



**Strategic Enrollment Plan**  
**2025-2030**

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## Executive Summary

Valdosta State University (VSU) stands at a critical juncture. Faced with declining undergraduate enrollment, increased competition, shifting demographics, and operational challenges, VSU has developed a bold and evidence-driven Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) to guide its efforts from 2025 to 2030. This plan charts a clear, actionable path to restore enrollment momentum, strengthen student outcomes, and reinforce the university's value proposition across its three primary learning opportunities: the Traditional Undergraduate experience, the Online College for Career Advancement (OCCA), and the Graduate School.

The SEP is informed by internal assessments, external partnerships (including Ruffalo Noel Levitz and the National Institute for Student Success), and extensive stakeholder input. It offers a candid assessment of current conditions while presenting realistic, measurable strategies aligned with institutional strengths and capacity. The plan does not attempt to fix every issue at once; instead, it prioritizes the most impactful levers for change, phased over time, and tied to key performance indicators.

Four strategic imperatives shape the plan:

1. **Rebuild competitiveness and market share** in the Traditional Undergraduate population, with targeted recruitment of freshmen and transfers—especially in Atlanta, South Georgia, and border states.
2. **Sustain and scale growth** in the Graduate School and OCCA, ensuring infrastructure, advising, and support systems match rising demand.
3. **Elevate student outcomes and satisfaction**, with focused efforts to close equity gaps in persistence, retention, and graduation.
4. **Clarify and communicate VSU's value**, differentiating its brand through messaging specific to course or program modality, career alignment, and personalized student experiences.

Twelve interlocking action plans provide a roadmap for change, spanning academic program relevance, student support, digital transformation, marketing restructure, and affordability. Projections are backed by data, and each strategy includes both implementation timelines and performance metrics to enable ongoing accountability.

VSU has already seen early momentum—successful SLATE CRM reimplementation, growth in graduate and online enrollment, and advising redesigns to institutional readiness for change. Through cross-divisional execution and sustained leadership, this SEP positions VSU to reclaim market share, revitalize its brand, and expand opportunity and success for every student it serves.

## Valdosta State University Enrollment Projections, Fall 2023-Fall 2030

| Student Category                 | Census        |               |               | Projections   |               |               |               |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                  | Fall 2023     | Fall 2024     | Fall 2025     | Fall 2026     | Fall 2027     | Fall 2028     | Fall 2029     | Fall 2030     |
| <b>VSU Enrollment</b>            | <b>10,180</b> | <b>10,305</b> | <b>10,435</b> | <b>10,614</b> | <b>11,316</b> | <b>12,056</b> | <b>12,789</b> | <b>13,559</b> |
| <b>Undergraduate Total</b>       | <b>7,259</b>  | <b>7,206</b>  | <b>7,199</b>  | <b>7,198</b>  | <b>7,697</b>  | <b>8,217</b>  | <b>8,717</b>  | <b>9,234</b>  |
| Dual Enrollment                  | 343           | 518           | 531           | 545           | 559           | 574           | 589           | 604           |
| New Freshmen                     | 1,068         | 1,131         | 1,242         | 1,200         | 1,296         | 1,334         | 1,372         | 1,410         |
| Returning New Freshmen           | 3,371         | 3,083         | 2,895         | 3,011         | 2,816         | 3,047         | 3,265         | 3,468         |
| 1-year Retention Rate            | 71.8%         | 72.2%         | 73.1%         | 73.8%         | 74.6%         | 75.3%         | 76.0%         | 76.0%         |
| New Transfers                    | 555           | 515           | 581           | 569           | 671           | 691           | 714           | 737           |
| Returning Transfers              | 1,748         | 1,772         | 1,745         | 1,733         | 2,197         | 2,409         | 2,612         | 2,845         |
| 1-year Retention Rate            | 70.0%         | 70.3%         | 71.3%         | 72.8%         | 72.9%         | 73.4%         | 73.6%         | 73.8%         |
| Post-bacc and Other              | 147           | 164           | 121           | 110           | 135           | 138           | 141           | 145           |
| Transient                        | 27            | 23            | 84            | 30            | 23            | 24            | 24            | 25            |
| <b>TUG Learning Opportunity</b>  | <b>6,136</b>  | <b>5,754</b>  | <b>5,380</b>  | <b>5,061</b>  | <b>5,230</b>  | <b>5,399</b>  | <b>5,568</b>  | <b>5,734</b>  |
| <b>OCCA Learning Opportunity</b> | <b>1,123</b>  | <b>1,452</b>  | <b>1,819</b>  | <b>2,137</b>  | <b>2,467</b>  | <b>2,818</b>  | <b>3,149</b>  | <b>3,500</b>  |
| <b>Graduate Total</b>            | <b>2,921</b>  | <b>3,099</b>  | <b>3,236</b>  | <b>3,416</b>  | <b>3,619</b>  | <b>3,839</b>  | <b>4,072</b>  | <b>4,325</b>  |
| Masters                          | 1,867         | 1,990         | 2,075         | 2,221         | 2,356         | 2,494         | 2,649         | 2,817         |
| New                              | 554           | 525           | 579           | 609           | 653           | 693           | 737           | 785           |
| Continuing                       | 1,313         | 1,465         | 1,496         | 1,612         | 1,703         | 1,801         | 1,912         | 2,032         |
| Specialist                       | 482           | 538           | 553           | 571           | 555           | 593           | 630           | 673           |
| New                              | 121           | 132           | 135           | 141           | 116           | 124           | 133           | 143           |
| Continuing                       | 361           | 406           | 418           | 430           | 439           | 469           | 497           | 530           |
| Doctorate                        | 462           | 481           | 497           | 510           | 598           | 642           | 683           | 725           |
| New                              | 104           | 113           | 100           | 105           | 122           | 130           | 139           | 148           |
| Continuing                       | 358           | 368           | 397           | 405           | 476           | 512           | 544           | 577           |
| Other                            | 110           | 90            | 111           | 114           | 110           | 110           | 110           | 110           |

*Note: TUG = traditional undergraduate programs. OCCA = online college for career advancement programs.*

*Source: VSU SRA Analysis of SEP Action Plans, October 2025.*

## Framing for Valdosta State University's Strategic Enrollment Plan

Valdosta State University stands at a pivotal moment—facing enrollment headwinds that reflect both national trends and local realities. Over the past decade, the institution has experienced sharp declines in undergraduate enrollment, most notably within its **Traditional Undergraduate** population. At the same time, VSU is showing promising growth and momentum in both its **Graduate School** and the **Online College for Career Advancement (OCCA)**. This divergence highlights both the complexity and the opportunity in VSU's enrollment landscape.

