

**SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**CCG Plan**  
**22 August 2012**

**Institutional Context:** Savannah State University (SSU) is the oldest historically black public institution in the state of Georgia and the first institution of higher learning within the city of Savannah. As one of the three open access institutions in the University System of Georgia (USG), SSU educates students who may not have met regular admission requirements and would otherwise attend a community college. However, with no community college within a 50 mile radius of SSU, the University has been charged to serve a large number of entering students in need of remediation. Over the past decade, enrollment at SSU has doubled and grew by an impressive 11.6 percent this past academic year with an enrollment of 4,552 students for Fall 2011 semester (an all-time record high for SSU).

Under the Complete College Georgia (CCG) plan, SSU aims to increase the recruitment, retention and graduation of non-traditional students and military students. Recently a part-time military liaison was hired and this position will be increased to full-time by Fall 2012. Strategies will include increasing the number of evening and weekend courses, increasing distance learning, evaluating and revising existing policies, and applying for affiliate membership in the USG Adult Learning Consortium in Fall 2012. In order to attract and retain high achieving students, SSU will implement an honors program to begin Fall, 2012. A faculty committee has completed development of a curriculum that meets the needs of these talented students.

An experienced, visionary administrator has been hired as the vice president for academic affairs and his role will include the implementation of SSU's Complete College Plan and the restructuring of academic affairs to better respond to the academic strategic priorities. SSU new strategic planning process will be aligned with Complete College Georgia's goals and strategies.

**Demographics:** SSU's Fall 2011 student population of 4,500 includes a high percentage of underrepresented students: Black (93%), Pell-eligible students (74%), and Title IV funding recipients (90%). Our student body (55% female) includes a number of adult learners (15%), military (3%) and other Americans (4%). In Fall 2011, SSU hosted 167 international students (3.6% of the student body) and 449 students (10%) from out-of-state. Among in-state students, approximately 40% of SSU's student body comes from the Atlanta Metro area and 30% from the immediate Chatham County area. Last fall, 14% of SSU's undergraduates attended part-time (carrying fewer than 12 credits or 4 classes) while 57% carried fewer than 15 credits—either pattern which, if continued, necessarily extends time to degree beyond 4 and 5 years.

Meanwhile, as a designated "access institution", SSU is privileged to serve students whose prior academic preparation has left them with less than college-level skills in many areas. In recent years, the freshman cohort has arrived with a composite mean SAT score in the 800's. Thus, in Fall, 2011, 760 students (17% of the student body) were enrolled in pre-college learning support courses. Under the terms of the access program, these students complete their basic studies courses before moving on to take their college level coursework. Furthermore, according to SSU's freshman survey, about half the entering students typically report they expect to work part-time to pay for college while 15% report they expect to work full-time while attending college. Over a third report they are first generation students and 35% report coming from single-

parent homes. Significant numbers report having childcare duties at home—though the number of hours devoted to these duties vary considerably by student types and year of matriculation. Slightly more than half of SSU's student body resides in student housing while 60% participate in student clubs and organizations and 250 (6%) participate in SSU's NCAA Division 1 athletics program.

Given this student population, with financial, academic, family, and schedule challenges, fairly consistent over recent years, SSU has successfully retained 70-72% of its entering freshmen to the succeeding year—a retention rate comparable to all state Universities in USG (71.9% for the 2010 transfer rate). SSU has herself graduated recent cohorts of entering full-time freshman at a rate of 30-35% within six years of matriculation—a graduation rate that does not trail by much that of all USG state universities (most of which do not serve the access function).

The overarching vision of SSU's plan is to increase degree attainment by specifically addressing the challenges to our students and to the institution through focus on these five priority areas:

1. Enhanced partnerships with K-12 community to improve college readiness and strengthen the pipeline of students.
2. Increase access for underserved students specifically non-traditional and military.
3. Shorten the time to degree by revamping academic advising, early alert systems and implementing DegreeWorks.
4. Restructure instructional delivery specifically increasing distance learning.
5. Transform remediation to enable students to matriculate into academic credit courses faster.

## **PART I: GOALS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

**Goal:** The overall goal of SSU's Complete College Georgia (CCG) plan is to increase access, retention and efficient progress through the curricula which impacts the graduation rates. By 2020, SSU will increase its six-year graduation rate by 15% (34% to 49%) with an emphasis on increasing SSU's four-year graduation rate by 16% (10% to 26%). The most recent Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) results shows that SSU's first-time, full time freshman retention rate is below its peers, as is the six-year graduation rate. Given the high number academically unprepared students matriculating at SSU, a consequence is that students who enter through access will have difficulty completing their collegiate studies within a six-year timeline. In order to increase the odds of SSU student success, this plan targets strategies and interventions to attract more varied students, improve remediation where necessary, and assist students' progress through the curriculum more efficiently (2011 IPEDS Report).

**Data Analysis:** On average, over the past decade, approximately 71% of all entering freshmen returned a second year; 52% returned a third year; 44% returned a fourth year; 35% returned a fifth year; 14% returned a sixth year; 6% returned a seventh year; and 4% returned in the eighth year. Meanwhile, among these, 1.6% graduated in 3 years, 15% in 4 years, 10% in 5 years, 4% in 6 years, and 2.7% in 7 or 8 years. Generally, the accumulated 4-year rate is comparable to USG's state universities (16.5%). Approximately 33% of all SSU's entering freshmen graduate from the institution within 8 years. SSU's CCG Plan is designed to significantly increase this completion rate. (See Appendix B)

For the Fall 2007 cohort of the 218 incoming students entering into learning support (33.9% of new students), 71.1% successfully completed remediation, with 27% successfully completing the

first core course in their learning support area(s) over succeeding terms ending FY 2010. Students who were in both math and English were less successful (approximately 20%). Students who were only in MATH 0099 were more successful in MATH 1111 (52%), while students only in English 0099 were less successful in ENGL 1101 (28%).

