNATIVE MAJORS (PATHS TO GRADUATION) — The university created majors for students with interests in majors that have limited access or where students fail to meet the standards to be admitted. Some students would benefit from receiving their baccalaureate degree but, for a variety of reasons, do not satisfy the degree requirements of any specific major. A General Studies degree would meet their objectives and allow them to progress. In April, 2013, the FIU Faculty Senate approved a baccalaureate degree in Interdisciplinary Studies which was proposed by the College of Arts and Science and which meets the needs of this group of students. Alternative tracks currently exist for students with interests in business nursing.

IDENTIFY BARRIER COURSES — ORGS discovered that College Algebra, which had a persistent failure rate of 70 percent, was a powerful predictor of on-time graduation: if students passed this course, they were 75 percent more likely to graduate on-time (regardless of major) than students who failed this course. This analysis led to two overlapping, grant-funded projects to change radically the pedagogy in these math gateway courses: first, a $100,000, three-year Wal-Mart Grant and then a $2.9 million, five-year Title V Grant. The new learning model is now in place and features computer- and peer-assisted instructional techniques. In August, 2012, the new Mastery Math Lab, with 202 computer stations, was opened in support of this new pedagogy. Recently, FIU was accepted as a Pilot Institution in the Gateways to Completion (G2C) Project of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. G2C will assist FIU's GSI to improve student success in five additional gateway courses with high failure rates.

Role of Technology

The GSI is a high-tech/high-touch system and relies on both the presence of professional advisors as well as sophisticated technological systems. Technology is used much like in teaching where computer-based systems handle basic information transfer and transactions and professional advisors address complicated and nuanced issues.

The GSI includes a suite of technological tools that helps students and advisors to stay connected and to know where the students are going, how to get there, and whether the students are on the right track:

- **MYFIU:** Student's home page, includes customized messages and progress alerts.
- **MYMAJOR:** A searchable database of information on all FIU undergraduate majors which includes Major Maps (semester-by-semester paths to on-time graduation).
- **MYMAJORMATCH:** An on-line occupational interest inventory that links the student's occupational interests to FIU majors and Major Maps.
- **MY_EADVSIOR:** An automated tracking tool that provides students and advisors with immediate semester-by-semester feedback regarding students' progress on their Major Maps and that is linked to the online registration system for immediate correction if the student is off track.
- **PANTHER DEGREE AUDIT (PDA):** A suite of interactive planning tools for students and advisors that shows real-time progress to meeting graduation and major requirements, what-if scenario testing for different majors, and course registration links.

In addition, GSI accountability and data systems rely heavily on technology. One of the GSI's innovations involves providing academic administrators with relevant, actionable data regarding retention and on-time graduation (fundamental measures of student academic success) in an accessible and interactive format. Prior to the GSI, academic administrators could not readily

obtain current retention and on-time graduation data at the department, college, or university level. Now, Undergraduate Education's ORGS has created an interactive dashboard that is refreshed weekly and available 24/7. These actionable, accessible data provide a basis for intervention and accountability that had not existed previously.

Also, My_eAdvisor usage reports are distributed weekly to academic administrators. These reports allow viewing at the university, college, and individual advisor level. For example, if an advisor is not opening messages from students or not taking action on alerts for students in his or her caseload, it is clearly visible in the usage report, and supervisors can take appropriate steps. Another example of its use is to provide quick data-based indications of the effectiveness of various advertising campaigns to increase students' use of My_eAdvisor.

Program Costs

In the last four years, a related cost that the institution has incurred involves hiring sufficient professional advisors to achieve FIU's current student/advisor ratio of 380:1, which matches best practice as identified by NACADA. Over the course of four years, 59 professional advisors have been hired at salaries of $40,000 plus $11,692 benefits, or over the course of four years, an additional $3,049,828. The institution is committed to hiring advisors to maintain this ratio as the institution grows. Prior to four years ago, the number of advisors was quite low relative to FIU's enrollment (seventh largest in the nation) and needed attention regardless of the GSI.

Other related costs were the creation of the Office of Academic Advising Technology and the ORGS: recurring cost for both offices combined is $1,334,998. These units did not exist and needed to be created regardless of the GSI.

A major cost that was essential to the GSI was the building of the My_eAdvisor tracking tool: $446,600, in external costs and; $183,400, recurring costs. Interestingly, all of these costs were strategic investments that came in a time of recession and significantly reduced state support. The bottom line was shrinking, but still FIU invested, because the strategic vision was clear.

Outcomes and Results

Taken together, all of FIU's data-based practices produced a dramatic increase in FTIC on-time graduation, improving 6.3 percentage points in one year, from 41.0 percent for the 2005–2011 FTIC Cohort to 47.3 percent for the 2006–2012 FTIC Cohorts. The practices continue to elevate on-time graduation for the next cohort. For the current 2007–2013 FTIC Cohort, 49.7 percent have graduated, with the registrar still posting graduates from the summer commencement. The GSI practices have produced a 9 percent increase in the FTIC on-time graduation rate, from historical low to historical high, in just two years.
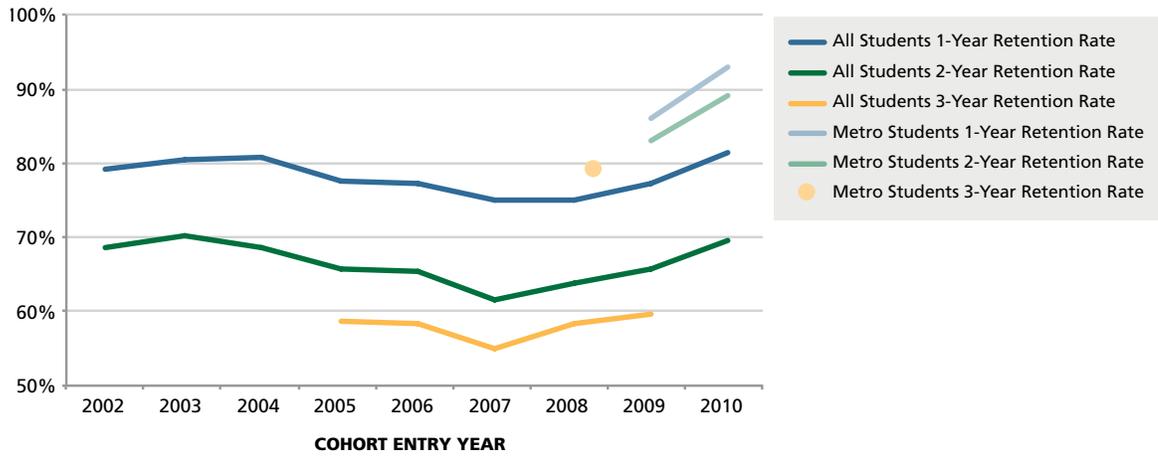
PROFILE 4: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD FINALIST

San Francisco State University
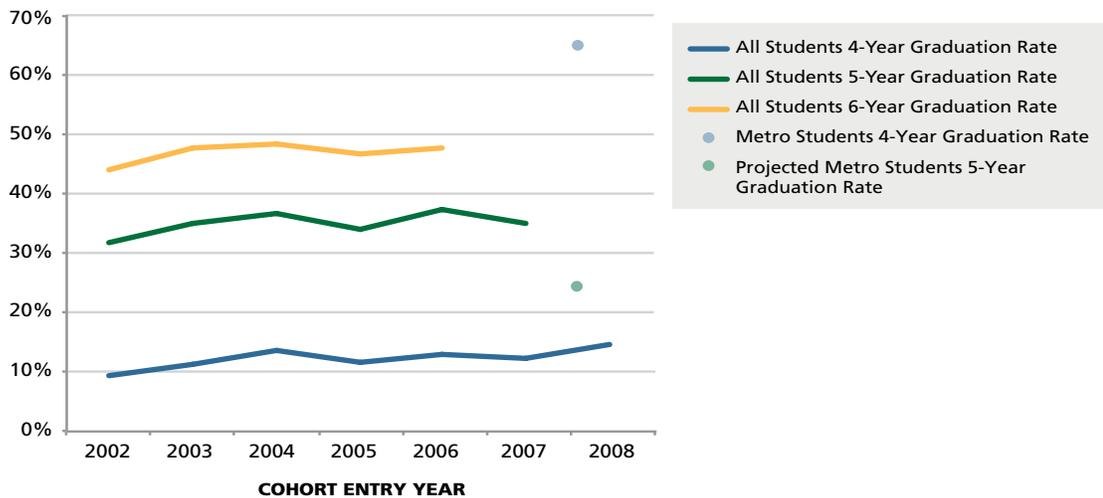
Location: San Francisco, California
Established: 1899
Enrollment: 27,515
Undergrads: 23,819
President: Leslie E. Wong

FIGURE 16: SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2000 - 2011 COHORTS

Source: San Francisco State University, California State University Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)
Note: SF State did not regularly publish 3-year retention rates until 2005

FIGURE 17: SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002 - 2008 COHORTS

Source: San Francisco State University, California State University Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)
http://www.asd.calstate.edu/csrde/ftf/2011htm/sf.htm; SF State Data Book 2013; SF State Data Book 2012
Note: Metro Academies started in 2009

Target Population: Low-Income, First-Generation and Underrepresented Student Populations

The target student population are those who are from low-income, first-generation, and under-represented backgrounds who are first-time, full-time freshmen (FTF). A high percentage of first-time freshmen at San Francisco State University (SF State) are in our target population. Fifty-one percent of FTF arrive to college needing remediation. Institutional data for 2012 show that 47 percent of first-time freshmen receive Pell grants, 60 percent are on financial aid, and 31 percent are first generation, with both parents having no college experience. Metro students are low income, underrepresented, or first generation to a much greater degree than all FTF.