The **2025–2030 Strategic Enrollment Plan** is framed around four imperatives:

1. **Restore competitiveness and rebuild market share** within the **Traditional Undergraduate** population—focusing on freshman, transfer, and border-state recruitment.

2. **Sustain and strengthen growth** in the **Graduate School** and **OCCA**, ensuring that expansion is matched by infrastructure, support, and brand clarity.
3. **Elevate student outcomes and satisfaction** across all learning opportunities, with focused attention on retention, persistence, engagement, and graduation.
4. **Clarify and communicate VSU's value proposition**, ensuring distinct messaging and experience alignment for each of the three delivery models.

This plan applies to a **student-centered, data-informed lens**, acknowledging that VSU serves a wide range of learners with different needs, motivations, and pathways. The **Traditional Undergraduate** cohort—historically the largest enrolled population—requires reinvestment in belonging, brand positioning, and campus engagement. The **Online College for Career Advancement**, designed for adult learners and “some college, no degree” students, must continue scaling with intentional focus on advising, career alignment, and digital support. The **Graduate School**, with a record enrollment of more than 3,000 students enrolled as of Fall 2024, must leverage its national reputation while providing a greater variety of learning modalities and high-touch student service.

Framing this effort also means navigating several core tensions:

- Balancing enrollment recovery in the Traditional Undergraduate population with continued growth in OCCA and Graduate School programs
- Tailoring recruitment and support strategies by learning opportunity while maintaining a unified VSU enrollment brand identity
- Meeting access and affordability goals without compromising program quality or student outcomes

This plan does not attempt to solve every challenge at once. Instead, it offers a **strategic focus**—targeted, phased, and aligned with institutional capacity—to address the most pressing issues in enrollment, retention, and student success. The subsequent **Situation Analysis** provides the factual foundation that informs this framing, outlining the current state and surfacing the challenges this plan is designed to meet.

## Situation Analysis

### Introduction

Valdosta State University (VSU) is undergoing a pivotal transformation in response to a shifting enrollment landscape marked by demographic decline, increased competition, internal operational disruptions, and evolving student expectations. As a regional comprehensive institution serving South Georgia and beyond, VSU has been disproportionately affected by these trends—yet it is also actively positioning itself for recovery and renewal.

Informed by extensive internal assessment and external consultation—including a 2023 diagnostic and playbook from the National Institute for Student Success (NISS) and multiple Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) Student Satisfaction Surveys in Spring 2024—VSU has gathered clear insight into the needs, expectations, and barriers facing its diverse student body (See Appendix A and B, *respectively*). These

data sources, combined with campus-wide strategic planning efforts, have reinforced the urgency of transformation and guided VSU's approach.

This situation analysis summarizes the institution's enrollment patterns, student success challenges, market positioning, and operational infrastructure. It provides the contextual foundation for the university's Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP), which aims to restore growth, strengthen student outcomes, and define a compelling institutional value proposition.

Through this plan, VSU seeks to increase enrollment and strengthen academic relevance, improve student outcomes, and ensure all learners are supported from enrollment through graduation, regardless of background or program modality.

## Enrollment Decline and Market Share Loss

In the enrollment deep dive conducted in Fall 2022, VSU has experienced a significant drop in undergraduate enrollment (decreased by 1,572 students, -17.9%), driven largely by declines in traditional new freshmen and transfer students. The most notable decline is among new first-time, full-time students, down by 34.3% over a seven-year period. Simultaneously, transfer enrollment fell by 27.6%, a trend exacerbated by reduced military and adult learner outreach and weakened relationships with two-year feeder institutions (See Appendix C).

Metro Atlanta, the state's largest prospective student market, exemplifies VSU's market share challenges. Over the past decade, VSU's first-time, full-time freshman enrollment from this region dropped from 1,677 to 387 students, a 77% decline, despite overall USG enrollment from the area increasing (See Appendix C). This erosion of market share reflects both external competition and an internal need to rethink outreach, messaging, and presence in key markets.

Additionally, VSU has experienced a significant demographic shift in its undergraduate population. Since Fall 2012, Caucasian student enrollment has declined by 41%, a rate that exceeds national trends. During the same period, African American student representation remained relatively stable (0.8 percentage points difference), and Hispanic student enrollment steadily increased (7.7 percentage points difference).

Valdosta State University Undergraduate Enrollment by Enrollment, Fall 2012-Fall 2024

| Undergraduate Population               |               |              |              |              |              |               |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
|  | Fall 2012     | Fall 2015    | Fall 2019    | Fall 2021    | Fall 2024    | PD            |
| African American                       | 3,634         | 3,178        | 3,382        | 3,544        | 2,600        | -28.5%        |
| Caucasian                              | 5,444         | 4,471        | 3,914        | 3,749        | 3,231        | -40.7%        |
| Hispanic                               | 413           | 469          | 672          | 909          | 844          | 104.4%        |
| Other                                  | 799           | 678          | 622          | 574          | 531          | -33.5%        |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>10,290</b> | <b>8,796</b> | <b>8,590</b> | <b>8,776</b> | <b>7,206</b> | <b>-30.0%</b> |
| Percentage of Undergraduate Population |               |              |              |              |              |               |
|  | Fall 2012     | Fall 2015    | Fall 2019    | Fall 2021    | Fall 2024    | PPD           |
| African American                       | 35.3%         | 36.1%        | 39.4%        | 40.4%        | 36.1%        | 0.8%          |
| Caucasian                              | 52.9%         | 50.8%        | 45.6%        | 42.7%        | 44.8%        | -8.1%         |
| Hispanic                               | 4.0%          | 5.3%         | 7.8%         | 10.4%        | 11.7%        | 7.7%          |
| Other                                  | 7.8%          | 7.7%         | 7.2%         | 6.5%         | 7.4%         | -0.4%         |

*Note: Other = other underrepresented groups. PD = percent difference. PPD = percentages point*

*Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG academic data collection, October 2025.*

While this reflects VSU's growing service to a more diverse student body, the magnitude of Caucasian student enrollment loss presents a strategic challenge. Survey feedback, focused interviews, and data analysis suggests that VSU's public image—including marketing content and campus impressions—has contributed to the perception that the institution primarily serves African American students, with some even misidentifying VSU as an HBCU (See Appendix D). An audit, conducted by University Marketing, of creative assess revealed images in the creatives are 57.1% white for traditional undergraduate ads, 55.5% white for OCCA ads, and 42.8% white for graduate ads (See Appendix E). Rebuilding interest among white prospective students—particularly in rural South Georgia and the Atlanta suburbs—must be part of a carefully balanced, inclusive recruitment strategy. While celebrating diversity remains a strength, the university has the opportunity to grow enrollment across all race and ethnicities.