For academic year 2011, graduates earning bachelors' degrees earned an average of 140 credit hours. This may be the result of changing majors, repeating courses, and taking unnecessary courses. In addition, over the last five years, students have successfully completed an average of 71% of their attempted course hours, decreasing the efficiency with which they progress through the curriculum. For 2010, the most recent year in which data has been tabulated, 65.9% of first-year students were in good academic standing (*i.e.* not on academic warning, probation or suspension), while 84.9% of sophomores, 89.6% of juniors, and 96% of seniors were in good academic standing. According to a 2010 student satisfaction survey, 83% of respondents had received help less than five times from tutorial and support services; 49% had never utilized these services.

**Goal Setting Process:** An SSU team was appointed by the SSU President to develop the CCG Plan. The team attended the CCG Summit in March 2012, where the details of the initiative were discussed and marshaled representative subcommittees to develop components of the plan (See Appendix C). Once the team returned, a campus wide meeting was held, where the initiative was presented to the campus community. The team reviewed the data and outlined strategies appropriate to accomplishing the CCG goals. In developing the CCG campus plan, multiple stakeholders across 12 academic and 13 administrative units were involved. These stakeholders included faculty, staff, students, and administrators who were apportioned among four teams. Each strategy was assigned to a specific team for development of the objectives with representation from alumni, administration, faculty, staff and the student body. These teams met and discussed the various components of the process, researched data and formulated the plan. Throughout the process, several campus wide meetings were held where the various components of the plan were discussed and modified based on input from the various groups. With respect to external stakeholders, President Dozier has engaged alumni, community organizations, and elected officials in continuing discussions concerning the plan through her numerous speaking engagements and visits to alumni chapters.

The details of our campus completion plan supports SSU's mission: "...to develop productive members of a global society through high quality instruction, scholarship, research, service and community involvement. The University fosters engaged learning and personal growth in a student-centered environment that celebrates the African American legacy while nurturing a diverse student body."

**Relevance to regional and local needs:** SSU is positioned to be a major partner in the City of Savannah revitalization efforts. The immediate region includes the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest container port on the east coast, two major military bases, along with numerous governmental, healthcare, and other business organizations. SSU continues to contribute to the various needs of the local and regional sectors of the economic workforce through such degree programs as Marine Science, Business, Political Science, Engineering Technology, Homeland Security, Criminal Justice, and Mass Communications. Through collaborations with the public and private sectors (*i.e.* Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA), local chamber of commerce, the city and county governments) SSU is preparing students to fulfill workforce needs within this region and state. In addition, the Board of Regents (BoR) recently approved teacher education programs in STEM

(Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) and the path breaking newly added program in Homeland Security help fulfill significant educational needs in the region and state

**Ongoing structure for analyzing and utilizing data:** SSU will continue to use data-driven strategies, metrics, and the performance measure results compiled during and at the end of each semester to inform our planning and decision-making. To this end, SSU has recently installed Degree Works to assist with student tracking, advising, and course scheduling; and Digital Measures to assist in faculty development and program assessment. Additionally, a revised process for informing campus constituents of program and process results is under development by IRPA that is expected to dramatically improve constituent knowledge and understanding of outcomes.

**Strengths and Resources:** As an access institution, SSU currently serves a high number of traditionally underrepresented students. Recent improvements to campus infrastructure (i.e. new student housing, student union and athletics fields) have increased student satisfaction. SSU has high quality, nationally accredited academic programs. And most importantly, SSU has one of the most diverse faculties in the state with 48% Black, 26% White, 21% Asian, and 6% other ethnicities embracing and engaging our students. The wide variety of faculty backgrounds provides a rich environment in which students learn from multiple cultures.

The institution has state-of-the-art technology and support, as well as a rich set of co-curricular opportunities for students. Specifically in the areas of remediation, the federal Department of Education's Title III Program recently funded the upgrading of six computer labs in two academic buildings; the renovation of space to create an athletic computer lab and study-hall tutorial center; and the creation of a training/study lab in the campus radio station heavily used by students in the mass communications degree program. Also through Title III funds, SSU was able to provide academic intervention programs such as tutorial services, advisement, testing, and a study hall for athletes. During the 2011– 2012 period, approximately 2,000 students received services in tutoring, advisement, and study hall. In the areas of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), Title III has provided funding to support pre-collegiate initiatives for surrounding K-12 schools in which SSU undergraduate students participate in outreach, a summer camp program, and on-campus workshops. SSU will continue its strong partnerships with the K-12 community to insure that a better prepared pipelines of college ready students.

SSU has had a long and continuous military history through its Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) and Army ROTC programs. The forty-year-old NROTC has produced over 230 Navy and Marine Corps officers. These relationships will strengthen our outreach to the military.

As we enhance our articulation agreements with Savannah Technical College, plans are to develop joint programs and a more seamless transition of students from Savannah Technical College to SSU and exploring the possibility of some SSU students' learning support needs being met at Savannah Technical College.

