

SGSC Student Achievement Goals and Outcomes

South Georgia State College (SGSC) identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered.

As an institution in the state college sector of the University System of Georgia (USG), **SGSC is primarily an associate's degree-granting access college** with three academic programs at that level (A. A., A. S., and A. S. in Nursing) comprised of 19 transfer pathways and the A. S. in Nursing career program. SGSC also offers 8 bachelor's degree programs that meet economic growth and employment needs of south-central Georgia.

SGSC uses multiple measures to evaluate and document student success. These measures are directly related to the institution's *Moving Forward: 2019-2024 Strategic Plan*, Goal 3: "SGSC will improve student success rates as measured by course completion, retention, graduation and transfer to other post-secondary institutions after preferably attaining a degree from SGSC." Student success in Nursing programs is also measured by licensure pass rates for NCLEX-RN, and teacher education student success is also measured by pass rates on the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE). In view of SGSC's role as a USG state access college, the institution's mission and strategic plan, and the institution's student demographics, **the following are the SGSC student achievement metrics:**

1. One-year retention rates for first-time full-time (FTFT) associate degree-seeking freshmen
2. Three-year graduation rates for FTFT associate degree-seeking freshmen
3. Number of associate's and bachelor's degrees conferred
4. Student persistence rates (enrolled fall and enrolled subsequent spring or graduated)
5. Transfer numbers and GPAs at receiving USG institutions
6. Pass rates for the National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN)
7. Pass rates for the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) instrument

All but the last two metrics, both of which are SGSC academic programs with professional discipline-accrediting and state governance, are integral parts of SGSC's "Complete College Georgia" annual report required and publicly published by the University System of Georgia to provide annual institutional updates based on data analysis related to student success strategies.

Five-year data for the seven student achievement metrics follows.

Metric 1: One-Year Retention Rate, FTFT Associate Degree-Seeking Students

Table 1 First-Time Full-Time Associate Degree-Seeking Freshmen One Year Retention Rates						Institution-Specific for All State Colleges (the average institution-specific retention rate for all 8 USG state colleges)	System-Wide for All State Colleges (retention rate within the System for all 8 USG state colleges)
Institutional Rate for SGSC				System-Wide Rate for SGSC			
Year	N Cohort	N Retained	% Retained	N Retained	% Retained	% Retained	% Retained
Fall 2015	910	409	44.95%	591	64.95%	58.00%	66.50%
Fall 2016	812	403	49.63%	572	70.44%	55.80%	65.60%
Fall 2017	849	345	40.60%	520	61.20%	51.50%	59.70%
Fall 2018	773	342	44.20%	468	60.50%	55.20%	64.10%
Fall 2019	664	307	46.25%	452	68.10%	56.60%	65.80%

Source: USG ADC Census; USG Retention Rate Reports. <https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers>

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 1

The data in the table above shows that the one-year institution-specific retention rate for SGSC's FTFT associate degree-seeking students has remained consistent at a five-year average of 45%, while the institution-specific average for all eight USG state colleges is 55%--this differential contributing to the rationale for an SGSC metric goal of a 55% one-year FTFT associate's degree-seeking student retention rate by fall 2022. The minimum threshold of acceptability is at the current SGSC rate of 45%, since it is expected that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may contribute negatively to overall retention rate.

The one-year rate of retention of former SGSC students within the University System of Georgia over the five-year period averages 65%, while for the same period the average for all eight USG state colleges is 64%. Given the A. A. and A. S. transfer mission of USG state colleges and the ease of transfer among USG institutions facilitated by a common core curriculum, it is clear that SGSC prepares students for continuation of their academic pursuits as well as do other USG state colleges.

Metric 2: Three-Year Graduation Rate, FTFT Associate Degree-Seeking Students

The three-year graduation rate data in the table below compares the five-year SGSC rates to the average rates for the same period for all eight USG state colleges. "Institution-specific" refers to students graduating from SGSC, "System-wide for SGSC" refers to former SGSC students who graduate from any USG institution, and "System-wide for all state colleges" refers to students who began at a USG institution, transferred to another USG institution, and graduated from the USG institution to which they transferred.