Metro Academies: College Completion with Excellence and Equity

Metro Academies (Metro) is a redesign of the first two years of college that has sharply raised re-tention and graduation rates among students who are low income, first generation, or underrep-resented. SF State and City College of San Francisco (CCSF) founded Metro in 2007. Each Metro is a "school within a school" for up to 140 students, who work as cohorts in two linked classes per semester over four semesters. This design gives students a personalized educational home for their critical first two years, when most attrition occurs. Each Metro has a broad career theme to engage students early in a field of interest. SF State currently has three Metros—Metro Health, Metro STEM, and Metro Child Development—and works closely with transfer partner CCSF, which operates its own Metros of Health and Child Development. Based on very strong results and in the face of difficult budget conditions, SF State is replicating and institutionalizing Metros to serve most low-income first-time FTF, serving 1,000 lower division students per year by 2015.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: Redesign the first two years of college in order to increase retention and graduation rates for low-income, underrepresented, or first-generation students in a cost-efficient way that is both scalable and sustainable.

STRATEGY: We identified the problems facing our target populations in a number of ways. First, faculty met to reflect on our own direct experiences. We knew that four out of 10 low-income SF State students drop out before their fifth semester. Second, we studied institutional research data, aiming to understand the relationships among various risk factors—low-income, first- generation status, ethnic underrepresentation, and remediation status. Third, we immersed our-selves in the literature on public postsecondary education. We gathered facts about national and statewide graduation rates, changing demographics, and causes for poor and worsening retention and graduation rates. Beyond that, we also carefully studied what is working, and made contact

with a number of nationally prominent educators and researchers who serve as Metro advisors. Particularly important to our thinking were four streams of research: on learning communities (including work by Vincent Tinto and randomized controlled trials conducted by MDRC); George Kuh's work on high-impact educational practices; Derek Bok's 2006 book Our Underachieving Colleges and Pascarella and Terenzini's 2005 book, How College Affects Students, a meta-review of nearly 2,600 studies conducted from the 1970s through the 1990s.

IMPLEMENTATION: Metro Academies is not an add-on program. Rather, it is a restructuring of the first two years of college, a critical period when almost 40 percent of SF State's FTF drop out. Starting a Metro requires a strong organizational commitment from senior leaders and a set-up period of one year. It requires modifying general education courses and securing approvals; modifying outreach, recruitment, and orientation processes; integrating academic and tutoring services into Metro classes; and faculty development. The detailed tool kit that Metro has developed will help future adoption partners to start up efficiently. To achieve large scale, a strong institutional commitment is essential.

San Francisco State University Initiatives

TARGETED OUTREACH — Proactively recruit low-income, first-generation and/or under- represented students through a permanent feeder pipeline in the southeast quadrant of our county;

HIGHLY STRUCTURED GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE PATHWAY — Provide courses that satisfy degree requirements for the associate and bachelor's degrees, for all 289 majors in the California State University system, whether the classes are taken at the community college or the university level. Students reduce time in courses that will not count toward their goals and gain momentum as they accumulate course credits that count toward graduation and, at the community college level, transfer.

LONG-DURATION LEARNING COMMUNITY — Two linked classes and co-enrollment in cohorts over four semesters. Seats within Metro's eight required courses are guaranteed and each Metro cohort is 'block-registered' together. Students support each other academically and socially, and form strong relationships with faculty and counselors. If a student stops out, the program stays in close communication and strongly encourages returning.

CURRICULUM DESIGN THAT IS 'SCAFFOLDED' OR SEQUENCED — Systematically build academic skills within and between semesters, giving students from underresourced high schools an accelerated learning experience. Instructors explicitly teach academic foundation skills without assuming that students already know them. In foundation areas—writing, quantitative thinking, critical thinking, and oral communication—a series of assignments grow progressively more

challenging each semester (e.g., moving from writing a two-page paper to writing a 15-page research paper with APA citations).

STUDENT SUPPORT TIED INTO COURSES AND THE LEARNING COMMUNITY PEER GROUP — An academic advisor comes to the classroom to schedule academic advising appointments with Metro students, and follows the cohort over time. Students are required to prepare education plans for graduation. Similarly, a Metro financial aid advisor visits classes to alert students to deadlines and make appointments. The Metro site coordinator monitors student attendance and grades in the Metro core classes as well as difficult gatekeeper courses outside of the Metro core curriculum, for example, math courses that have high failure rates. If a student falters, she or he is required to participate in a study group with a tutor who is familiar with the challenging course(s).

STRUCTURED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION — Metro hosts a structured two-year faculty learning community that provides 45 hours of professional development over two years. Faculty members learn how to use evidence-based educational practices to provide interactive, engaging instruction.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF USING DATA TO IMPROVE LEARNING — Metro promotes a culture of evidence, continuous quality improvement, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Working with Academic Institutional Research (IR), Metro has set up annual reporting on important benchmarks, which we review with faculty and at a yearly meeting of chairs, deans and the provost. Metro site coordinators review more fine-grained data often—for example, monitoring retention in specific courses and the grades of individual students.

Role of Technology

Technology is integral to our work. Metro uses technology in the classroom, for faculty development, as a student and program administrative assessment tool, and to track student services such as counseling and tutoring. Metro utilizes electronic portfolios, iLearn, Social Media, faculty intranet and a student outcomes database.

Program Costs

Metro costs an additional $470, or 4.5 percent more, per student per year for the two-year Metro program. This covers Metro's program coordination time, outreach and recruitment, academic counseling, tutoring and faculty development. Note that Metro's main program expense is required GE courses already on general funds. Our institutions are able to designate or redeploy these eight GE Metro courses at no additional cost. For this initial investment of $940 per student for two years, Metro results in a decreased institutional cost of $17,880 per bachelor's graduate. This is caused by reducing the costs of attrition and time to degree, and unneeded/excess units.

Outcomes and Results

Metro students are retained at a 19 percent higher rate into their fourth year than all SF State FTF. Metro students are also 9.7 percentage points more likely than SF State students to graduate in four years. Using student course completion data for the Metro cohort graduating in spring 2014, we can confidently project that Metro students' five-year graduation rates will be 29 percentage points greater than for SF State FTF.

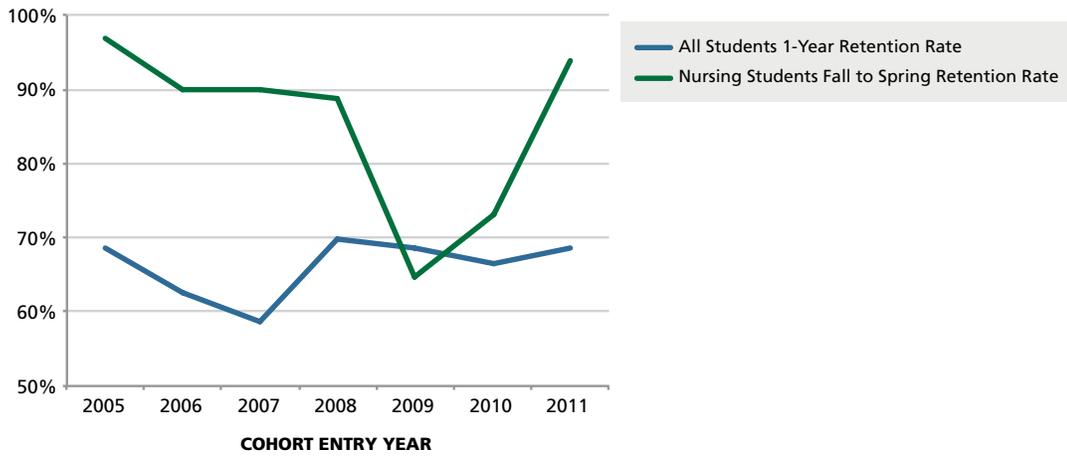## PROFILE 6: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

Alcorn State University

Location: Lorman, Mississippi
Established: 1871
Enrollment: 3,950
Undergrads: 3,208
President: M. Christopher Brown II

FIGURE 18: ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC & NURSING STUDENTS RETENTION RATES FOR 2005 - 2011 COHORTS

Source: Florida International University, 2013
Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records management system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid information.