**Limitations:** Students have reported the need for improvement in areas of academic advising and the freshman year experience course in order to decrease time to degree completion. Many of our faculty would benefit from professional development to better enable them to teach and develop online courses. More focus needs to be placed on addressing the learning needs of non-

traditional part-time and full-time students matriculating at SSU. SSU will centralize its data sources so that data can better inform decisions during CCG plan implementation.

**Gaps and Measures:** A small percentage of SSU students are identified as military personnel and/or their families. SSU is in the process of creating a Veterans Affairs Office and support services to serve the needs of veterans and their families. In order to increase the percentage of military and adult learning students SSU plans to increase the number of evening, weekend and on-line course offerings.

To address the low percentage of enrolled Hispanic students, SSU is developing a marketing and recruitment plan that includes hiring bilingual staff and translating materials into Spanish. SSU is a partner with Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah Technical College and the Lumina Foundation to enhance the recruitment of and services to Hispanic students. Under this grant, SSU will be funded to hire a graduate assistant to assist in these efforts.

More information is needed regarding students who transfer out from SSU annually. Accordingly, an in-depth study is scheduled to begin during Fall 2012 to explore various dimensions of the transfer phenomenon, including:

- Do transferring students seek majors not available at SSU? If so, what are they?
- Do transferring students seek more or less rigorous programs than they find at SSU?
- Do transferring students seek more convenient class schedules than they find at SSU?
- Do financial or family pressures lead students to transfer?
- Are transferring students avoiding particular irritants at SSU? If so, what are they?
- Are transferring students attracted elsewhere by particular institutional attributes? If so, what are they?

## **PART II: STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The strategies and objectives identified below will achieve the goal to increase SSU's four-year graduation rate from 10% to 26% and the six-year graduation rate from 34% to 49% to significantly contribute to the initiative of CCG by the year 2020. Each strategy and objective has been specifically selected because of its relevance to SSU's access mission, the results of the data analysis and its consistency with core components of Complete College Georgia and Complete College America.

### **STRATEGY ONE: Enhanced partnerships with the K-12 community to improve College Readiness and strengthen the pipeline of students**

Objective 1.1: Increase the number of dual-enrollment students.

Objective 1.2: Increase academic support and partnership with Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS).

Objective 1.3: Expand STEM, Early College and other initiatives to increase K-12 participation.

**Metrics and Goal Alignment:** Savannah State University has a long-standing record of initiatives with the SCCPSS. Early College currently serves 80 students each year. Other initiatives aim to increase the awareness of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines as career options to elementary, middle, and high school students. Since its inception in 2009, STEM 360 (Title III funded program) has impacted over 1200 students and over 100 teachers through service delivery.

Also, one of the TRIO Programs, Assuring Commitment Continuity & Excellence in Student Success (ACCESS) programs, encompasses Upward Bound, Gear-UP, Educational Talent Search, and Student Support Services. These units within ACCESS at SSU have been partners with Savannah Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS) and local community for a generation. (See Appendix D)

SSU and SCCPSS representatives meet regularly to discuss potential and ongoing partnerships that enhance awareness and content delivery within the K-12 classroom. The one goal in collaboration between SSU and the SCCPSS is to increase the capability of teachers to deliver STEM content to students and increase the number of students that are aware of STEM disciplines as career options in secondary education.

**Target Student Population(s):** high school students and first generation students.

**Strategy Two: Increase access for underserved non-traditional, military, Hispanic and learning support students as an access institution.**

Objective 2.1: Increase recruitment, retention and graduation of adult learners and military students.

Objective 2.2: Increase recruitment, retention and graduation of Hispanic and other diverse students.

**Initiatives to Improve Access:**

To improve service to SSU's underserved, non-traditional students, the University will increase class offerings and support services (including registration and admissions processes) available at non-traditional times (i.e.: weekends and evenings) and non-traditional locations (e.g. military bases, job sites, churches, etc.). The university will seek other community venues and occasions to offer classes and serve non-traditional student in groups of varying sizes. The university will advertise and communicate these services widely to the external community, using Spanish language materials where useful.

**Support Strategies:**

SSU will pursue opportunities for foundation funding to support Hispanic initiatives (Goizueta, Lumina, etc.). In order to support these populations of students through degree completion, we will develop service strategies that meet their diverse needs. These needs include: expanded evening and weekend operating hours for campus offices and facilities; recruitment of multilingual personnel in key service areas; a special section of FYE dedicated to adult learners; intensive mentoring and individualized advising; and a program to help students obtain computers at low or no cost. SSU will also encourage the creation or reinvigoration of student

organizations attractive to these diverse populations. Current Title III funds are committed to hire additional academic advisor in the Center for Academic Success. We will seek to hire bilingual/bi-cultural staff to serve in this capacity. In addition, SSU will recruit in the Office of Admissions and Enrollment a recruiter also fluent in Spanish who will also develop bilingual recruiting and admissions materials. Further support will include the creation of a military services center and expand student organizations to include these interest groups. SSU is also in the process of developing a VA awareness day to support our military population in the community.

Moreover, SSU will expand its Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) capabilities, which will include opportunities for military and adult learners to earn college level credit for demonstrated proficiency in an area of study. These PLA capabilities will include issuance of college level credit based on the CLEP or DSST examinations.

**Metrics and Goal Alignment:**

SSU's current student population includes a relatively low number of adult learners (15%), military (3%) and Hispanic and other ethnicities and nationalities (4%).

**Target student population(s):** Military, adult learners, Hispanics and other ethnicities and nationalities.

**STRATEGY THREE: Shorten the time to degree by revamping academic advising, early alert systems and implementing DegreeWorks.**

Objective 3.1: Increase the average percentage of attempted credit hours successfully completed.