Table 2 First-Time Full-Time Associates Degree-Seeking Freshmen Three-Year Graduation Rates						Institution-Specific for All State Colleges	System-Wide for All State Colleges
Institution-Specific Rate for SGSC				System-Wide Rate for SGSC		(the average institution-specific rate for all 8 USG state colleges)	(rate within the System for all 8 USG state colleges)
Cohort	N Cohort	N Graduated	% Graduated	N Graduated	% Graduated	% Graduated	% Graduated
Fall 2013	878	105	11.96%	108	12.30%	13.4%	13.8%
Fall 2014	818	118	14.43%	123	15.04%	13.8%	14.2%
Fall 2015	910	120	13.19%	125	13.74%	15.2%	15.5%
Fall 2016	812	130	16.01%	132	16.26%	14.5%	14.8%
Fall 2017	768	147	19.14%	149	19.40%	15.6%	15.9%

Source: USG Graduation Rate Reports. <https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers>

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 2

The data in the table above shows that the three-year institution-specific graduation rate for SGSC's FTFT associate degree-seeking students has increased for every cohort year but one (fall 2015) and is at a five-year average of 15%, while the institution-specific average for all eight USG state colleges is 14.5%. The rationale for an SGSC metric goal of a 20% three-year FTFT associate's degree-seeking student graduation rate for the fall 2022 cohort is based on significant rate increases for the fall 2016 and 2017 cohorts. The minimum threshold of acceptability is at the current SGSC five-year average rate of 15%, even though the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may contribute negatively to overall graduation rate. **It is noteworthy that SGSC's institution-specific graduation rate for the two most recent cohorts significantly exceeds the average graduation rate for all USG state colleges.**

Not only does the SGSC three-year institution-specific graduation rate exceed the average for all USG state colleges, but the rate for the two most recent student cohorts of former SGSC students transferring to other USG state colleges (18%) far exceeds the average rate for all USG state college associate's degree-seeking students transferring within the System (15%).

Given the A. A. and A. S. transfer mission of USG state colleges and the ease of transfer among USG institutions facilitated by a common core curriculum, it is clear that SGSC prepares students for continuation and completion of their academic pursuits as well as do other USG state colleges.

Metric 3: Degrees Conferred by Degrees Offered

This metric demonstrates that enrollment decline does not necessarily result in fewer degrees conferred. Table 3 shows that the reverse is true at SGSC for the five-year period. During the five-year period, there has been a significant increase in the number and type of student success strategies created to foster student achievement. The two SGSC campuses both have academic success tutoring centers, STEM centers, writing centers, and 24/7 tutoring availability through tutor.com. In addition, there is a student success program for residential students on the Douglas Campus (there are no residence halls on the Waycross Campus).

Table 3 Enrollments and Degrees Conferred by Degree Offered					
	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Total Student Enrollment	2542	2540	2482	2346	2028
Associate Degree	236	265	261	302	312
Career Associate Degree	60	41	48	42	44
Bachelor's Degree	33	58	65	69	96
Total	329	364	374	413	468

Source: USG ADC Census; USG Degrees Conferred Reports. <https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers>

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 3

The table above shows that both transfer associate's and career bachelor's degree production have increased over the five-year period of data, in spite of enrollment decreases during the five-year period—most notably due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the most recent year. Apart from the effects of COVID-19, enrollment decreases are primarily due to the termination of a college non-degree entry program on the campus of another USG institution and the termination of some dual enrollment core curriculum offerings at area high schools. **The salient point here, however, is that degree production has increased significantly over the five-year period, in spite of enrollment decreases, and, as demonstrated with metric two, graduation rates have also increased.** It is important that the public understand that degree production and graduation rates are consistently rising at SGSC. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic creates some uncertainty regarding enrollment and graduation rates; consequently, the metric goal is 440 total graduates for FY 2022, with a minimum threshold of acceptability of 410—still above the number for FY 2020.

The career associate's degree data is from the only such SGSC degree program, the Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN). Since FY 2018, degree production in the ASN program has remained steady and reflects the stringent faculty-student ratio required in Nursing programs.

Metric 4: Persistence Rates (% enrolled fall term and subsequent term or graduated) for Tutored and Non-Tutored Students

Persistence rate is defined as the percentage of students enrolled in fall semester and subsequently enrolled the following spring semester or graduated. In the table below persistence rate is disaggregated for students participating in tutoring opportunities and students not participating in tutoring opportunities, since data demonstrates that tutoring increases student achievement and should be strongly encouraged. At SGSC tutoring is available to students on either the Douglas or Waycross campuses at academic success centers, STEM centers, writing centers, and online through tutor.com.