FIGURE 19: ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY FTIC AND NURSING STUDENTS GRADUATION RATES FOR 2002 - 2009 COHORTS
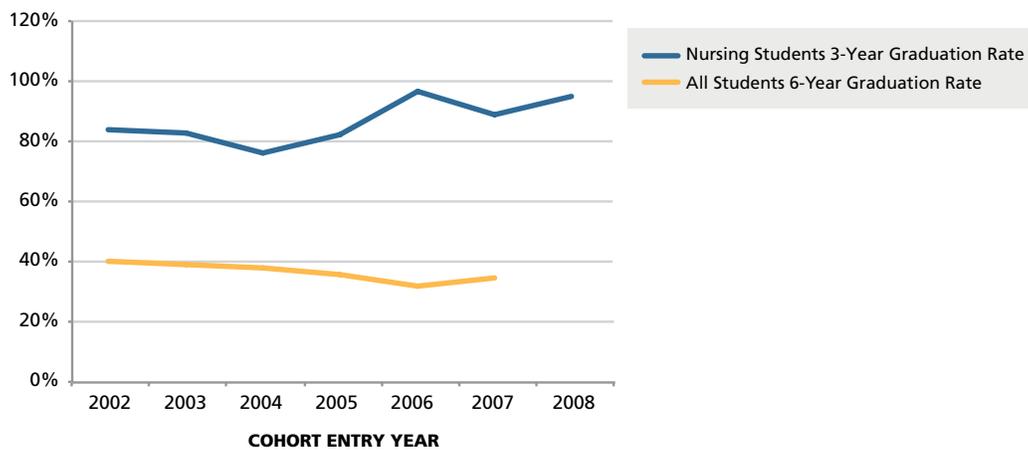
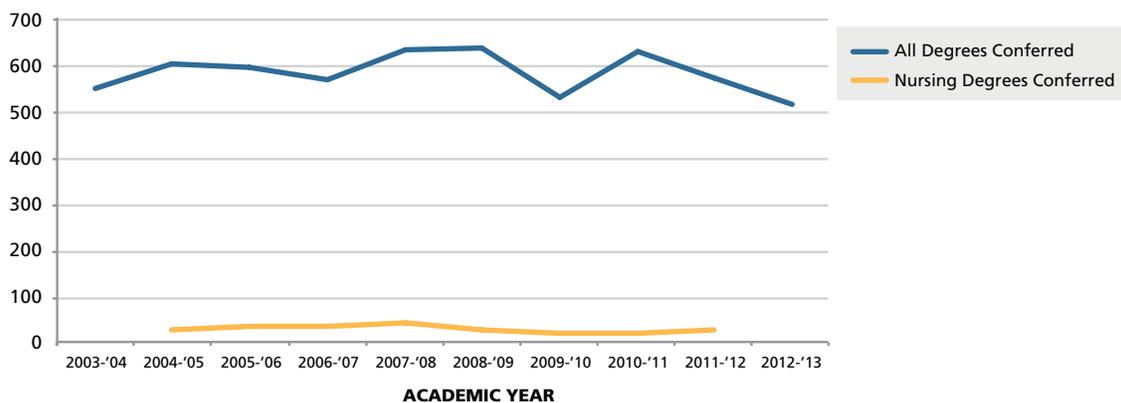Source: Florida International University, 2013
Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records management system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid information.

FIGURE 20: ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR 2003-2013

Source: Florida International University, 2013
Note: We are not able to provide information on the number of Pell-eligible students prior to 2006 because FIU transitioned to a new student records management system in 2005, and only information on active students was carried over into the new system for a number of fields, including financial aid information.

Target Population: Nursing Program Students

Nurses from minority backgrounds represent 16.8 percent of the registered nurse workforce, which indicates that 10 percent of minority students entering entry-level baccalaureate nursing programs dropped out or changed their major. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's report on 2010–2011 enrollment and graduations in baccalaureate and graduate programs in nursing, nursing students from minority backgrounds represented 26.8 percent of students in entry-level baccalaureate programs, 26.1 percent of master degree students, and 23.3 percent of students in research-focused doctoral programs. In terms of gender breakdown, men comprised 11.4 percent of students in baccalaureate programs, 9.5 percent of master's students, 7.5 percent of research-focused doctoral students, and 9.0 percent of practice-focused doctoral students.

Retaining Student Nurses for Academic Success

Prior to 2010, 15 percent of the students admitted to the Upper Division Baccalaureate Nursing Program at Alcorn State University returned to a lower-division curriculum with a change of major. State and national accreditation standards require an 80 percent program completion rate in 150 percent of the program length. In 2009 the program's completion rate was 65 percent for Alcorn's baccalaureate nursing program. Through a Strengthening Minority Institutions grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the Alcorn State University School of Nursing launched a five-year project to increase the graduation and licensing examination pass rates of prelicensure nursing students.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: Increase the graduation and licensing examination pass rates of pre-licensure nursing students.

STRATEGY: One strategy implemented to increase the graduation and licensing examination pass rates of prelicensure nursing students was the establishment of a Retaining Nursing Students for Academic Success Center, which included resources to enhance the learning environment and increase retention and graduation rates. The center is equipped with 10 computers, a printer, and a complete inventory of nursing software programs to supplement course content in the undergraduate programs. The center has one room to provide a quiet place for individualized counseling and a larger space for group sessions. Students may also arrange time in the Virtual Hospital, completing various simulated scenarios to increase clinical reasoning skills.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Alcorn State University Initiative

The Retaining Nursing Students for Academic Success Center is staffed with a Retention Specialist, a clinical associate, and a coordinator. The Retention Specialist intervenes with students through faculty referral, self-referral, and special assessment. Students are also provided special assistance to meet individualized learning needs. The Clinical Associate is available as an expert clinician to provide support with clinical reasoning skills. The center's coordinator ensures a seamless process in the implementation and evaluation of the center's services.

At the end of each semester, faculty make recommendations for resources to be added to the center's inventory based on curricular evaluation outcomes. Other sources of input come from student evaluations and information obtained from professional development activities. The center's staff has also networked with other student success navigators for input.

Information regarding the Retaining Nursing Students for Academic Success Center is announced at the beginning of the academic year during student orientation. Flyers are posted throughout the School of Nursing building to remind students of the available services. Faculty members also announce the center's services in class and post announcements on Blackboard for each course.

Quarterly reporting of the center's progress provides university administration with information regarding the achievement of benchmarks and strategies for continued progress toward the achievement of the desired outcomes.

Role of Technology

Toward improving instruction and learning, Alcorn State University has invested in and installed state-of-the-art Smart Classrooms across the campus. The Smart Classrooms have created an environment that is more conducive to interactive and cooperative learning, allowing individual students to benefit from computerized tutorials and other technological-assisted instructional tools. In addition, the university has enabled several conference rooms with videoconferencing capabilities, CD and DVD players, Elmo document cameras, laptop computers, camcorders, microphones, amplifiers and speakers, clicker systems, and data projectors. The Smart Classrooms allow instructors to introduce students to an array of new technologies. A pen-based user interface on a projected display, a computer vision–based module for selecting remote students using a laser pointer, and a speech-capable computer-animated virtual assistant will allow the instructor to control the presentation of lecture materials and informs the instructor of classroom events.

Additionally, toward improving instruction and learning, Alcorn State University has brought online two state-of-the-art test preparation laboratories/curriculum resource centers, one housed in the School of Education and Psychology and the other housed in the Davey L. Whitney Health and Physical Education Complex. The test preparation laboratories/curriculum resource centers have created an environment that is more conducive to interactive and noninteractive learning and cooperative test preparation, allowing individual students to benefit from computerized tutorials and other technological-assisted instructional tools. In addition to the physical technological changes to the campus, Alcorn State University has also invested in many technology based instruction software packages including Blackboard, electronic attendance software (Grades First), Edmentum (formally Plato), and Hawkes Learning Systems for Mathematics Tutoring. The School of Nursing Retention Center is equipped with 10 computers and an inventory of software programs to support the needs of students experiencing academic difficulty. In addition, a Virtual Hospital was established to further enhance the needs of all students in the areas of critical thinking and clinical reasoning.

Program Costs

The cost of establishing technology infrastructure to support the needs of the center is as follows:

Wiring the center	$10,000.00
Hardware	$3,000.00
Software	$4,000.00
High fidelity manikins	$70,000.00
Renovation of the space	$220,000.00

Return on Investments

Experienced a 30 percent increase in pre-licensure nursing students successfully completing the nursing program.

Outcomes and Results

Degree completion rates improved from the 2008 rate of 65 percent because of the strategies instituted through the Retaining Nursing Students for Academic Success Center and because the center was utilized by the students. The degree completions rate for 2011 was 95 percent, that is, 95 percent (n = 41) of the students admitted in fall 2008 completed the program of study within 150 percent of the prescribed program length. The degree completion rate for 2012 was 90 percent, that is, 90 percent (n = 59) of students admitted in fall 2009 completed the program of study within 150 percent of the prescribed program length.
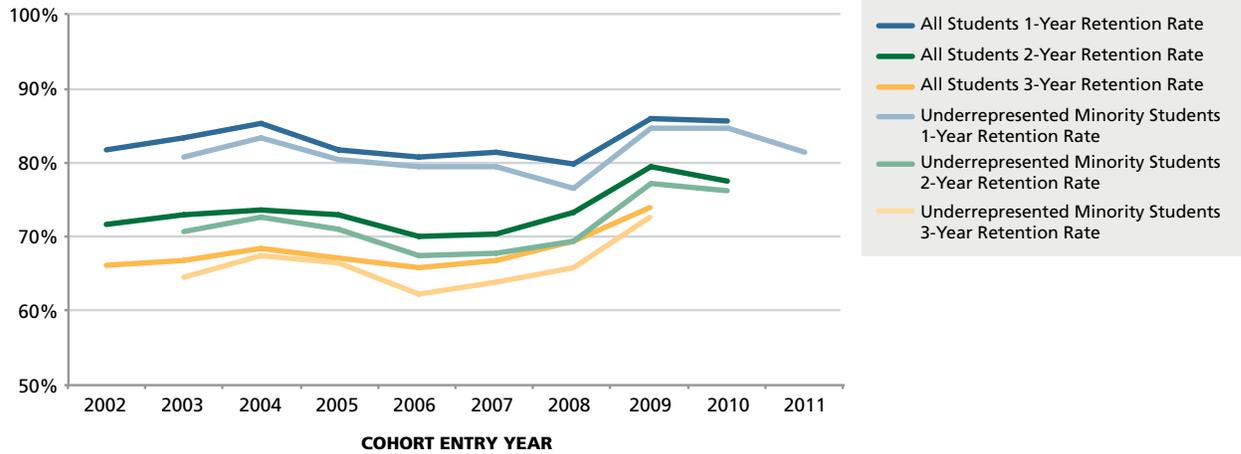
PROFILE 7: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