Objective 3.2: Increase the overall and year-to-year student retention and graduation rates.

Objective 3.3 Establish policies and processes for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA).

Objective 3.4 Establish new degrees that meet student needs to exit with meaningful and useful degrees.

**Strategies to Shorten Time to Degree:**

SSU has instituted a streamlined registration process by providing incoming students with pre-set schedules and centralized, professional advising for all first and second year students. This process will ensure that all departments provide students with complete “roadmaps” or scheduling pathways to timely degree completion. The implementation of a new student-tracking system, Degree Works, (being completed in July, 2012) will permit students and their advisors to easily track progress towards degrees, enable reviewing “what if” scenarios for considering alternative curricula and scheduling on the fly, and permit academic departments to develop demand-based course schedules to meet exact student scheduling needs. It is expected that students and their advisors will be able to develop more efficient routes to program completion by use of this technology—thus reducing the incidence of students engaging courses superfluous to their programs and shortening time to degree.

SSU will seek approval to develop an Associate degree in General Studies that allows students, who leave the university in good standing, to exit with a degree that enables them to pursue meaningful and valuable employment. It provides a path to complete the baccalaureate at a later time when life circumstances allow. The university will also seek approval for the Bachelor in General Studies as another avenue to degree completion. It will benefit adult learners as well as traditional students and community college transfers.

**Support Strategies:**

A structured mentoring program including defined mentor selection criteria has been implemented at SSU. Beginning Fall 2012, training will be provided for upper-division students, faculty and staff to serve as mentors to new students. Activities and events for mentors/mentees and evaluation and assessment of the program will be ongoing. A campus-wide swipe-card system to track student utilization of support services is in preliminary planning stages. Savannah State University will seek membership in the University System of Georgia's Adult Learning Consortium (ALC) to enhance knowledge and facilitate the expansion of PLA capabilities. Military and adult learners will be able to obtain college degrees in a shorter period of time if they can receive credit for demonstrated proficiencies associated with college level courses. Savannah State University will put in place an early alert system for students that are showing signs of academic struggle. Coupled with intensive professional advisement, the early alert system will lessen number of students underperforming academically, who eventually do not persist and graduate or who take a longer time than normal to complete their degree.

**Metrics and Goal Alignment:**

Graduates earning bachelors' degrees earned an average of 140 credit hours. This may be the result of changing majors, repeating courses, and taking unnecessary courses. In addition, over the last five years, students have successfully completed an average of 71% of their attempted course hours. For recent cohorts of incoming freshman, the retention rate is approximately 70 – 75%.

**Target student population(s):** All students.

**STRATEGY FOUR: Restructuring Instructional Delivery**

- Objective 4.1: Increase the number of online courses.
- Objective 4.2: Increase the number of faculty trained to deliver online courses.
- Objective 4.3: Increase the number of night, weekend classes, and alternative scheduling models
- Objective 4.4: Enhance the campus climate to support and promote online instruction.

**Strategies to Restructure Instruction:**

The Online Education Taskforce recently developed guidelines for online learning at SSU with plans implementation within the next academic year. There are plans to develop at least one fully online degree program within three years. The university is also developing alternative delivery methods for mini-semester classes and exploring the creation of weekend intensive courses.

Courses that are a barrier to student progress will be identified and examined for restructuring. Specific faculty in these disciplines will be identified to participate in the [National Center for Academic Transformation](#) initiative to redesign curricula and learning environments. Student

success in these courses will also be supported by expanded tutorial services and new supplemental instruction. This will include embedding tutors within specific sections of a “high-risk” course, allowing each tutor to sit in class with the students and then provide dedicated, course-specific tutoring outside of class in direct consultation with the instructor.

**Support Strategies:**

SSU is in the process of becoming an eCore member institution. eCore is the University System of Georgia’s electronic core-curriculum, supported cooperatively by faculty from all USG institutions and managed centrally. In addition to providing faculty development opportunities at SSU to increase the number of faculty trained in online pedagogy, the university will also hire one or more instructional designers to aid faculty in online course development. These strategies aim not only to create a corps of faculty fully trained to develop and deliver online courses, but also to support a campus culture that is supportive of online teaching and learning.

**Target student population(s): All students.**

**STRATEGY FIVE: Transform remediation to enable students to matriculate into academic credit courses faster.**

Objective 5.1: Decrease the number of students who enter into ENGL 0099, READ 0099, and MATH 0099.

Objective 5.2: Increase the number of students who have successfully completed the core course in their LS area(s) by the end of their first year at SSU.

Objective 5.3: Increase retention and graduation rates for LS students.

**Strategies to Transform Remediation:**

The top 25% or “upper tier” of learning support students who did not earn the required minimum score to pass the COMPASS exam will be placed in the first core class with the co-requisite skills workshop/class and will receive enhanced tutorial support in order to promote success in college-level coursework, decrease time to degree, and ensure that they develop the foundational skills necessary to succeed in subsequent courses.

A faculty committee also will be established to determine whether current remedial course meet student need and to develop diagnostics and new courses for reading and mathematics, where necessary. Results of the diagnostics will be used for placement of students with SAT/ACT scores below threshold into appropriately designed courses.

Restructured learning support offerings will decrease time in learning support for “middle-tier” learning support students and increase their readiness for the first core course. In addition, academic units will cooperate to ease scheduling the 8-week learning support sections and corresponding core classes each semester so that students can complete both learning support and the first core class in the same term. The institution is pursuing a partnership with Savannah Technical College for delivery of remediation to “lower-tier” learning support students.