Contributing Factors:

- Enrollment leadership turnover and a failed CRM migration disrupted admissions operations and communication.
- The shift to test-optional admissions and VSU's higher 3.2 GPA threshold without test scores has redirected capable students (e.g., 3.0–3.1 GPAs) to other state institutions with lower requirements, weakening VSU's traditional recruitment pipeline
- VSU's identity, value, and unique qualities are not clearly distinguished from other public universities in Georgia.
- Declines in adult and military student enrollment are linked to staff reductions, weakened relationships with community colleges and military centers, and a lack of robust transfer articulation agreements.



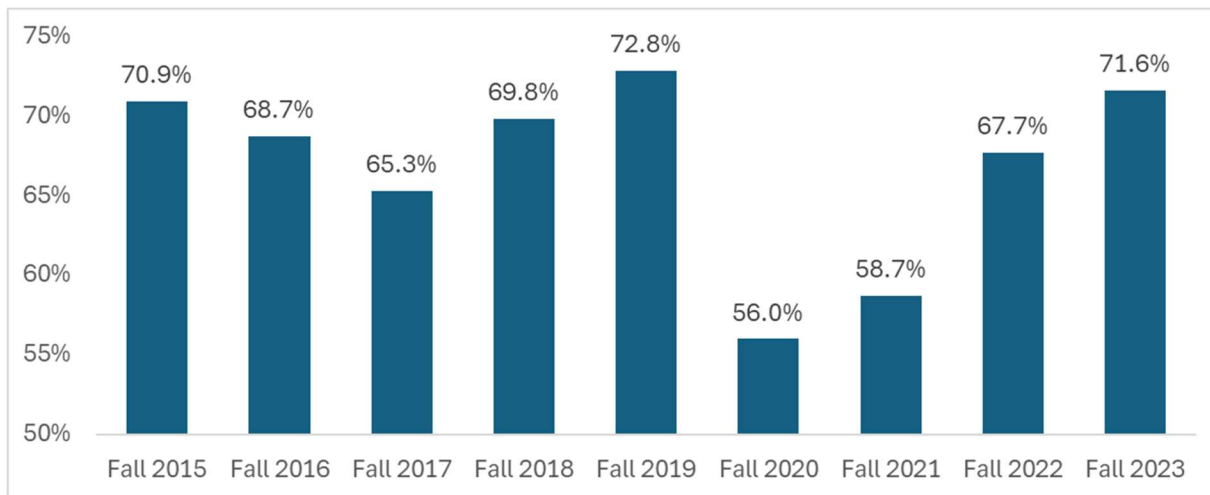
- Underutilization of border state tuition waivers and limited brand visibility in neighboring states, although it was increased in early 2023.
- Reduced effectiveness of out-of-state recruitment strategy due to decreased standardized testing and lack of accessible GPA data for test-optional recruitment.

The cumulative impact has been declining visibility in key student segments and markets, exacerbated by shifting demographic interest, decreased competitiveness in high-growth markets, and untapped opportunities in out-of-state recruitment.

## Retention, Persistence, and Completion Challenges

Retention remains one of the most pressing concerns for VSU. First-year retention rates fell to a low of 56.0% for the 2020 cohort, following years of steady decline. While recent data show a modest rebound (+13 percentage points since 2021), the overall effect of poor retention continues to suppress enrollment growth and student success outcomes, as displayed in the graph below.

Valdosta State University First-time Full-time Freshmen One-year Retention Rates, Fall 2015-Fall 2023



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG academic data collection, October 2025.

Analysis shows that students who disengage academically, socially, or financially are less likely to persist. For instance, students with lower high school GPAs, those without HOPE scholarships, and those who do not attend campus events or live in community-rich environments are at higher risk of stopping out. Importantly, nearly 30% of non-returners had no transcript request, suggesting full stop-outs rather than transfers (See Appendix C).

When compared to peer institutions and national benchmarks, VSU's retention and completion rates reveal cause for concern (See Appendix A and C):

- VSU's first-year retention rate trails to the national average for four-year public institutions (75%).

- Six-year graduation rates at VSU (41%) are also below the national average (62%) and peer institutions (55%).
- Gaps are especially pronounced among African American males and Pell-only students, who persist at significantly lower rates than other student populations.
- Online and non-traditional learners continue to struggle with persistence and GPA performance, particularly when they do not receive proactive support early in their academic journey.

#### Key Data and Trends:

- First-year retention dropped from 72.8% (2019) to 56.0% (2020).
- Retention and graduation rates consistently trail national and peer institution averages.
- African American male students and Pell-only students show the most significant retention gaps.
- Online students—especially freshmen—have lower persistence and GPA averages.

#### Institutional Responses:

- Hybrid advising model utilizing faculty from the discipline and creation of three coordinated student success units
- Introduction of SLATE CRM for Student Success to identify and support at-risk students
- Structured block scheduling implementation in Fall 2025 along with an emphasis for in-person classes for traditional undergraduates across the CORE
- Emphasis on new students taking INQR as part of the block scheduling with additional student support in the curriculum

The cumulative impact has been lower student persistence, increased stop-outs, and suppressed enrollment growth across key student segments.

## Brand Positioning and Market Differentiation

A major theme in stakeholder feedback and market research is that VSU lacks a clear, compelling brand identity that differentiates itself from the competitive market (See Appendix F). In a state where peer institutions such as Georgia Southern and Kennesaw State have expanded into engineering, NCAA FBS athletics, and research classification, VSU has struggled to define what makes it distinct.

Prospective student surveys revealed low awareness and a weak sense of financial value. Only 14% of surveyed students indicated they would enroll if accepted—significantly lower than benchmark institutions (See Appendix E). The institution’s historic approach to “serving everyone” is increasingly misaligned with today’s market demands for targeted value propositions.

Findings from the 2024 Student Satisfaction Surveys confirmed that while students are highly satisfied with faculty engagement and major-specific programs, they often do not understand the broader value of a VSU degree until after enrolling (See Appendix B). This suggests that the student experience exceeds pre-enrollment perceptions, presenting an opportunity to reshape the narrative for prospective students.