California State University, Fresno
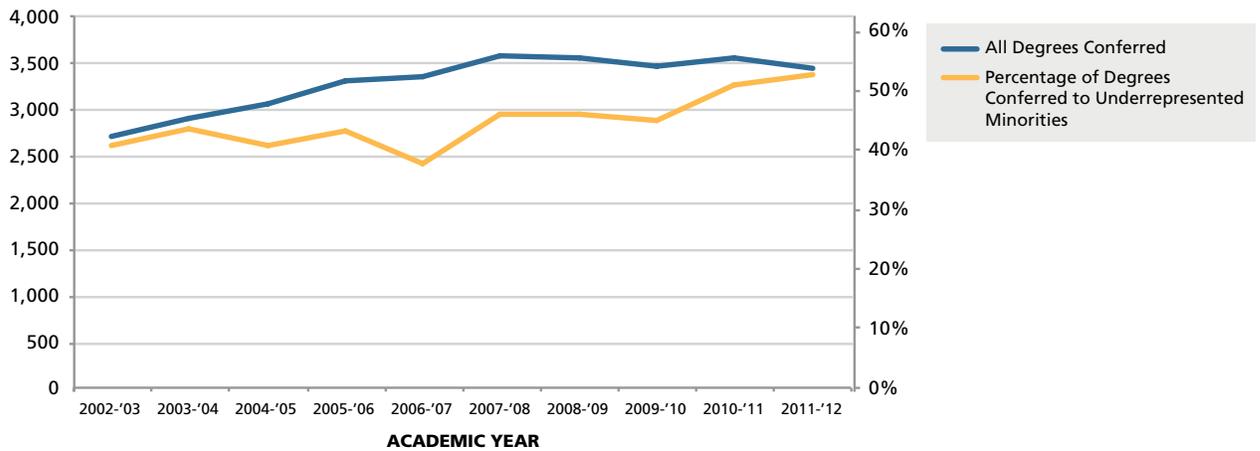
Location: Fresno, California
Established: 1911
Enrollment: 22,565
Undergrads: 19,719
President: Joseph I. Castro

FIGURE 21: CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2002 - 2011 COHORTS

Source: California State University-Fresno, 2013

FIGURE 22: CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO BACHELOR'S DEGREES CONFERRED BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Source: California State University-Fresno, 2013

Target Population: Underrepresented Student Populations

The target population is all undergraduate students starting with the fall 2009 first-time, full-time freshmen. The initial target cohort is 2,764 first-time, full-time freshmen, including 1,135 underrepresented minorities (Hispanics, African Americans, American Indians, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders). Subsequent first time, full-time freshmen cohorts have ranged from 2,800 to 3,200. As a note, California State University, Fresno (Fresno State) serves a large number of Hmong/Southeast Asian students, who are similar to our underrepresented categories, who are not categorically included in our underrepresented group.

Graduation Rate Initiative: Access to Excellence

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: The overall goal of our degree completion efforts is to increase our six year graduation rate by 6 percent in six years, starting with the 2009 full-time, time year freshmen cohort. Objectives include:

- Creating year to year initiatives and interventions that address specific challenges for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors that will increase yearly retention rates and ultimately the six year graduation rate.

- Focusing on transfer students separately from native students where appropriate to increase two year and three year graduation rates by 6 percent.

- Reducing the difference in the six-year graduation rate between underrepresented minority students and others.

STRATEGY: As part of the nationwide Access to Success Initiative, the California State University (CSU), Office of the Chancellor launched the CSU Graduation Initiative: Closing the Achievement Gap in which it pledged to improve the CSU graduation rate by 8 percentage points system-wide and reduce by half the college-going and six-year graduation gaps for low-income and minority students by the year 2015-2016. However, seven years prior to that, Fresno State had developed an initiative to promote and monitor student retention and graduation rates. The system and the campus analyze data and monitor student retention and graduation rates disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and other ways. The Student Success Task Force (SSTF) examined the data, identified problems, brainstormed strategies, oversaw implementation and communicated to key campus constituencies efforts focused on improving student engagement and student success. In 2009, the Graduation Rate Initiative Team (GRIT) was formed to more closely monitor data and evidence and report on student retention and graduation success indicators. GRIT is also proactive in planning and supporting the evaluation of program intervention activities and student support services and maintains close organizational coupling with the SSTF.

IMPLEMENTATION: Many of the initiatives implemented at Fresno State relied solely on student participation, and without mandatory policies in place, student participation has been minimal on some projects. It is imperative for faculty to buy in to these initiatives in order for them to be carried out and successful. Although there has been good participation on some fronts, such as course redesign, there is still a desire to engage more faculty in these initiatives to have a greater impact across the entire campus community. Fresno State is the premier regional university serving central California's diverse, growing population. Fresno State serves a four-county region historically fraught with significant changing socioeconomic and demographic conditions, including high unemployment, high poverty, and an increase in non–English-speaking cultures. Our continued efforts in serving the underrepresented populations have included developing and enhancing programs that improve opportunities for academic success for first-generation students and students from historically underrepresented groups. Through these efforts, we have seen increases in some of our underrepresented minorities (URM) retention rates but are still striving to achieve our goal to reduce the achievement gap.

Overcoming challenges was the focus of the work of the SSTF and GRIT. These efforts have involved the full integration and cooperation of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs divisions, a laser-like focus on ensuring that institutional policies and interventions foster student success and eliminate barriers, and securing outside funding, including a Title V grant, a Wal-Mart grant, a grant from the CSU, funding from the President's Excellence Fund, and student funds (Instructionally Related Activity funds).

California State University-Fresno Initiatives

ACADEMIC ADVISING INITIATIVE (2009) — A series of special academic advising initiatives including an Academic Success/Skills Course, Sophomore Initiative, Third Year Retention for At-Risk Students, Second Year Connection, Fourth Year At-Risk Students, and Super Seniors.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE (2009) — The university received a Wal-Mart grant to support a First Year Experience (FYE) and learning community of general education courses for incoming freshman students.

THE OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (2009) — The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) analyzed trends in retention and graduation, prepared reports, produced an annual Data Book, performed in-depth analysis about time to degree, identified students at risk by inter-related factors, and recommended methods and programs that could improve retention and graduation.

INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY/STUDENT SUPPORT IN THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT (2009) — Redesigned high-enrollment courses with high failure rates. Supplemental instruction embedded tutors in courses. SupportNet is an early alert system that enables faculty and staff to refer at-risk students to counselors who provide academic and social support to help students.

TITLE V (2010) — Commitment to Latina/o Academic Success & Excellence (CLASE), a five-year Hispanic-Serving Institution grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Intent is to improve the retention and graduation rates of underrepresented minorities, especially those from Hispanic/Latino background by 5 percent in 2015 (2009, six-year graduation rate - 44.9 percent). Title V staff partners with the academic programs to implement initiatives that improve student learning, engagement, and academic success (e.g., course redesign, service learning, critical thinking, and student writing). In addition, Title V staff partners with Student Affairs programs to offer student success workshops and interventions, including academic GE advising, career assessments, career experience course, financial literacy, and professional mentoring.

TRANSFER GRADUATION INITIATIVE (2011) — The university established an advisory council to work with local community colleges to improve the transcript sharing process with community colleges, implemented a specific transfer summer orientation program, and introduced a special course for transfer students in academic difficulty after the fall semester.

"CROSSING THE FINISH LINE" PODCASTS (2012) — A series of videos for seniors entitled "Crossing the Finish Line" were designed to facilitate degree completion.

SELF-PACED ONLINE TUTORIAL (2013) — Self-Paced Online Tutorial (SPOT) was designed and piloted to facilitate completion of the Upper Division Writing Requirement.

CSU GRANT (2013) — Awarded a grant of $500,000 from the CSU designed to increase and enhance our efforts to improve retention and graduation rates.

Role of Technology

Three key technology tools have supported our efforts.

- Blackboard, our learning management system, is the primary tool faculty use to house and deliver instructional content to students. Our course redesign effort emphasizes the use of advanced Blackboard tools and other online teaching and learning tools such as screen capturing.
- Electronic portfolios, which started in the 2011 cohort, are also heavily used in the FYE program. Electronic portfolios facilitate student reflection on their learning experience and pro-

vide a mechanism for faculty to evaluate student work. FYE has used electronic portfolios for two years, but did not for the 2009 group.