**Support Strategies:**

SSU will develop and implement selection and training practices for student peer tutors and faculty in the learning support area. Implementing a proposal to allow non-science majors to take

MATH 1001 - Mathematical Modeling instead of MATH 1111 - College Algebra as an Area A core option will facilitate the transition from learning support to core curriculum courses.

The university recognizes that requiring students with insufficient preparation to take the COMPASS, to repeat the exam unsuccessfully is a major barrier to progression and that alternative approaches are much needed. The university will participate in the recently-convened USG working groups to explore placement options other than the COMPASS.

### **PART III: PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **STRATEGY ONE: Enhance Partnerships with K-12**

##### **Objective 1.1: Increase the number of dual-enrollment students.**

Currently there are 70-80 students in the Early College Program. The University's goal is to increase the enrollment of Early College students by 50 percent over a five-year period.

##### **Objective 1.2: Increase academic support and partnership with Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools System (SCCPSS).**

The current partnership with the SCCPSS includes TRIO programs such as Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, and Student Support Services and SSU hosting Early College on its campus. Under the direction of the new Vice President for Academic Affairs, SSU plans to expand the partnership with SCCPSS and other service area K-12 School Systems.

##### **Objective 1.3: Expand STEM initiatives to increase K-12 participation.**

Currently, through the STEM's initiative, SSU has served over 1,200 K-12 students and 200 teachers. Under the leadership of the new dean for the College of Sciences and Technology, SSU plans to increase the number of STEM and STEM 360 students by 15 percent over a five-year period.

Timeline: Five years

Benchmarks: (1.1) Current average is 80 dual enrollment students; (1.2) Programs currently serve 1635 students; (1.3) On average STEM now serves 400 students/year and approximately 65 teachers/year

Outcomes: (1.1) Increase the number of dual enrollment students by at least 14 students per year for a total of >150 dual enrollment students; (1.2) Expand the partnership with SCCPSS and other service area K-12 School Systems; (1.3) Increase the number of STEM students and teachers by 15 percent over a five-year period.

#### **STRATEGY TWO: Increase Access and Completion for Students Traditionally Underserved**

##### **Objective 2.1: Increase recruitment, retention and graduation of adult learners and military students.**

SSU will expand current recruitment plan to target adult learners and military students. Military liaison has been hired and a veterans' service center will be established.

##### **Objective 2.2: Increase recruitment, retention and graduation of Hispanic and other American students.**

The Office of Admissions and Recruitment is in the process of developing a recruitment plan targeting Hispanic students and other ethnicities and nationalities.

To successfully achieve the objectives above, the office of University Advancement will work collaboratively with the Offices of Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management to develop effective marketing materials and enhancing Public Relations. The office of Enrollment Management will develop recruitment plans to directly connect with each of these targeted groups. SSU will hire in the Office of Admissions and Recruitment a recruiter also fluent in Spanish.

Timeline: Five years

Benchmarks: Current population is 15% adult learners, 3% military, >1% Hispanic, 45% male

Outcomes: Increase to 25% adult learners, 10% military, 5% Hispanic, 50% male

### **STRATEGY THREE: Shortening Time to Degree**

#### **Objective 3.1: Increase the average percentage of attempted credit hours successfully completed.**

SSU is implementing an enhanced advising system to ensure that students remain on track for their curriculum plans and receive necessary and timely academic support.

#### **Objective 3.2: Increase the overall and year-to-year student retention rate.**

SSU is establishing an early alert system for at-risk first year students with intensive weekly advising. It is currently in the developmental stage. Centralized advisement and mentoring will be established in Fall 2012.

Timeline: Five years

Benchmarks: Current four-year graduation rate is 15%; five-year graduation rate is 25%; six-year graduation rate is 30%

Outcomes: Increase four-year graduation rate to 30%; five-year graduation rate to 50%; and six-year graduation rate to 65%

### **STRATEGY FOUR: Restructure instructional delivery specifically increasing distance learning.**

#### **Objective 4.1: Increase the number of online courses.**

SSU plans to join the e-Core system and establish online degree programs, including one currently in the approval stage for the bachelor's degree in business.

SSU plans to identify courses in need of restructuring and will engage faculty in innovating course design and delivery that meets the needs of its students.

#### **Objective 4.2: Increase the number of faculty trained to deliver online courses.**

The Task Force for Online Education has proposed guidelines for certifying faculty for online teaching and approaches for encouraging more faculty to pursue appropriate training and to develop online courses.

#### **Objective 4.3: Increase the number of night, weekend classes, and alternative scheduling and modes (online) of delivery.**

To assist adult learners, SSU will explore the option to provide weekend classes and alternative scheduling models.

Timeline: Five years

Benchmarks: Currently SSU offers no fully online degree programs; an average of 50 course sections online per term; and approximately \$400 per year per full-time faculty for professional development

Outcomes: Develop at least three fully online degree programs; offer 20% of courses per semester partially or fully online; provide at least \$2,000 per year per full-time faculty for professional development

### **STRATEGY FIVE: Transforming Remediation**

#### **Objective 5.1: Decrease the number of students who enter into ENGL 0099, READ 0099, and MATH 0099.**

SSU has decreased the number of “university college” admits (students lacking qualifications for normal college-level work) by 90% and will work with Savannah Technical College to serve the needs of Learning Support (LS) students.