Table 4 below shows student persistence rate in two categories, students participating in tutoring and students not participating in tutoring, to underscore the importance of seeking help with difficult course content.

Table 4 SGSC Student Persistence Rates, Tutored Vs. Non-Tutored		
Academic Term/Year	Tutored	Non-Tutored
Fall 2015	83.92%	76.83%
Fall 2016	84.86%	74.42%
Fall 2017	86.33%	73.45%
Fall 2018	83.76%	77.68%
Fall 2019	79.75%	75.21%
Five-Year Average	83.72%	75.51%

Source: SGSC Banner; TutorTrac; Tutor.com

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 4

Table 4 demonstrates that, for each of the five fall semester cohorts reported on, students participating in tutoring persist at a much higher rate (83.72% five-year average) than students who do not take advantage of tutoring (75.51 five-year average). It is noteworthy, too, that even for students who do not seek tutoring three-fourths will persist from fall to spring terms, thus increasing their likelihood of completing an academic degree or successfully transferring to another institution. The persistence rate indicates that SGSC is preparing students and providing avenues for student achievement. SGSC's metric goal is that the persistence rate for all students will reach 80% for fall 2022. To reach this goal SGSC continues to engage all faculty, academic advisors, and student success entities to participate in the early alert process and to encourage students to seek tutoring through the variety of means available. The minimum acceptable threshold for persistence is 75% for fall 2021 non-tutored students and 80% for tutored students.

Metric 5: Transfer Admissibility and First-Term Grade Point Average at Receiving USG Institutions

Analysis and Evaluation of Transfers to USG Research, Comprehensive, and State Universities for Metric 5

Student transfer to USG senior institutions is an integral part of the mission of the state college sector institutions of the University System of Georgia. Transfer is also an important part of SGSC's current *Moving Forward: 2019-2024 Strategic Plan*, Goal 3. Table 5 data below shows that for all academic years the vast majority of SGSC students who transfer out are enrolling at research, comprehensive, and state universities, rather than at another state college. This indicates that students are either transferring upon graduation from SGSC or transferring prior to graduation from SGSC in order to pursue a bachelor's degree from a senior institution for which they believe themselves to be prepared. In either case, it is clear that students gaining admission to senior USG institutions and transferring from SGSC are considered to have been prepared at SGSC for admission to a USG institution with higher admissions requirements than those of SGSC. For each of the five years in the table below SGSC student transfers to senior USG institutions represent over 83% of total transfers, and for three of the years (2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2020-2021) the rates have been 86%, 87%, and 88%).

Table 5 Transfer from SGSC to Other USG Institutions by Sector and Year					
Transfers to, by Sector	Academic Year 2016-2017	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2018-2019	Academic Year 2019-2020	Academic Year 2020-2021
Research Universities	40	30	39	21	36
Comprehensive Universities	375	346	289	227	239
State Universities	113	97	71	72	84
State Colleges	86	70	68	64	47
Total USG System	614	543	467	384	406

Source: USG ADC Census; USG Degrees Conferred Reports. <https://www.usg.edu/research/usqbythenumbers>

Analysis and Evaluation of SGSC Transfer-Out First-Term GPA at Receiving Institutions for Metric 5

In terms of academic performance, Table 6 below shows that the significant data point is the comparison between grade point averages in the last term at SGSC and the first term at the institution transferred to. For all but the most recent academic year (2020-2021) SGSC students transferring to other USG institutions achieved a higher first-term grade point average at receiving institutions than they did in their last term at SGSC. Clearly, SGSC is preparing students well for continuation of their academic endeavors. For the overall USG state college sector, higher grade point averages have been achieved in the first term at receiving USG institutions for every academic year, and the state college sector average GPAs for the past three academic years have been higher than those of students transferring from SGSC. SGSC has very active tutoring, STEM, writing, and student success centers on both of its campuses, as well as an expanding early-alert system and residential student achievement program in place to provide students with tools needed for academic success. SGSC's goal is to raise the first-term GPA at receiving institutions to 2.8 by academic year 2022-2023. This goal has been achieved three times in the past five academic years; however, the sharp drop in GPA for the most recent academic year (2020-2021) is of concern. The five-year average SGSC transfer student first-term GPA at receiving institutions (2.68) is the minimal threshold of acceptability for 2022-2023. SGSC's minimum acceptable threshold for first-term transfers-out at receiving SGSC institutions is 2.68, since that is the SGSC average for the past five academic years.