■ We have adopted GradesFirst campus wide. GradesFirst allows key university personnel, including faculty, to identify students at-risk of academic failure earlier than would have otherwise been the case.

Program Costs

Much of the work completed as part of the graduation rate initiative was taken on by faculty, staff, and administrators as part of their jobs and no additional expenditures were incurred for those efforts. For example, faculty, staff, and students were involved in the Graduation Rate Initiative Team and the SSTF. These groups developed and oversaw implementation of procedures used. Department chairs, advisors, and faculty spent additional time working on programs or directly with students as part of their regular duties. The university has spent $175,000 in course redesign efforts and in the neighborhood of $50,000 in incremental student success efforts.

Return on Investments

The savings from the redesign effort is the cost of the number of sections we did not have to teach, approximately $171,000 to date. Since the redesigned courses will continue to be offered, the savings will accumulate every semester (at a rate of $45,000 per semester). Similarly, the supplemental instruction program was available to students in 25 sections of 13 different courses. The program served 2,004 students and raised their average GPA by .73 points-an average cost of $3.28 per 1/10 of a point increase in GPA. If the GPA in those classes (2.62) carries over into the other classes those students are taking, it would make them 2.5 times more likely to graduate than had they stayed at the lower GPA (1.89).

Outcomes and Results

The average first-year retention rate from 2003 to 2011 is 83.5 percent for all students and 81.6 percent for URM students. Comparing the most recent cohort years with previous history, the average first-year retention rate for URM students is 80.3 percent from 2003 to 2008 cohorts and improved to 84.0 percent for 2009 to 2011 cohorts. Comparing the most recent cohort years with previous history, the average second-year retention rate for URM students is 70 percent from 2003 to 2007 cohorts and improved to 74.5 percent for 2008 to 2010 cohorts. Comparing the most recent cohort years with previous history, the average third-year retention rate for URM students is 65.1 percent from 2003 to 2006 cohorts and improved to 67.3 percent for 2007 to 2009 cohorts. The six-year graduation rates for fall 2002 to fall 2006 first-time and full-time freshmen cohorts (most recent data) vary from 47.8 percent to 50.6 percent, averaging 48.7 percent, for all students. For URM students, these rates range between 38.1 percent and 44.5 percent, averaging 41.8 percent. For these cohorts of students, Fresno State improved graduation rates for all, and the progress is slightly greater for minority students.
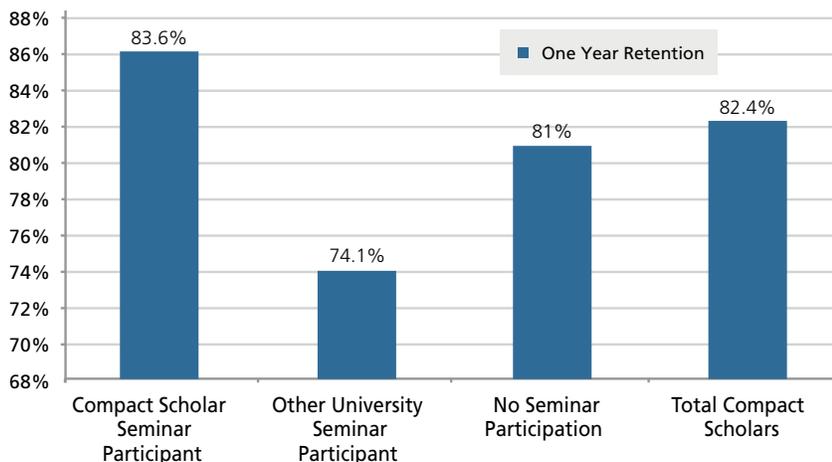
PROFILE 8: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

San Diego State University

Location:	San Diego, California
Established:	1897
Enrollment:	31,899
Undergrads:	27,087
President:	Elliot Hirshman

FIGURE 23: SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY 2008 FTIC COMPACT SCHOLARS 1-YEAR RETENTION RATES BY SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Note: One Year Retention Rate for Service Area Commuters in the Fall 2008 FTF Cohort is: 79.6 percent

FIGURE 24: SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY 2008 FTIC COMPACT SCHOLARS 4-YEAR GRADUATION RATES BY SEMINAR PARTICIPATION
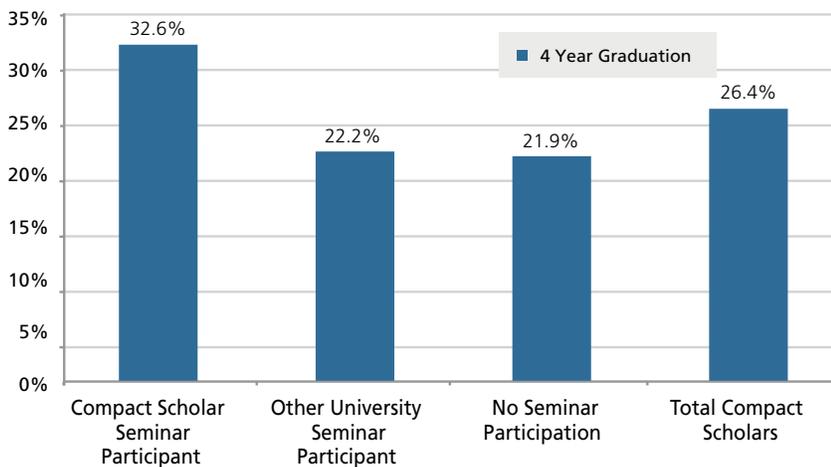
Note: Four Year Graduation Rate for Service Area Commuters in the Fall 2008 FTF Cohort is: 17.0 percent

While San Diego State University (SDSU) has led the nation among research universities in improved retention and graduation rates overall, we have in the past three years focused particularly on Hispanic student success. As the percentage of the Hispanic population grows, it is crucial that more students from this population have access to higher education and even more important that they achieve at the very highest level. Our target population is focused on students from the Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD), a district on the border with Mexico, in which more than 74 percent of the students are Hispanic or Latino and in which nearly half of the students are socio-economically disadvantaged. Students that graduate from this district, successfully satisfy the Compact for Success benchmarks, and matriculate to SDSU, comprise our target population. Students that meet the following benchmarks are eligible:

- Maintained continuous enrollment in the SUHSD schools from the 7th to 12th grade
- Attained a CSU GPA of 3.0 or higher by time of application and maintained this GPA through senior year
- Completed all A-G course requirements
- Satisfied the ELM (Entry Level Math Placement) requirement
- Satisfied the EPT (English Placement Test) requirement
- Have taken the SAT or ACT

The cohorts are consistently made up of a majority of Hispanic students with all years totaling at least 50 percent or greater Hispanic students. The second largest represented group in each cohort is Filipino with all cohorts totaling approximately 20 percent Filipino student populations.

The Compact Scholars Program: Supporting Student Achievement

The Compact Scholars Program is the postsecondary component of the Compact for Success, an innovative partnership between the Sweetwater Union High School District and San Diego State University. The program supports student achievement by connecting students to the diverse resources of the San Diego State campus community. Compact Scholars actively engage in high-impact educational practices, including first-year seminars, study abroad, learning communities, service-learning, undergraduate research, and internships.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: The goal of the Compact Scholars Program is to deepen academic engagement and to promote higher retention and graduation rates for SUHSD students attending SDSU.

STRATEGY: The compact Scholars Program provides a learning community and advising support through which students are encouraged to take part in study abroad programs, become engaged in undergraduate research, and take on leadership roles at the university.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Compact Scholars Program Office was established in the Division of Undergraduate Studies at SDSU in 2005. Initially aimed at providing pathways for students from the SUHSD, with support from the dean of undergraduate studies, the provost, and the president, the director of the Compact Scholars Program worked with faculty and staff to collaborate in the development of strategies aimed at increasing student achievement. With these partnerships and through collaboration that involved faculty, the Office of Undergraduate Research, student affairs, international programs, and others, the Compact Scholars Program was able to build on ongoing university commitments—study abroad, undergraduate research, and student engagement—to focus on providing additional opportunities for this population of students.

Additionally, the director of the Compact Scholars Program engaged key University Senate committees, such as the Undergraduate Council, and Diversity, Equity and Outreach, and shared data related to continuation rates, probation rates, grade point averages, and number of units completed. Most importantly, the Compact Scholars Program, the university as a whole, and the Division of Undergraduate Studies uses data regularly to make strategic decisions about student

progress, support initiatives, interventions, and other strategies designed to support and foster student success. This use of data is an ongoing feature of the Compact Scholars Program, one that allows the director and others to make timely, critical decisions regarding resource allocation, intervention goals, and student outreach.

San Diego State University Initiatives

THE SWEETWATER EDUCATION FOUNDATION COMPACT SCHOLARSHIP (2006) — Renewable four-year Compact Scholarships have been awarded to financially eligible students to assist them in meeting the educational costs to attend SDSU. Award amounts ranged based on a student's expected family contribution (EFC) level. The last Compact cohort to receive Compact Scholarship assistance matriculated in fall 2011.