Additionally, adult learners and online students prioritize flexibility, affordability, and career alignment but report challenges navigating systems and finding support, indicating a need to brand not only academic strengths but also the quality of support services across delivery models (See Appendix F).

#### Challenges:

- VSU's institutional identity is perceived as generic or indistinct, making it harder to stand out among USG peers, as students and families struggle to see what makes VSU different or better.
- Increased competition from regional institutions with elevated identities
- Value of degree not clearly communicated pre-enrollment
- Limited differentiation in messaging for nontraditional and online students

#### Emerging Opportunities:

- Enhanced digital marketing and immersive campus visit strategies
- Emphasis on quality of faculty, personal scale, and high-impact programs
- Enrollment branding initiatives under development in alignment with SEP goals
- Enhanced storytelling around career outcomes and faculty-student relationships
- Consistent messaging aligned to student modality and motivations

These challenges impact market positioning and competitive advantage which weaken enrollment yield.

## Financial Aid, Affordability, and Communication

Financial aid and affordability continue to be persistent barriers to enrollment and persistence. VSU's student body is heavily composed of Pell-eligible students—60% compared to 40% among peer USG institutions. Pell-only students (those without HOPE) show the lowest retention rates, reflecting both financial strain and communication gaps (See Appendix D).

Feedback from students and families indicates frustration with the aid process, particularly its complexity, lack of proactive outreach, and inconsistent information. Student satisfaction surveys reinforced these concerns, highlighting widespread dissatisfaction with billing transparency, response times from financial aid staff, and mandatory fees for services not used—particularly among commuters, online learners, and graduate students. Rising housing costs and limited aid for out-of-state and nontraditional learners were also noted as pain points (See Appendix C).

In alignment with NISS recommendations, VSU has begun to implement a more integrated, data-informed approach to student financial support. This includes early financial alerts, cross-unit training on aid processes, and strategic use of completion grants, HOPE recovery programs, and nudges through texting and chatbot platforms.

#### Key Issues:

- Overreliance on reactive communication and inconsistent packaging
- Pell-only students face retention disadvantages
- Scholarship strategy not fully aligned with recruitment and persistence goals

- Mandatory fees perceived as unfair among online and commuter students
- Limited aid availability for graduate and out-of-state populations
- Poor student understanding of SAP policies and financial responsibilities

#### Institutional Action:

- Strategic realignment of financial aid to target yield and retention
- Personalization of financial messaging through SLATE and early estimates
- Exploration of regional tuition waivers and affordability campaigns
- Implementation of completion grants, HOPE recovery, and financial aid alert systems
- Training academic advisors to help students navigate aid-related decisions
- Increased transparency and outreach around billing, payment plans, and SAP

The cumulative impact has been unmet financial need, low aid satisfaction, and preventable student attrition due to cost and communication gaps.

## Enrollment Infrastructure and Operational Disruption

The period from 2020 to 2022 was marked by significant internal disruption. The failed SLATE CRM conversion, combined with high turnover in key enrollment leadership roles, led to operational fragmentation and disjointed student communication.

These breakdowns occurred at a time when agility and clarity were most needed. However, recent progress including a successful SLATE relaunch, cross-divisional collaboration, and KPI tracking signals an institutional readiness for a more data-informed, strategic future.

New structures and tools—including SLATE workflows, weekly enrollment monitoring, and coordinated enrollment discussions with each learning opportunity—have begun to reduce duplication and support more seamless interactions between units and students. Continued investment in service delivery and user-focused systems will be critical to improving perception and performance.

#### Challenges:

- High turnover in admissions, advising, and marketing leadership
- Elimination of the Director of Undergraduate Admissions position, combining with the AVP for Enrollment Management position with broader institutional responsibility.
- Communication silos and inconsistent student outreach
- Reactive instead of proactive enrollment practices

#### Current Improvements:

- Successful implementation of SLATE CRM and automation workflows
- Comprehensive enrollment monitoring tied to SEP benchmarks and goals
- Cross-functional alignment created through the combination of Student Affairs and Student Success and strengthened relationships between Enrollment and Student Affairs and Academic Affairs through the SEP process.

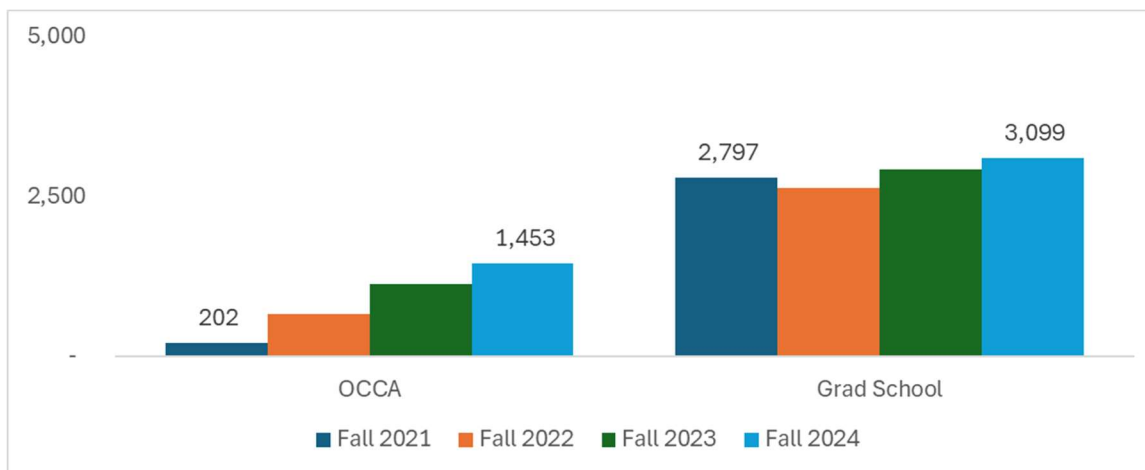
- Reinstatement and active search for the Director of Undergraduate Admissions to strengthen leadership and strategy in recruitment operations

The cumulative impact has been fractured communication, inconsistent service delivery, and student frustration with institutional responsiveness.

## Graduate and Online Enrollment Growth

While total undergraduate enrollment declined (-18%), VSU's graduate programs and the OCCA experienced strong growth. Graduate enrollment increased by 11% and OCCA experienced a 619% increase since its launch in Fall 2021. These growth areas signal key opportunities for institutional repositioning and financial sustainability.