Table 6 SGSC Transfer Student Average Last SGSC Term GPA and First-Term Average GPA at Receiving USG Institutions Versus USG State College Sector Transfer Student Last-Term Average GPA and First-Term GPA at Receiving USG Institutions				
Academic Year	SGSC Transfers out, Last-Term GPA	All USG State College Transfers out, Last-Term GPA	SGSC Transfers, First-Term GPA, Receiving Institutions	All USG State College Transfers, First-Term GPA, Receiving Institutions
2016-2017	2.58	2.67	2.80	2.74
2017-2018	2.12	2.74	2.95	2.86
2018-2019	2.48	2.72	2.53	2.80
2019-2020	2.32	2.71	2.79	2.89
2020-2021	2.84	2.77	2.34	2.77
5-Year Avg.	2.47	2.72	2.68	2.81

Source: USG ADC Census; USG Degrees Conferred Reports. <https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers>

Metric 6: Pass Rates on National Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN)

Achieving a passing score on NCLEX-RN is required for certification as an RN in the State of Georgia. The Georgia Board of Nursing expects that institutions providing Nursing programs in the State of Georgia will maintain a minimum annual NCLEX-RN pass rate of 80%. Table 7 below shows the average pass rate for SGSC Nursing students over the most recent four-year period.

Table 7 NCLEX-RN Pass Rates by Year: SGSC, Georgia, National			
Year	SGSC	Georgia	National
2017	98.31	87.31	87.11
2018	95.12	89.55	88.29
2019	97.87	90.85	88.18
2020	95.00	89.09	86.57
4-Year Avg.	96.58	89.20	87.54

Source: Georgia Board of Nursing

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 6

The NCLEX-RN pass rate data shows that for every year reported the SGSC average pass rate has exceeded both the Georgia and national rates. The SGSC four-year average of 96.58 is exceptional in comparison to the Georgia average of 89.20 and the national average of 87.54. SGSC aims to meet a pass rate goal of 95.00 each year.

Metric 7: Scores on Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE)

The table below shows end-of-program student achievement data for the first graduating cohort of SGSC's new B. S. in Elementary and Special Education program, which enrolled its first class of juniors for fall semester 2019. The data includes scores on the Georgia Public Service Commission's approved education content tests, the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE). Students must pass these tests to be certified to teach in the State of Georgia. The data also shows student grade point averages upon entry into the program and upon exiting the program.

Table 8 Scores on Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE), with Student Program Entry and Exit Grade Point Averages				
Student Name (Redacted)	GACE 003	GACE 004	Program Entry GPA	Program Exit GPA
Student 1	268.0	248.0	3.10	3.53
Student 2	280.0	245.0	3.70	3.82
Student 3	238.0	222.0	3.50	3.75
Student 4	278.0	271.0	4.00	3.98
Student 5	259.0	257.0	3.20	3.61
Student 6	261.0	232.0	3.80	3.88
Student 7	265.0	263.0	3.60	3.65
Student 8	251.0	251.0	3.30	3.62
Student 9	284.0	270.0	3.80	3.88
Student 10	272.0	229.0	3.80	3.89
Student 11	284.0	275.0	3.30	3.57
Student 12	263.0	256.0	3.90	3.94
Student 13	284.0	266.0	3.60	3.64
Student 14	271.0	226.0	3.00	3.37
Student 15	255.0	238.0	3.90	3.91
Student 16	290.0	263.0	3.90	3.96
Student 17	278.0	271.0	3.00	3.51
Average Student Score	269.5 > state average	251.9 >state average	3.55	3.74
Minimum to Pass	220	220		

Source: *Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC); SGSC Banner*

Analysis and Evaluation of Metric 7

It is noteworthy that every student in the cohort passed the GACE assessments and that all but one of the students increased his or her SGSC grade point average by the time of graduation from the program. **It is also noteworthy that the cohort's average GACE scores are well above the state minimum passing scores.** Finally, it is particularly noteworthy that **100% of the first cohort of program graduates are employed as certified teachers in the State of Georgia.** SGSC's goal is that 100% of each student graduated from the B. S. in Elementary and Special Education program will pass the GACE tests and be certified by the State of Georgia. The minimum threshold of acceptability is that 90% of graduates will pass the GACE within three years of graduation.