COMPACT SCHOLARS UNIVERSITY SEMINAR (2006) — One-unit elective course (General Studies 100) that provides students with an opportunity to explore a variety of areas that define the university experience at a major comprehensive university as part of a learning community. In fall 2009 the Hybrid University Seminar was piloted. Students completed part of the course on their own online and the other part in class with an instructor. With the combination of audio, video, visuals and reading assignments, students benefited from experiencing a variety of modes of learning online.

COMPACT SCHOLARS PROGRAM ORIENTATION (2006) — Orientation program devoted entirely to the incoming cohort of Compact Scholars freshmen and separate from the existing University Orientation is a reflection of the high priority placed on meeting the specific needs of this target population on the SDSU campus. It is offered to students annually free of charge to eliminate any financial barriers. It was created to support the student's individual under-standing of the services and benefits extended to them as Compact Scholars, and for students to recognize the individual behaviors and practices that lead to improvements in retention and graduation rates.

DUS STUDENT LEARNING LOUNGE (2008) — The DUS Student Learning Lounge provides a learning commons for Compact Scholars to study, access academic resources, and to meet face-to-face with valuable student support professionals during the academic week.

DUS STUDY ABROAD ADVISOR (2007) — Personal, one-on-one advisement to students in planning their study abroad experiences which is especially helpful in assisting our first-genera-tion and low-income students that are underrepresented in studying abroad.

Role of Technology

Technology has been very helpful in improving our communication strategies and has provided us with communication tools to deliver timely information to students. Given the size and scope of our target population, the Blackboard Homeroom suite has been invaluable in allowing the Compact Scholars Program Office to disseminate information directly to students efficiently at the touch of a button. It has increased efficiency and allowed us to manage student communications and announcements directly from the Compact Scholars Program Office. YouTube and Facebook have also been helpful in providing us with social media platforms to communicate with our students. Surveygizmo is another technological asset that has allowed us to survey students and to collect student reservations and data essential to our program operations.

Program Costs

The annual permanent budget line allocated to the Compact Scholars Program Office is $75,000 including salaries and operations.

Return on Investments

Given the limited resources, and the obstacles we know are commonly faced by this target population of students, we have been able to achieve remarkable returns on a small investment. Based on the original allocation of $75,000 in 2006, at that time we allocated $373 per student. To date, we have enrolled over 2,000 Compact Scholars. Through strategic collaborations and partnerships including application for grants, services to students have over time been able to grow over time despite limited resources.

Outcomes and Results

As the result of focused efforts at SDSU, the percentage of Hispanic students enrolling has increased from 24.2 percent in fall 2009 to 28.8 percent of the student population in 2012. During the same three years, continuation rates for Hispanic students have risen from 81.3 percent to 86 percent and in our Compact Scholars Program to 88.9 percent. The first-year retention rate of the Compact Scholars has steadily increased with each successive cohort. There was an immediate and significant improvement in four-year graduation rates for Compact Scholars from 2006 (20.9 percent) to 2008 (26.4 percent). These are also significant gains given that, from 2006 to 2012, there has been no significant change in the overall high school GPAs or SAT scores of incoming Compact Scholars students.
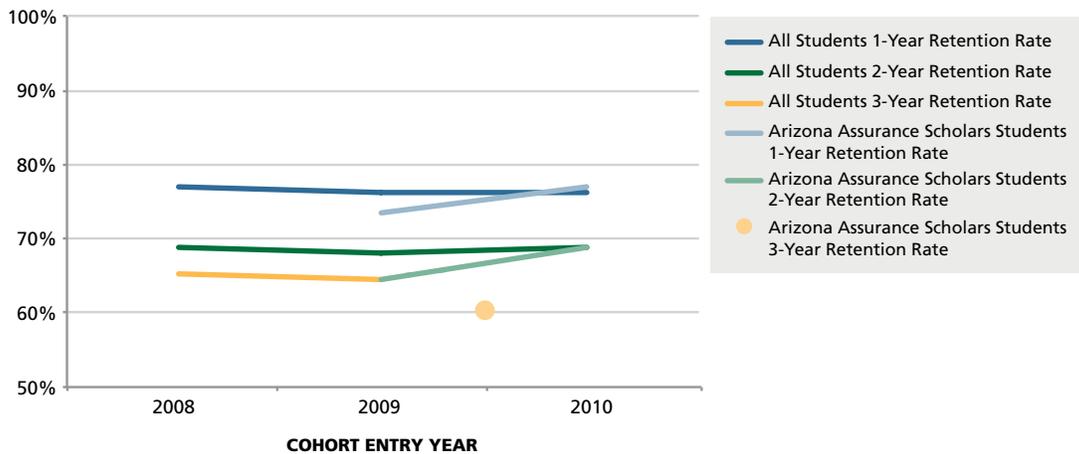
PROFILE 9: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

University of Arizona

Location: Tucson, Arizona
Established: 1885
Enrollment: 39,236
Undergrads: 30,867
President: Ann Weaver Hart

FIGURE 25: UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA FTIC RETENTION RATES FOR 2000 - 2011 COHORTS

Source: University of Arizona, 2013

Target Population: Low-Income Student Populations

The Arizona Assurance (AZA) Scholars Program seeks to assist high school students who are Arizona residents, possess a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale), have a family income (wages or adjusted gross income) of $42,400 or below—as demonstrated on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid—and are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant. As of 2012, the state of Arizona has approximately 510,097 K-12 students that meet the financial eligibility criteria to become AZA Scholars[1]. Our goal is to make each and every one of them aware of this opportunity.

The Arizona Assurance Scholars Program

The AZA Scholars Program at The University of Arizona (UA) is a financial aid and support services program for low-income students in the state of Arizona. The program is designed to assist students with any resources and support necessary to successfully attain their bachelor's degree and prepare them for graduate or professional life afterwards. The AZA Scholars Program partners with colleges and departments on campus to provide its students with comprehensive programming from their freshmen year through their senior year, so that they are able to have a smooth transition into and out of the university upon graduation. The mission of Arizona Assurance is achieved through financial aid, first-year transition programming, mentoring, leadership, career development, graduate and professional school preparation, and cultural enrichment.

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1   There are roughly 1,064,785 K-12 students in Arizona (source: Arizona Department of Education). It's estimated that the mean household income of this population is $43,318 (source: Arizona Census). Roughly 48 percent of these students or 510,097 of them meet financial assistance requirements.

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: To assist students with any resources and support necessary to successfully attain their bachelor's degree and prepare them for graduate or professional life afterwards.

STRATEGY: The AZA Scholars Program has utilized both quantitative and qualitative data to identify retention, graduation, and degree completion issues among its target population as well as its current and past participants. We analyzed a baseline sample of three UA cohorts to examine the retention and graduation rates of this target population, with particular consideration to socioeconomic status, taking into account all students who are Arizona Assurance eligible, and found a glaring need for support.

IMPLEMENTATION: Much of AZA's success relates to its ability to draw from existing programs and services on the UA campus. The most significant factor towards replicating the AZA program regards financing. However, in terms of successful utilization of resources, an imperative aspect of AZA worth duplicating is its built-in student support system. AZA Scholars have access to tutoring, peer advising, mentorship, workshops, leadership and career development programs, graduate school preparation, and the assistance of an entire staff committed to easing each student's transition into college and ensuring that they persist. This has been the biggest key to our success.

University of Arizona Initiatives

FIRST-YEAR SUCCESS COURSE (2009) — During the first-year each student is required to participate in a first-year success course or transition program, which was implemented in 2009. Research showed that students who participated in a first-year success course had a higher GPA.

STUDENT-FACULTY MENTORING PROGRAM (2009) — A faculty mentoring program was implemented in the first-year of the program to ensure that students had access to faculty member who could assist them and guide them in their first year of college.

FOCUS ON SUCCESS WORKSHOP (2009) — Prior to the start of the semester all students participate in a three-hour workshop called "Focus on Success" that provide critical information on the AZA program, financial aid, mentoring and academic support.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING WORKSHOP (2009) — In the second year, students are required to participate in a workshop on gaining experience to learn about the importance of engaging in opportunities outside of the classroom and how to find and obtain internships, jobs and/or volunteer experiences.

POST-GRADUATION WORKSHOPS (2009) — In their fourth year, students are required to participate in two workshops, one on job searches and the other on interviewing.

ADVISOR REQUIREMENT (2009) — Each semester students are required to meet with their academic advisor to ensure they are on track towards graduation. During their second year they are encouraged to obtain a four year plan. To promote engagement outside of the classroom, students are also required to participate in an experience outside of the classroom such as internships, jobs, leadership, clubs and volunteer experiences.

STAFF SUPPORT (2009) — Students also have access to full-time Arizona Assurance Staff who provide support with questions on financial aid, student success strategies, and referral to resources.

PEER TO PEER SUPPORT (2009) — In addition, in 2009 the Arizona Assurance Scholars Club and Cubs to Wildcats were created for and by AZA Scholars. The club was created to provide an opportunity for the scholars build a community that gives back.

Role of Technology

Technology plays the same role with the AZA program that it does with the larger campus community, and is utilized to achieve the same benefits: to connect students to the heart of University life and provide resources necessary for them to take advantage of scholastic and professional opportunities.