Valdosta State University Enrollment by Learning Opportunity, Fall 2021-Fall 2023



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG academic data collection, October 2025.

Still, these programs face challenges. Graduate School recruitment is highly decentralized and lacks a dedicated recruiter and a dedicated marketing strategy. Graduate growth is completely attributed to colleges and departments moving graduate programs to a fully online format without an institutional or strategic direction. The College of Education has led the online graduate growth and based on the RNL academic program demand research, has a strong brand through the State of Georgia. The Master of Library Science is also a graduate program with a strong brand and program demand. The master's degree in library science is currently at capacity in terms of instruction and is positioned to sustain but not grow.

Valdosta State University has offered fully online bachelor level degree programs for many years. In 2021, the University launched a major initiative which is now known as the OCCA. The University of Georgia system approved eight-degree programs to be offered through OCCA as well as a bundled tuition rate that includes books and fees. The OCCA initiative was designed to reduce the number of Georgia adults that were enrolling in out of state fully online degree programs. Three undergraduate degrees were offered autonomous to OCCA: Workforce Education and Development; BS Office Administration and Technology and BA in French. During the strategic enrollment planning process, the

online French program was discontinued, and the Office Administration Degree was proposed for integration into the OCCA organizational leadership program. The Workforce Education and Development program will be revised to focus on Human Resource Development and tentatively added as the ninth OCCA program pending USG approval. This consolidation reduces internal campus confusion and allows VSU to holistically manage and promote undergraduate online programs under one brand.

The OCCA initiative has several strengths including seven high-demand programs and the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies, which is ideal for reaching out to VSU stop-out students for reenrollment. OCCA programs have standardized course templates and strong course design. The OCCA instructional model is scalable and accommodates subject-matter experts from anywhere to teach; and the bundled rate is conducive to employer sponsored tuition assistance and programs.

OCCA enrollment has steadily increased since its inception; however, total undergraduate online enrollment at VSU has not increased as planned (See Appendix G). The OCCA enrollment for those programs that were offered online prior to OCCA referenced as “legacy” online programs (criminal justice and psychology have only recently achieved enrollment slightly above or at the legacy enrollment highs. New OCCA programs in organizational leadership, management and interdisciplinary studies have resulted in online growth and unfortunately on-campus declines resulting in a net loss of students overall. Elementary education, and CIS have experienced declines with the on-campus enrollment, but a net increase due to the increased growth of the OCCA offered program.

Barriers to growth include:

- Adequate resources for full search engine optimization as well as sophisticated digital lead generation.
- Systemic data integration issues impacting the ability to measure ROI in enrollment marketing make it challenging to directly attribute advertising campaigns to enrollment outcomes.
- Little or no corporate and influencer networking and recruiting infrastructure.
- Lack of sustained efforts to positively impact OCCA persistence and retention.
- A per credit hour rate that exceeds the military tuition assistance cap of \$250 per credit hour.
- USG emphasizes eMajor online degree programs that are direct competition.

Fortunately, according to SARA data, the market for Georgian students enrolling in online programs continues to grow.

Findings from the 2024 student satisfaction survey of VSU online learners (undergraduate and graduate) state flexibility, convenience, and course relevance were seen as strengths. Yet students reported inconsistent communication from faculty, unclear assignment expectations, and dissatisfaction with being charged for on-campus services they do not use.

Adult learners emphasized the importance of career-aligned programming, responsive advising, and easy-to-navigate systems. These expectations point to a broader institutional opportunity to build a

more unified and student-centered approach to access resources needed by fully online and graduate learners.

#### Key Strengths:

- High-demand graduate programs in business, STEM, and library sciences
- OCCA's targeted design for adult learners with "some college, no degree"
- Integrated advising and coaching model showing early promise
- Rapid growth among online modalities supporting adult learners' flexibility needs
- Positive re-enrollment sentiment among online students in satisfaction surveys

#### Remaining Barriers:

- Lack of centralized graduate enrollment strategy
- Resource and priority challenges between face-to-face and online program versions
- Limited aid and institutional support for nontraditional graduate learners
- Disconnect between marketing promises and student support delivery

The cumulative impact has been rapid enrollment growth tempered by inconsistent enrollment strategy and growing expectations among adult and online learners.

### Academic Portfolio Relevance and Optimization

VSU's academic portfolio includes several underperforming programs with low student interest or workforce relevance. A recent RNL academic program demand study confirmed misalignment between offerings and market needs, especially in business, STEM, and healthcare fields. Student satisfaction survey feedback also highlighted a desire for clearer connections between academic content and real-world careers, especially in general education and early major coursework. Many students expressed confusion about course relevance, limited opportunities for experiential learning, and a lack of program-level clarity when entering their discipline.

In response, VSU has launched both short-term program innovation (through new tracks and credentialing) and long-term academic optimization strategies designed to reduce low-performing offerings, expand workforce-aligned options, and embed career pathways earlier in the student journey.

#### Key Initiatives:

- Development of new academic tracks in several STEM programs
- Mellon Foundation grant focused on career-readiness in humanities
- Academic optimization process underway to streamline and refresh offerings
- Increased collaboration between academic units and career services to embed applied learning
- Program mapping and program-specific marketing enhancements to clarify outcomes and expectations
- Exploration of stackable credentials and short-term certificates in high-demand fields

The cumulative impact has been academic program misalignment with student demand and labor market trends, prompting a renewed focus on relevance, innovation, and clarity.

## Student Life, Belonging, and Support Services

Student engagement and support are uneven across the institution. While many students praise the commitment of faculty, especially in majors like nursing and the arts, similar hands-on-learning that creates faculty-student connections is limited in other degree programs. Additionally, the increasing presence of online instruction—even for traditional undergraduate students not enrolled in OCCA—has contributed to a less residential campus culture and increased student disengagement.

Traditional undergraduates shared concerns about limited weekend activities and few structured opportunities for meaningful social connection beyond the classroom. Within the traditional undergraduate learning opportunity, commuter students reported feeling invisible within campus culture, and majority online learners noted difficulty establishing a sense of identity or belonging to the institution.

Post-pandemic realities continue to shape the engagement landscape. Like many institutions, VSU is facing rising levels of student isolation and loneliness. Student organizations are less active than in prior years, with fewer in-person events, limited outreach to new members, and a growing preference for virtual meetings—contributing to a diminished sense of campus vibrancy.

