Project Request: Provide trend data on Georgia Southern University First-time Freshman Six Year Graduation Rates. Include data by each Academic College and Major.

Requested by: Mrs. Laura Mills, Director of Strategic Research and Analysis

Project Abstract: Data were requested on the six year graduation rates of the Fall 2006 – Fall 2011 First-time Freshman Cohorts by Academic Colleges and Majors at Georgia Southern University. These rates offer insight on graduation trends based on academic major at last enrollment at Georgia Southern. This report is updated each fall semester with the latest cohort.

Methodology: The first-time freshman cohorts and their six year graduation rates are reported in the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) Graduation Rate Surveys (GRS-1). The data tables created for IPEDS reporting were used for consistency with overall graduation rates and to avoid duplication of effort for regenerating those numbers. The University System of Georgia census enrollment and degrees awarded files were the original source for identifying the cohorts, their graduation rates, and other data elements. College and major, as noted in these analyses, are as of graduation or last enrollment for those who did not graduate within six years with an undergraduate degree from Georgia Southern University. The college and major of the undergraduate degree reported here are based on the degree with the lowest sequence number (in Banner) where a student receives dual degrees (1st Major as input into Banner).

The cohorts reflected in this report are the IPEDS First-time, Full-time Degree-seeking Freshmen defined as undergraduates who enter college for the first time in Fall Term or who have graduated from high school within the same calendar year of that Fall Term. The cohort also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school). These are the same cohorts as reported in the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey.

Note. Data in this report reflects the following eligible exclusions (deceased or military withdrawal) as defined by IPEDS: Fall 2006 (1), Fall 2007 (1), Fall 2008 (3), Fall 2009 (2), and Fall 2011 (2). As of Fall 2012, the College of Information Technology is now the College of Engineering and Information Technology and the College of Science & Technology is now the College of Science and Mathematics. The data in this report reflects that change. The College of Public Health began offering undergraduate level degrees in Fall 2013 (FY1314).

Project Timeframe: November 2017

Project Costs: staff time
Executive Summary

Georgia Southern University tracks graduation of freshmen by using the National Center for Education Statistics-Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) and University System of Georgia definitions. These definitions are the same and define the cohorts as those students who are:

- First-time,
- Full-time,
- Degree-seeking, and
- Major upon graduation or at last enrollment

Additionally, these students are undergraduates who enter college for the first time in the noted Fall Term or who have graduated from high school within the same calendar year of that Fall Term. The cohort also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credit earned before graduation from high school). These are the same cohorts as reported in the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey.

The major for the student upon graduation for a baccalaureate degree or their last enrollment at Georgia Southern is the major defined in this report. In following that concept, the graduation rates reflect the students’ last college and major declared for the baccalaureate degree or enrollment if they did not graduate after six years. Georgia Southern overall six-year graduation rates for the Fall 2006 through Fall 2011 cohorts ranged from 50% to 51%. The College of Public Health is included although they only started offering an undergraduate level program in Fall 2013. Also, as of Fall 2012 the College of Information Technology is now the College of Engineering and Information Technology and the College of Science & Technology is now the College of Science and Mathematics. The data in this report is not yet affected by that change.

These data should be useful as departments and colleges review initiatives that were implemented for student success relating to academic progress and graduation from the University. Additionally, the changes to academic advising processes may be a topic for further investigation to assess any potential impact on improved graduation rates for students.