Program Costs

Given that AZA draws from existing campus programs, there has been a minimal cost to the institution in regards to subcomponent strategies. Staffing the AZA program has amounted to an annual cost of roughly $250,000, but by far the greatest expense to the institution has been financially supporting students:

AZA EXPENDITURES	
Salaries and Wages	$163,300
Employee-Related Expenses	$53,925
Operations	$34,241
Student Support (Financial Aid Disbursements)	$35,548,534
Total Expenditures	$35,800,000

Return on Investments

The AZA program's return on investment can only be measured in consideration to the number of students who have graduated from the University of Arizona who otherwise would not have, and what their impact and contributions to the world will be, having benefited from a college education. As evidenced by the tables below, substantive quantitative data indicates a definite trend: that the AZA program is helping large numbers of students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to persist and become college graduates.

Outcomes and Results

The primary objectives of the AZA Scholars Program are to retain and graduate qualifying students (Arizona residents with a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher, a family income of $42,400 or below, and Federal Pell Grant eligible). All cohorts of Arizona Assurance (2008–2009, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012) had higher rates of first semester retention than all freshmen in the same years and equal to or higher rates of first-semester retention than all Arizona residents. The 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 cohorts had 1 percentage point higher first-year retention compared to all freshmen. The 2011–2012 cohorts had 6 percentage points higher first-year retention compared to all freshmen. The first, third, and fourth cohorts (2008–2009, 2010–2011, 2011–2012) had a first-year retention rate of 79 percent , 78 percent, and 86 percent, respectively, compared to 74 percent among similar students in previous years who would have been eligible for the AZA Scholars Program.

PROFILE 10: MVP OPPORTUNITY AWARD EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

University of Louisville

Location:	Louisville, Kentucky
Established:	1798
Enrollment:	22,293
Undergrads:	15,893
President:	James R. Ramsey

FIGURE 26: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING STUDENTS BY ACADEMIC YEAR FROM 2001-2002 TO 2011-2012
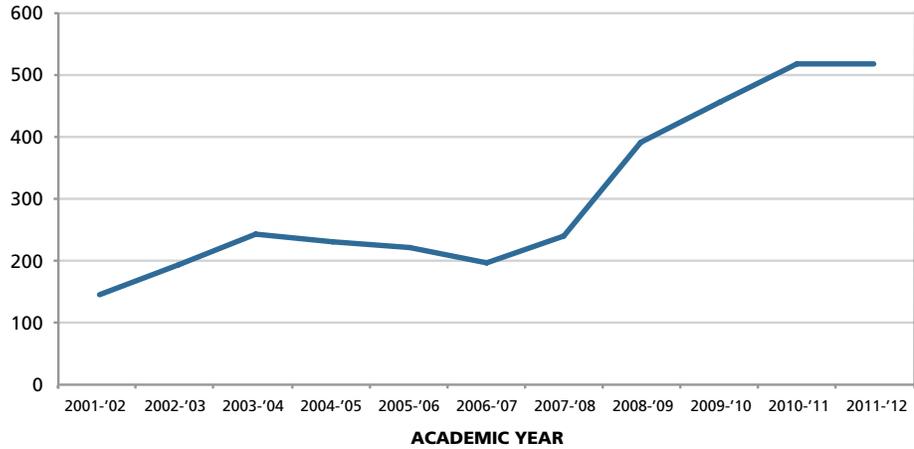
FIGURE 27: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE DEGREES CONFERRED TO ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING STUDENTS BY ACADEMIC YEAR FROM 2001-2002 TO 2011-2012
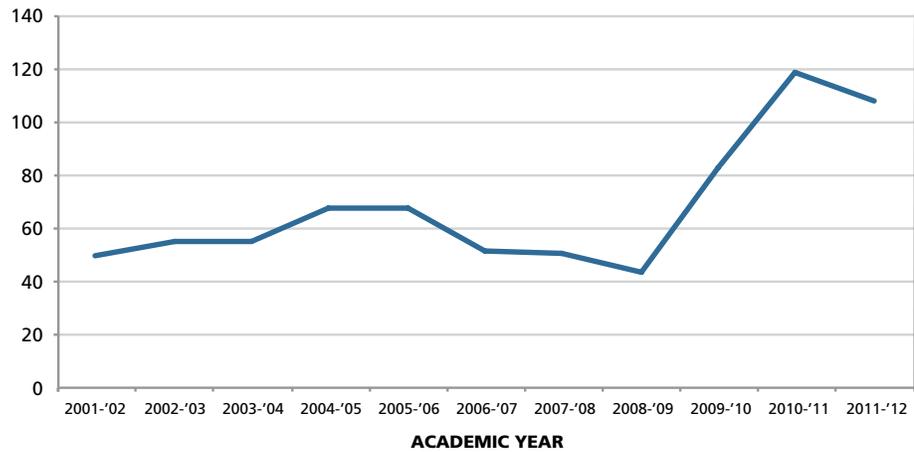
FIGURE 28: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING STUDENTS BY ACADEMIC YEAR FROM 2001-2002 TO 2011-2012 BY AGE
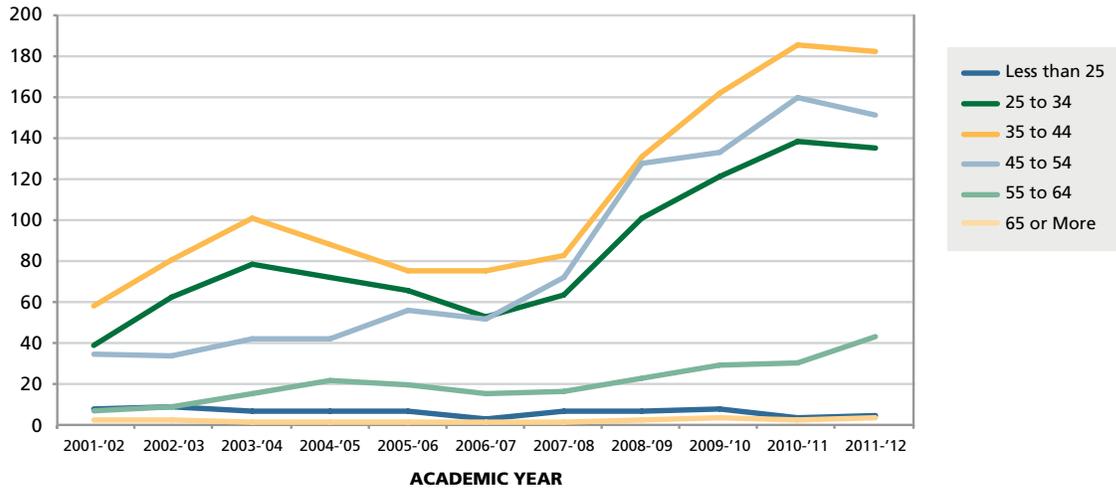

FIGURE 29: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE AVERAGE YEARS TO DEGREE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING STUDENTS BY YEAR GRADUATED
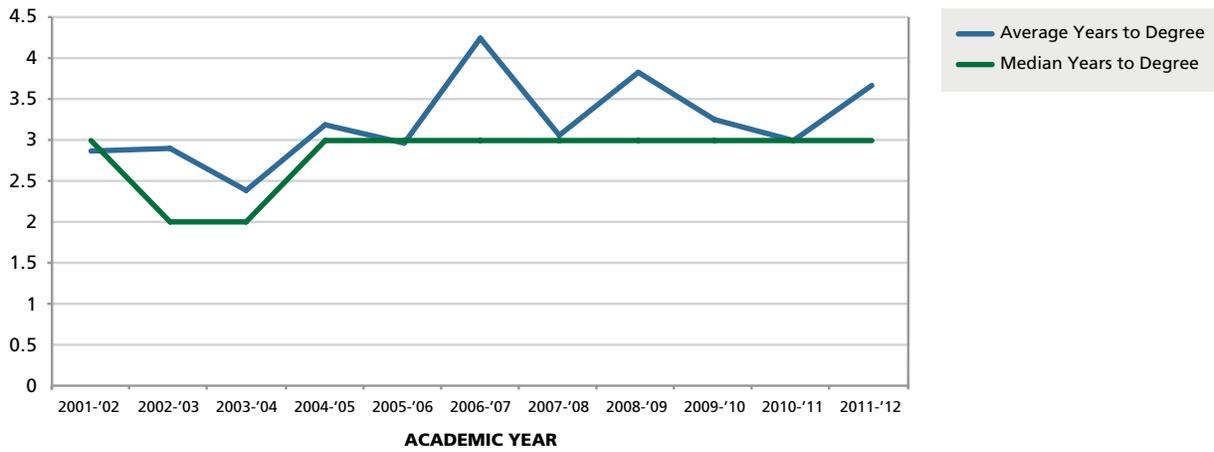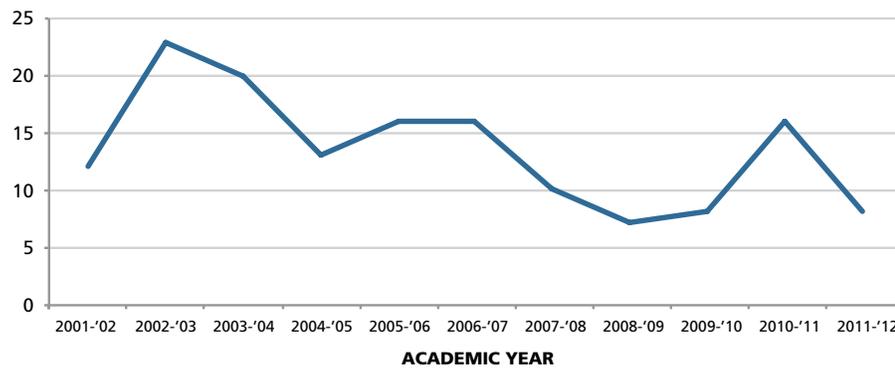
FIGURE 30: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE WORKFORCE LEADERSHIP STUDENTS COMPLETING AN ADDITIONAL DEGREE AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION BY YEAR

Target Population: Working Professionals

With a student population of over 22,000, the University of Louisville offers graduate, professional, baccalaureate, and associate degrees, as well as certificates, in over 170 fields of study through 12 schools and colleges. The Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership and Learning (OLL) is a unique degree designed for working professionals with previous college credit and five or more years of work experience in various career fields related to leadership, organizational development, training and development, human resources, and workforce development occupations. Louisville, Kentucky, has more than 96,000 working-age adults who have started college but have not finished (Ash & Landes, 2010). In the Greater Louisville region, the Competitive City Report (2010) highlighted measurements of performance and competitive standing that stressed the importance of raising the region's persistently low levels of education attainment as a "deep driver of change" to advance Louisville's standing among its peer cities.

Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership and Learning (OLL) Model Program

The major previously titled Workforce Leadership and Occupational Training and Development was adapted and refined to address the Council on Postsecondary Education's "Double the Numbers" goal by the year 2020. The program curriculum was redesigned and implemented in coordination with state and local graduation initiatives in order to address needs of the underserved population of adult students. The curriculum for the OLL Bachelor of Science, which is offered online and in the evening in Louisville and Fort Knox, focuses on content areas such as leadership, human resources, needs assessment, workplace diversity, and design and delivery of educational or training curriculum and strives to develop intrapersonal (self-concept) and interpersonal (relationship) dimensions of a student. The introduction of this innovative program

resulted in a surge of enrollment, tripling the number of adult learners enrolled from approximately 170 in fall 2007 to its current enrollment of over 500 students in spring 2013, and resulted in significant growth in retention and graduation rates.

The biggest step for any institution considering replication of our program would be to model our Prior Learning Assessment practice and adopt the andragogical framework that guides our approach to adult learning and development. Programs should innovate where possible but should not reinvent the wheel when effective and efficient practices exist

Goals, Strategy and Implementation

GOAL: This degree is designed for working professionals with previous college credit and five or more years of work experience in various career fields related to leadership, organizational development, training and development, human resources, and workforce development occupations.

STRATEGY: A unique feature of the program offers adult learners the ability to earn up to 48 college credits for military training, workplace experiential learning, certifications, licenses, and other experiential learning through a Prior Learning Assessment portfolio. These portfolio-based credits have been empirically proven to accelerate pace to degree and improve percentage of graduation of those adult learners that engage in and receive credits for prior learning (CAEL, 2011). The curriculum for the OLL Bachelor of Science degree, which is offered both online and in the evening in Louisville and Fort Knox, focuses on content areas such as leadership, human resources, needs assessment, workplace diversity, and design and delivery of educational or training curriculum and strives to develop intrapersonal (self- concept) and interpersonal (relationship) dimensions of a student.

IMPLEMENTATION: In order to provide maximum access to working adults in a variety of careers including the military, healthcare, manufacturing, services, non-profits, and home-based careers, the OLL program began offering online courses in 2002. The instructional design and development of a fully online program was a daunting task for a small faculty. Also, once the curriculum was in place, it was challenging to attract a sufficient number of students to fill these courses. Establishing a department that offers evening and online options was not in line with many other departments across campus. Therefore, we launched a concerted effort to educate our campus community about the sound pedagogical principles set forth in our discipline. This took many years and numerous conversations with administration, faculty, and staff. Thankfully, our efforts have paid off and we have the faith and support of the overall campus and are not viewed as a "diploma mill" degree. We have proud alumni and leaders throughout the community strategically placed in influential positions of leadership.

University of Louisville Initiative

The OLL program is standards based, with all courses designed to incorporate the American Society of Training and Development Standards. Students in all classes must demonstrate mastery of the standards and learning outcomes throughout the program by submitting a hallmark assessment project for each course to an electronic portfolio which is captured in the product LiveText. Hallmarks serve as baseline assessments for programs to capture student performance data and as professional portfolio-builders for the students. Each hallmark uses a rubric aligned with learner outcomes and standards and is used to provide student performance data directly related to program standards and outcomes.

The program has undergone an extensive internal curriculum review process in the past several years, and the curriculum was further enhanced and redesigned to incorporate critical thinking elements in alignment with the Quality Enhancement Plan for the university that is part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation process at the University of Louisville. The critical thinking initiative, spearheaded by Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning's Ideas to Action group, has been embraced by the OLL program as well as other units of the College of Education as a means of fostering student learning and thinking skills to form a more complete set of skills upon graduation.

OLL program faculty are well-versed in the principles of andragogy (adult learning) and pedagogy. In alignment with the curriculum, all OLL online courses incorporate adult learning principles and best practices in online learning into the design of each course. For example, the courses are structured in an easy-to-use manner with a consistent format and weekly schedule so that students have clear expectations about what to expect, where to find materials and assignments, and where and when to submit assignments. Our faculty offer optional synchronous learning sessions using web-conferencing technology as well as online chat in their courses. Many courses require group work in private study group discussion areas, to facilitate student development of increasingly important virtual team-building skills.

Role of Technology

The addition of the online component in 2002 has made the program even more accessible and available to working professionals in Louisville and beyond. The program has earned great respect in the community and beyond, where it is seen as a vital way to retain excellent employees and develop their skill sets while they can work and serve in the community. The program's access, cost-effectiveness, learning effectiveness, and faculty and student satisfaction in particular make the program a leader in this region.

The Blackboard Learning Management System has been implemented since 2000. The Delphi Center provides additional software to be used by distance courses, including Blackboard Collaborate (an integrated web-conferencing tool formerly known as Wimba), which is heavily used by the program for collaboration sessions and office hours; Tegrity course capture software; Learning Objects Campus Pack; a blog and wiki tool; and a variety of other ancillary software from which all courses can choose. The Delphi Center provides direct support and training for faculty and staff, which comes in the form of face-to-face, small group, asynchronous, and synchronous online instruction. Help is available to online students 24/7 through the university help desk and through self-help documentation and videos at the Delphi Center Blackboard site.

Program Costs

The University of Louisville has made a commitment to serving the adult learner population by designating the OLL program as its official degree completion program. Because of its commitment to this student population, the OLL program and university dedicated one single recruitment and community outreach program coordinator at a cost of $41,000 per year. Otherwise, all other additional faculty and staff added upon enrollment growth were funded by OLL student tuition revenue. The University of Louisville is able to take this entrepreneurial approach with minimal costs because of its ability to offer classes off campus. This avoided costly use of brick-and-mortar resources on campus and helped us utilize a larger percentage of tuition revenue to address programmatic and staffing needs.

Outcomes and Results

The introduction of this innovative program resulted in a surge of enrollment, tripling the number of adult learners enrolled from approximately 170 in fall 2007 to its current enrollment of over 500 students in spring 2013 and has resulted in significant growth in retention and graduation rates.

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

ABOUT APLU

The **ASSOCIATION OF PUBIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES** (APLU) is a research, policy, and advocacy organization representing 218 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and related organizations. Founded in 1887, APLU is the nation's oldest higher education association with member institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. territories. Annually, member campuses enroll more than 3.8 million undergraduates and 1.2 million graduate students, award over 1 million degrees, employ nearly 1 million faculty and staff, and conduct more than $37 billion in university-based research.

ABOUT OAS

APLU's **OFFICE FOR ACCESS AND SUCCESS (OAS)** is dedicated to equity, access, and educational excellence for all Americans with a special focus on underserved students and minority-serving institutions. OAS is primarily responsible for supporting the APLU Council of 1890 Universities; the Commission on Access, Diversity and Excellence (CADE); Hispanic-Serving Institutions; and the OAS Advisory Board.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JOHN MICHAEL LEE, JR. is vice president for the Office for Access and Success (OAS) and is responsible for advancing Public Black Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and supporting the APLU Council of 1890 Universities; Commission on Access, Diversity and Excellence; and the OAS Advisory Board. His research interests include student access, participation, and success in higher education; student recruitment, retention, and graduation; student development; minority serving institutions (HBCUs, HSIs, and Tribal Colleges); higher education diversity; and education policy.

He earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration from New York University, an MPA with a concentration in economic development from Georgia State University, and a bachelor of science in computer engineering from Florida A&M University.

SAMAAD WES KEYS is the program assistant for the OAS and is responsible for research, managing collaborative partnerships and initiatives to meet the key organizational objectives for advancing college access and success for all students, with particular attention paid to underrepresented groups at the precollege and college levels. His research interests are focused on postsecondary education policy, minority student access and success, and minority-serving institutions. He holds a deep interest in the for-profit sector of higher education and how these institutions are shaping the future direction of higher education.

He is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia's Institute of Higher Education. He earned a master's degree from Central Michigan University in educational curriculum and instruction and a bachelor of arts degree from Morehouse College in psychology.