Compounding these issues, reductions in student fee revenue led to a restructuring of the programming model across Student Affairs. This shift emphasized efficiency and coordination but resulted in a drop from nearly 800 student programs per year to just over 300.

Graduate and adult learners emphasized the need for relevant services, clear communication channels, and acknowledgment of their time and work constraints. Survey feedback suggests that students across all populations want a more coordinated, responsive system of support tailored to their unique needs and goals.

### Institutional Responses:

- Redesign of orientation and advising for early belonging
- Introduction of block scheduling, peer mentoring, and early alerts
- Efforts to expand co-curricular engagement and experiential learning for students
- Integration of satisfaction data into campus programming decisions
- Expand awareness of student engagement platforms to increase visibility of events and resources
- Shift in Student Life leadership to infuse a new culture and set of program ideas while focusing their efforts on student engagement components

The cumulative impact has been diminished by campus vibrancy, increased isolation, and widening gaps in engagement and belonging.



## Conclusion

Valdosta State University's enrollment challenges are multi-dimensional and interconnected—ranging from retention and reputation to infrastructure and academic relevance. However, the institution has already begun laying the foundation for a more stable and strategic future. Early wins in SLATE implementation, block scheduling, graduate enrollment growth, and advising redesign demonstrate both momentum and the institutional capacity for change.

This situation analysis clarifies where we are now and identifies actionable levers for progress. Stakeholder input, student survey feedback, and national benchmarking have revealed both our gaps and our opportunities. Targeted strategies across student support, academic relevance, and operational efficiency are already in motion—poised to restore competitiveness, improve student outcomes, and rebuild institutional trust.

This plan is not a static document but a living framework for cross-divisional collaboration, goal alignment, and long-term transformation. Through this Strategic Enrollment Plan, VSU seeks to reclaim market share, revitalize its brand, and expand access and success for every student we serve.

Success will require committed institutional leadership, coordinated execution, and the shared belief that these changes and consistent progress are necessary to sustain and grow institutional enrollment.

## Strategic Enrollment Planning Process

The University selected Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, under the contract with the University System of Georgia, to consult on Academic Program Alignment and the development of a Strategic Enrollment Plan. This engagement began in January 2024 with efforts outlined below:

Spring-Summer 2024

- Academic Program Planning
  - Prospective Student Demand Survey
  - Academic Program Environmental Market Scan
  - Analysis of under-enrolled and low degree completion undergraduate and graduate programs
  - Final recommendation for academic program deactivation, realignment, and new program proposal.
- Strategic Enrollment Planning
  - Current Student Satisfaction Survey Delivery: traditional undergraduate, online learners, adult learners
  - Analysis of historical enrollment trends, enrollment marketing, SLATE CRM, website optimization, and admissions recruitment practices

#### Fall 2024<sup>1</sup>

- Strategic Enrollment Planning
  - Work-group meetings and Action Plan development for all enrollment related functions across each learning opportunity
  - Work-group meetings and Action Plan development for Academic Programs

#### Spring-Summer 2025<sup>2</sup>

- Strategic Enrollment Planning
  - Work group meetings and Action Plan development continued.
  - Work group established for Student Success and Housing/Residential Life

To ensure a coordinated, campus-wide approach, the Strategic Enrollment Plan process was led by Dr. Sheri Noviello, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. Vince Miller, Vice President for Enrollment & Student Affairs. A larger steering committee was established to include key leaders in each of the learning opportunities and strategic research and analysis: Kevin Overlaur – OCCA; Dr. Becky da Cruz – graduate school; Gary Bush – traditional undergraduate; and Dr. Barrie Fitzgerald – strategic research and analysis. The leaders provided oversight and direction for the SEP activities while ensuring campus-wide stakeholders were involved in the work group activities to develop the individual Action Plans.

#### Focused Workgroups:

- Academic Program Portfolio Optimization – Action Plan Submitted
- Online College Enrollment – Action Plan Submitted
- Traditional Undergraduate Enrollment – Action Plan Submitted
- Transfer Student Enrollment – Action Plan Submitted
- Graduate School Enrollment - Action Plan Submitted
- STEM Cluster – Action Plan Submitted
- Enrollment Marketing – Action Plan Submitted (originally embedded in all other recruitment strategies but later consolidated in own plan for reference)
- Digital Transformation – Action Plan Submitted
- Student Success – Action Plan Submitted
- Housing and Residence Life – Action Plan Submitted
- Value and Affordability – Action Plan Submitted

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<sup>1</sup> Delays caused by hurricane recovery impacted the timeline and created sporadic engagement within the work groups.

<sup>2</sup> Delays at the beginning of the semester caused by cyber security interruption impacted the timeline and created sporadic engagement within the work groups.

- Military and Veteran Recruitment – Action Plan Not Submitted. Rolled into Transfer Student Recruitment Plan
- LCOBA – Action Plan Not Submitted due to leadership changes
- International Student Recruitment – Action Plan Not Submitted due to pending state and federal policy changes impacting this area.

## Key Performance Indicators

In the evolving landscape of higher education, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provide a critical framework for measuring institutional effectiveness and guiding strategic decision-making. For Valdosta State University (VSU), these KPIs offer a comprehensive lens through which to assess enrollment performance, student success, fiscal health, and market position. Enrollment-related metrics, such as total headcount, full-time equivalent (FTE) students, and student credit hours, are among the most visible and easily quantifiable indicators of institutional growth and sustainability. These metrics—when analyzed by student type (e.g., first-time freshmen, transfer, graduate), modality (on-campus or online), demographics, and geography—reveal nuanced insights into recruitment trends and institutional reach. Likewise, funnel rates across stages of the admissions process provide actionable data for refining outreach and conversion strategies.