#### **Objective 5.2: Increase the number of students who have successfully completed the core courses in their LS area(s) by the end of their first year at SSU.**

SSU will establish a program to allow LS students in the top 25% to enroll in core courses along with the LS courses and provide additional support.

#### **Objective 5.3: Increase retention and graduation rates for LS students.**

SSU is establishing a system of professional advisors, peer tutors, and faculty to support LS students.

Timeline: Five years

Benchmarks: Fall 2007 data shows 33.9% of new students entering learning support; 27% of learning support students who successfully complete the first core course in their learning support area by the end of their first year

Outcomes: Reduce the number of students who enter into learning support by 50%; increase the number of students who successfully complete the first core course in their learning support area by the end of their first year by 50%.

### **PART IV: ONGOING FEEDBACK/EVALUATION**

#### **I. A Description of SSU’s data/feedback/evaluation system**

**Appendix F** (SSU CCG Research Tracking) provides a model guiding the overall development of the institution’s new data feedback/evaluation system for communicating the effectiveness of the CCG plan to stakeholders. The system now under development will serve the institution in lieu of a full-fledged data mart to enable stakeholders to both receive and have open on-going access to timely reports related to all aspects of the CCG implementation and outcome.

This system will focus on each student “identity” category (e.g.: veteran, adult, sex, ethnic) and track each cohort’s matriculation, retention, and progression through the collegiate experience to one of the four possible outcomes Graduation, Transfer, Continuing, or Dropout—dropout from higher education being the assumed final

outcome for students who cannot be identified belonging to one of the other categories within eight years of matriculation (unless still continuing at SSU).

The system will track students' involvement in SSU experiences and/or interventions, as measured by individual performance indicators (noted in the model), ranging from basic skills & core curriculum through various academic programs, co-curricular activities, and support services. At maturation, the system will develop correlations between experiences and interventions with the outcomes, controlling for other factors, while providing a complete tracking model for student success at SSU. As the CCG program and new Advising Center mature, various other student attributes will also be included as further control variables in the model's design—as illustrated in the guiding model. The model will be operationalized using Multivariate non-linear regression (MNLr) —the most appropriate statistical tool for analyzing categorical outcomes of this type. The process will result in the ability to calculate probabilities of each outcome for different 'types' of students undergoing different sets of "experiences." Using the model, the institution will be able to identify those specific experiences contributing to student success for particular types of students.

## II. Plans for sharing Information about Access, Retention, and Completion at SSU

SSU practices total transparency with campus plans, operations, and effectiveness assessment. Accordingly, information arising from research, planning, assessment, and accreditation has long been posted to the web with access open to interested stakeholders, internal and external, without password protection. <http://irp.savannahstate.edu/>

The new tracking system will improve upon this past process by delivering just-in-time automated periodic reports distributed automatically (via e-mail attachments managed through Crystal Reports) to key constituencies (Chairs, Deans, Directors, Vice Presidents, & others) and archived in a central file server indexed and accessible through the IRPA web site. Reports will reflect both effectiveness and efficiency measures for discrete campus operations influencing students' successful completion. (It is anticipated, however, that to protect individuals' privacy, findings where  $n < 10$  will be uniformly redacted.).

**Appendix A: SSU Enrollment by Ethnicity and Sex: Fall, 2011 Undergraduates**

	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Native American	5	3	8
Asian	12	8	20
Black	2203	1811	4014
Hispanic	6	4	10
White	91	127	218
Multiracial	6	2	8
Unknown	65	52	117
Total	2388	2007	4395

**Appendix B: Most Current Graduation Rates: USG**

	F, 2007 4 years	F, 2006 5 years	F,2005 6 years
SSU			
Institution	8.35	23.24	30.15
System	9.98	26.54	36.60
<b>State University Average</b>			
Institution	16.25	31.56	37.44
System	18.65	38.58	46.31
<b>Regional University Average</b>			
Institution	21.70	39.95	45.32
System	24.25	47.79	57.36
<b>Research University Average</b>			
Institution	43.15	68.47	72.65
System	44.54	71.35	76.82

<b>SSU Growth Targets:</b>			<b>(Focus on 6 year average)</b>
<b>Acad YR</b>	<b>Logic</b>	<b>Targets</b>	
Yr 1	reach 50% state univ avg	34%	
Yr 2	reach state univ avg	37%	
yr 3	mid-way state to regional univ.	40%	
yr 4	reach regional univ avg	45%	
yr 5	pass GA average rate (47.5%)	50%	
Yr 6	pass national average (55.5)	56%	

**Why focus on 6 year average:**

SSU students, given access mission, require remediation (delaying graduation beyond timing for non-remediation students)

SSU students, given income/wealth levels, require work part time or stop/out terms unrealistic to expect extensive 4 & 5 year completions