The measurability of these KPIs lies in the data-rich environment of enrollment management. Institutions like VSU routinely track retention, persistence, and completion rates, all of which are aligned with both state and federal reporting requirements and contribute directly to performance-based funding models. Market share analyses, career outcome reporting, and program-level data on enrollment, retention, and accreditation offer further layers of evaluation, connecting student pathways with workforce alignment and institutional distinctiveness. Financial indicators—such as net revenue per student, Pell and HOPE recipient percentages, and scholarship leveraging—highlight the university’s commitment to access and affordability, while also offering insights into long-term sustainability. Collectively, these KPIs not only measure institutional success but also enable ongoing strategy refinement to ensure VSU meets the needs of its diverse student body and the broader South Georgia region.

| Category        | Metric  | Performance Indicator  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Enrollment      | Total Headcount<br>Student FTE<br>Student Credit Hours                | By level (FTFT, transfer, graduate)<br>By modality: on-campus, OCCA or graduate online<br>By demographic<br>Geography<br>Enrollment funnel rates |
| Student Success | Completion Rates<br>Retention Rates<br>Persistence<br>Career Outcomes | By programs, cohorts, and demographics   |

|                         |  |  |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Program Differentiation | Program Enrollment & New student enrollment<br>Program retention & Program completion<br>Accreditation, Recognitions<br>Student Outcomes<br>Market Share | Three-year trends<br><br>Gifts, Grants, and Awards<br>Partnerships, Employer and Education Connections   |
| Fiscal and Financial    | Affordability – Tuition and Housing<br>Pell recipient percentage<br>HOPE recipient percentage<br>Full fee-paying students<br>Leveraging Scholarships     | Competitive difference<br>Retention of Pell and/or Hope students<br>Unmet need<br>Outstanding Balances<br>Net revenue per student<br>Number of students on scholarship |

VSU has an extremely talented Strategic Research and Analysis team supported by a willing campus IT team to help create performance dashboards using Microsoft Power BI technology. This future initiative can help place near real-time data in the hands of administrators, academic leaders, and unit heads tasked with moving the needle on VSU's enrollment and student success efforts. Many campuses lack the talent and resources to create such a valuable tool; however, over the next three years VSU could develop dashboards among other important initiatives taking place with technology on the campus.

## Action Plans for Enrollment Growth and Student Success

Several enrollment strategies were identified for action planning. VSU administrators, staff, and faculty developed enrollment strategy action plans during the Summer and Fall 2025 semesters. Some of the concepts were paused for future review; others moved to implementation immediately in alignment with institutional and USG initiatives, and a final set emerged as the foundation for the 2025 – 2030 Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP). The SEP strategy set includes:

- Academic Program Portfolio Optimization
- Online College for Career Advancement Enrollment
- Traditional Undergraduate Enrollment
- Transfer Student Recruitment
- Graduate School Recruitment
- STEM Cluster
- Enrollment Marketing
- Digital Transformation
- Student Success
- Housing and Residence Life
- Value and Affordability

These enrollment strategies provide accountability to the annual enrollment goals and a return on investment projections for the enrollment growth initiatives.

## Action Plan: Academic Program Portfolio Optimization

| <b>Situation:</b><br>Several programs identified as low-enrolled or low-producing need critical evaluation of ROI and whether they should continue. There is a need to also find new, innovative program offerings that can attract a new audience of prospective students. |                              |         |            |                 |
|---|------------------------------|---------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>Reduce underperforming programs.<br>Develop new, high-demand programs and tracks aligned to market and career pathways.   |                              |         |            |                 |
| <b>Further Description/Explanation:</b><br>Continue to offer in-demand degree programs with fresh curriculum that aligns with student interest and employer expectations.   |                              |         |            |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>  |                              |         |            |                 |
| Steps   | Responsibility               | Cost    | Start Date | Completion Date |
| In-Progress   |                              |         |            |                 |
| Explore merging of the BA in Communication program and the BA in English program (consider deactivation of BA in English once revised degree is completed)  | James LaPlant/<br>Nicole Cox | In-kind | 5/15/2025  |                 |
| Explore merging of the BFA in Mass Media program and the Journalism concentration to create a career-ready program  | James LaPlant/<br>Nicole Cox | In-kind | 5/15/2025  |                 |
| Revise Office Administration & Technology (OAT) program and move as a track in ORGL   | David Stykhuis               | In-kind | 9/15/2024  |                 |
| Revise Workforce Education Development (WED) program to focus on Human Resource Development and offer it as the 9th OCCA program  | David Stykhuis               | In-kind | 9/15/2024  |                 |
| Create BA in World Languages (will deactivate BA in Spanish program once the revised degree is approved)  | James LaPlant                | In-kind | 5/15/2025  |                 |
| Add non-thesis track to existing MS in Biology  | Pierre-Richard Cornely       | In-kind | 1/10/2025  |                 |
| Add tracks in Computer Information Systems (CIS) program<br>Cybersecurity   | Pierre-Richard Cornely       | In-kind | 1/10/2025  |                 |
| Add tracks in BS in Environmental Geosciences program<br>Geospatial Technology and Urban Planning<br>Environmental and Climate Sciences<br>Environmental Sustainability   | Pierre-Richard Cornely       | In-kind | 1/10/2025  |                 |

|  |                        |         |           |  |
|--|------------------------|---------|-----------|--|
| Add tracks in BS in Computer Science (CS) program<br>AI<br>Machine Learning    | Pierre-Richard Cornely | In-kind | 1/10/2025 |  |
| <b>Tentative New Programs/Tracks</b>   |                        |         |           |  |
| Being considered for the Doctor of Optometry program (OD)                      |                        |         |           |  |
| MS in Data Science   |                        |         |           |  |
| Tracks in BS in Engineering Technology program<br>Systems<br>Manufacturing     |                        |         |           |  |
| <b>New Programs/Tracks Added in Past 5 Years</b>                               |                        |         |           |  |
| BS in Data Science (with tracks)<br>Data Analytics<br>Supply Chain & Logistics | Pierre-Richard Cornely | In-kind | 5/10/2025 |  |
| MAT in Elementary Education  | Forrest Parker         | In-kind | 5/10/2025 |  |
| MAT in Art Education   | Nicole Cox             | In-kind | 6/1/2024  |  |
| Healthcare Administration track in ORGL  | James LaPlant          | In-kind | 8/1/2024  |  |
| <b>Deactivated Programs from FY24 to Present</b>                               |                        |         |           |  |
| BA in French Language and Literature   |                        |         |           |  |
| MA in History  |                        |         |           |  |
| Doctor of Speech Language Pathology  |                        |         |           |  |
| BFA in Art Education   |                        |         |           |  |
| BS in Physics  |                        |         |           |  |
| BS in Applied Mathematics  |                        |         |           |  |
| MS in Exercise Physiology  |                        |         |           |  |
| MAT in English to Speakers of Other Languages                                  |                        |         |           |  |
| BBA in International Business  |                        |         |           |  |
| BBA in Healthcare Business Administration                                      |                        |         |           |  |
| BSED in Special Education  |                        |         |           |  |
| MED in Middle Grades Education   |                        |         |           |  |
| MAT in Middle Grades Education   |                        |         |           |  |
| BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies   |                        |         |           |  |
| BS in Astronomy  |                        |         |           |  |
| BSED in Health and Physical Education  |                        |         |           |  |
| BA in Mathematics  |                        |         |           |  |
| MAT in Secondary Education   |                        |         |           |  |