Appendix C

SSU's CCG Plan - Subcommittees				
	Improving Access & Completion	Shortening Time to Degree	Restructuring Instructional Delivery	Transforming Remediation
<b>Team Leader:</b>	<b>TIMOTHY CRANFORD</b>	<b>MO SARHAN</b>	<b>JONATHAN LAMBRIGHT</b>	<b>APRIL GENTRY</b>
Office of the VPAA	Jonathan Lambright	Amelia Jenkins Alice White		
College Dean			Michael Schroeder Derrek Dunn Reginald Leseane Elazer Barnette	
Faculty	Ken Jordan Cecil Jones	Bill Dowling Sametria McFall-Dickerson Adrienne Anderson	Lillian Reddick Emily Bentley	Dorothy Gardner-Martin Bernard Bongang Mohamed Mustafa Rose Metts Johnnie Myers
Support Specialists	Katrina Ransome (Athletics) Tara Aikens (Testing) Teri Clay (Adult Learners) Hope Cranford (P-16) Emmanuel Naniuzeyi (Int'l)	Mary Ann Goldwire (Advising) Nat Hardy (Honors)	Rosalyn Tharpe (FYE) Estee Snowden (Tutoring) Mary Jo Fayoyin (Distance Learning) Arora Anshu (Online) Michael Lewis (Online) Ijaz Awan (Online)	Lawrence Simmons (Learning Support) Vivien Harris-Murphy (Learning Support - English) Phat Hong (Learning Support - Math) Gary Guillory (Student Support Services) Amelia Castilian-Moore (Disability)
ADMISSIONS	Brian Dawsey Shameka Cisco (Recruiter)			
Registrar	Mac Baldwin (Military)	Janice Bing (Degree Audit)		
SSU Student	Military Student: Benjamin Green	SGA: ?	Student Tutor: ?? Nontraditional Student: Jasmine Miller	Learning Support Student: ??
INSTITUTIONAL	Advancement	Louise Haaker		
Business & Financial Affairs	Ed Jolley Adrienne Brown Syreeta Monroe	Terri Phillips (Fibnancial Aid) Janice Johnson (Bursar) JeanAnn Caywood (Swipe cards)	Shammah Blaloch	
Total Committee Members:	17	13	15	11
	<b>Report Part</b>	<b>Point Person</b>	<b>Additional Support</b>	
	<b>I. Goals &amp; Data Analysis</b>	Mike Crow	Lauren McClain	
	<b>II. Strategies &amp; Objectives</b>	Irvin Clark	Lisa Yount	
	<b>III. Planning &amp; Implementation</b>	Mo Sarhan	Maliece Whately	
	<b>III. Ongoing Feedback &amp; Evaluation</b>	Reginald Leseane	Jerry Wright	

## **Appendix D**

### **Upward Bound Program (High School Program)**

**\$3.025 Million (2012-2018)**

Upward Bound provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families; and high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

#### **Funding Source:**

U.S. Department of Education

**Target Population:** Students must be first generation and/or low income and enrolled in a college preparatory curriculum in high school. Students must also show evidence of an academic need. The goal is to provide services to increase high school retention keeping students “on-track” toward graduation from secondary school. The program also assists in ensuring enrollment and degree attainment from postsecondary institutions.

**Eligibility Criteria:** Students ages 13-19 who attend targeted public Savannah-Chatham County School in a combination of two thirds low income and first generation while the other one-third may be first generation or low income.

#### **Funded to Serve:**

135 Participants

#### **Services Provided:**

Supplemental instruction/tutorial, financial aid assistance, financial literacy education, test taking/study skills, work/study experiences, academic/personal counseling, cultural/college visits, Saturday sessions, residential summer program, Parental Involvement

## **Educational Talent Search (Middle and High School Program)**

### **\$2.2 Million (2011-2016)**

The Talent Search program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assist participant with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.

#### **Funding Source:**

U.S. Department of Education

#### **Target Population**

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. Students must be enrolled in target area middle and high schools in Savannah-Chatham County.

#### **Eligibility Criteria:**

Two-thirds of the participants served during the project must be low-income and first generation students.

#### **Funded to Serve:**

900 Project Participants

#### **Services Provided:**

Academic, financial, career counseling including advice on entry or re-entry to secondary or postsecondary programs; Career exploration; Information on postsecondary education; Exposure to college campuses; Assistance in completing college admissions and financial aid applications; Assistance in preparing for college entrance exams; Mentoring programs; Special activities for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders; Workshops for the families of participants; Cultural Enrichment

**Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) (Middle and High School Program)**

**\$2.8 Million (2012-2018)**

GEAR UP is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

**Funding Source:**

U.S. Department of Education

**Target Population:**

Fifth and sixth grade students at DeRenne Middle School

**Eligibility Criteria:**

Students must be in the grade levels served in DeRenne Middle School

**Funded to Serve:**

400 Participants

**Services Provided:**

Study Skills, Tutoring, Saturday Sessions, Summer Programs, Academic Advisement, Personal/Social Counseling, Mentoring/Job Shadowing, Educational/Cultural Fieldtrips, College Campus Visits, Parental Involvement Activities, College Application Assistance, and Financial Aid Workshops, Financial Literacy Education

**Student Support Services (Undergraduate College Program)**

**\$1.5 Million (2010-2015)**

Student Support Services provides opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Student Support Services (SSS) projects also may provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants (# 84.063). The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

**Funding Source:**

U.S. Department of Education

**Target Population:**

SSU students who identify with at least 1 of 3 risk factors: (a) low-income, (b) first-generation college student, or (c) student with disability.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

At least two-thirds (66%) of the participants served during the project should be low-income and first-generation, students with disabilities, or students with disabilities who are low-income.

**Disability Criteria:**

At-least one-third (33%) of students with disabilities served by the program should be low-income.

**Funded to Serve:**

175 Project Participants

**Services Provided:**

Academic Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Early Alert Academic Intervention, Course Selection Advising, Grant Aid Issuance, Financial Literacy Education, Graduate/Professional School Exploration and Application Assistance, Financial Aid Education and Application Assistance, Cultural Enrichment, etc.

## Appendix E

Fact Book > Series 0400 Admissions and New Students > [Display 0463](#)

### Freshmen Report College Selection Process

From the **CIRP Freshman Study\***

Percent of Freshman class rating college selection process items this year.

Activity Noted	1995		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
	SSU	USA																				

#### SSU was what choice for freshmen?

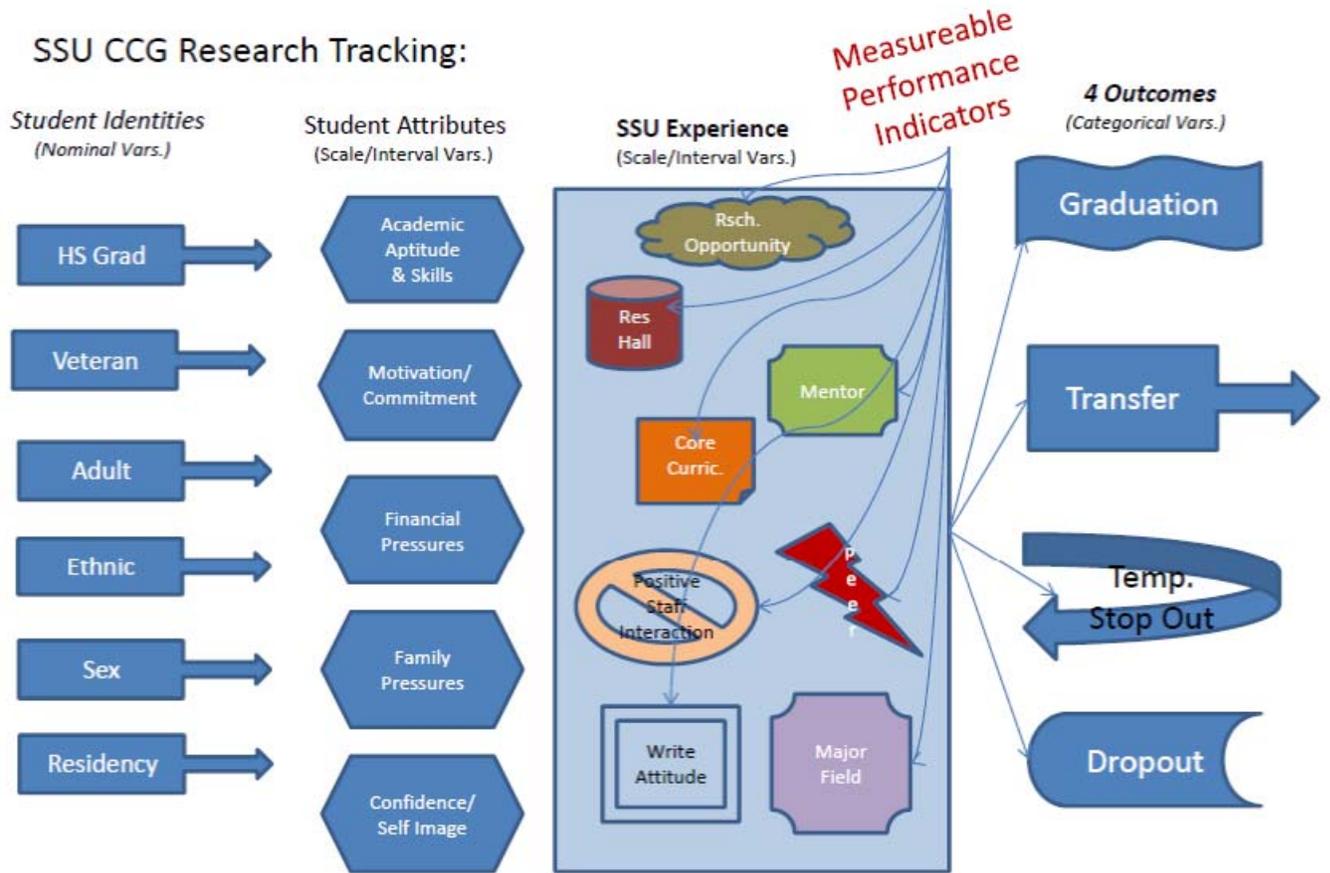
First choice	40	.	28	72	34	71	33	60	29	61	22	60	31	61	22	61	29	61	22	57	33	58
Second choice	33	.	37	19	34	20	32	26	37	27	35	27	40	28	40	27	36	26	40	28	29	29
Third choice	18	.	20	5	13	5	21	8	19	8	25	8	16	7	26	7	23	8	25	9	23	9
< than 3rd choice	9	.	15	4	18	4	14	5	15	4	18	5	13	4	12	4	13	5	12	6	14	4

\* Each fall term, SSU participates in a national study of college freshmen conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, known as the "CIRP Freshman Survey". The survey instrument, inquiring about over 300 issues, is administered by faculty in SSU's Freshman orientation course during the first two weeks of class. Completed survey instruments are returned to UCLA for processing and findings are returned to SSU's Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment, which, in turn, reports the findings to University stakeholders for planning purposes. Accordingly, all findings are based on students' self-reported data.

In a typical year, nearly 500 institutions and a quarter million students contribute to the study nationally. At SSU, approximately 300 new freshmen (on average) participate annually; typically, this has been about half the freshman class. Results are not always exactly comparable across institutions and years because different institutions survey their students differently in different years and the sample responding is not technically a scientifically random one. But the study has been on-going for over 30 years and the number of participants is sufficiently large that results are generally considered highly reflective of the whole freshman class, nationally.

**Appendix F**

**SSU CCG Research Tracking:**



**Model: Identity Category + Attribute Scale + SSU Experiences Scales = Likely Outcome Category**