## Action Plan: Online College for Career Advancement Enrollment

| <b>KPI(s):</b>   |   |           |             |                 |
|--|---|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
| Number of Submitted, Completed, and Accepted Applicants  |   |           |             |                 |
| New and continuing enrollment in each of the eight Online College for Career Advancement Programs  |   |           |             |                 |
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b>   |   |           |             |                 |
| Equip OCCA for continued and accelerated growth for the next decade.   |   |           |             |                 |
| <b>Further Description/Explanation:</b>  |   |           |             |                 |
| The Online College for Career Advancement initiative was launched in 2021. This initiative identifies actions that expand and refine the original blueprint for OCCA.  |   |           |             |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>   |   |           |             |                 |
| Steps  | Responsibility  | Cost      | Start Date  | Completion Date |
| Hire the Executive Director of Online College position with emphasis on this position prioritizing corporate partnerships, enrollment growth strategies, and targeted focus on the non-traditional learner.  | Chief Information Officer                                 | \$180,000 | 7/1/2025    | 9/15/2025       |
| Design and implement a new staffing model for advising and coaching OCCA students by increasing student to staff advising ratios and repurposing some advising positions as mentor/coaches. Cost is for two positions to elevate to Advisor II – mentor/coach. | Executive Director of Online College                      | \$30,000  | 6/1/2025    | 8/15/2025       |
| Launch program specific, digital lead campaign and align digital lead generation with SLATE system   | AVP Enrollment, Assoc. Director Enrollment Marketing, RNL | In-Kind   | Summer 2025 | Fall 2025       |
| Expand the OCCA communication flow to customize by program and student persona. Quicker automation between messaging.  | Executive Director of Online College, AVP Enrollment      | In-Kind   | Summer 2025 | Fall 2025       |
| Develop a corporate partnership program to grow OCCA enrollment that aligns with the corporate needs, employee incentives, etc. and begin establishing partners.   | Executive Director of Online College                      | TBD       | Spring 2026 | Ongoing         |
| Identify a scalable course development model for growth  | Provost   | TBD       | Fall 2025   | Ongoing         |



|  |  |                     |             |             |
|--|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Secure \$250 credit hour rate for active-duty military   | President, VP Finance & Administration, VP Advancement                             | \$50,000 - \$75,000 | Fall 2025   | Fall 2026   |
| Reactivate the military / veteran recruiting position if/when a military rate is established.              | AVP-EM, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Executive Director of Online College | \$65,000.00         | TBD         |             |
| Create a separate application process for OCCA to tailor questions to those necessary for this population. | AVP Enrollment, DCO Strategic Research & Analysis                                  | In-kind             | Fall 2025   | Spring 2026 |
| Focus on completing and yielding applications  | Director of Undergraduate Admissions   | In-kind             | Summer 2025 | On-going    |

## Projected Enrollment Impact

| Student Category                 | Baseline     | Historical   |              | Projections  |              |              |              |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                  | Fall 2023    | Fall 2024    | Fall 2025    | Fall 2026    | Fall 2027    | Fall 2028    | Fall 2029    | Fall 2030    |
| <b>OCCA Learning Opportunity</b> | <b>1,123</b> | <b>1,452</b> | <b>1,819</b> | <b>2,137</b> | <b>2,467</b> | <b>2,818</b> | <b>3,149</b> | <b>3,500</b> |
| New Freshmen                     | 49           | 52           | 128          | 94           | 98           | 104          | 109          | 115          |
| Returning New Freshmen           | 335          | 392          | 514          | 683          | 517          | 573          | 606          | 628          |
| New Transfers                    | 187          | 215          | 244          | 269          | 389          | 444          | 510          | 581          |
| Returning Transfers              | 530          | 767          | 906          | 1,064        | 1,438        | 1,672        | 1,899        | 2,152        |
| Post-bacc                        | 22           | 26           | 27           | 27           | 25           | 25           | 25           | 24           |
| Transient                        | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            |

## Action Plan: Traditional Undergraduate Enrollment

| <b>KPI(s):</b><br>Number of Submitted, Completed, and Accepted Applicants<br>New freshman enrollment growth in Atlanta, Savannah, and Northern Florida regions.<br>Identify target enrollment capacity for DE and Increase the number of DE conversions to VSU.<br>Increase the overall number of first-time, full-time freshmen entering class to 1,400 students. |  |   |             |                 |
|--|--|---|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>Develop strategies to have a positive impact on dual enrollment and freshman enrollment and include those strategies in the current Strategic Recruitment Plan 2023-2028.  |  |   |             |                 |
| <b>Further Description/Explanation:</b><br>VSU must rebuild affinity in the Atlanta and Florida area and while continuing to serve students with high financial need, also connect and be a first choice for students with financial and academic ability. Resonate with both first- and second-generation college families.                                       |  |   |             |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>   |  |   |             |                 |
| Steps  | Responsibility   | Cost  | Start Date  | Completion Date |
| Social media ambassadors aligned with affinity groups & learning communities - ZeeMee as well as Admissions IG Account   | AVP-EM, Assoc. Dir. Admissions Recruitment               | Funded (Admissions & RNL Investment)        | Summer 2025 | Spring 2026     |
| Join the Common Application to increase application volume   | AVP-EM   | \$24,500<br>Year 1 Funded<br>VPESA Year-end | Spring 2025 | Fall 2025       |
| <b>Increase Dual Enrollment</b>  |  |   |             |                 |
| Develop Dual Enrollment Certificate-to-Degree Pathways   | AVP-EM and Academic Deans                                | In-kind                                     | Fall 2024   | Fall 2025       |
| Launch Summer Academy for Dual Enrollment with Residential Option  | AVP-EM, Academic Deans, Housing                          | In-kind                                     | Summer 2027 | Ongoing         |
| <b>Recruitment Events &amp; Counselor Outreach</b>   |  |   |             |                 |
| Fall 2025 host Virtual Counselor events with expectation to transition to face-to-face counselor events in Atlanta, Savannah, and St. John in Fall 2026 if funds are available.  | AVP-EM - Admissions Leadership team                      | \$25,000                                    | Fall 2026   | Annually        |
| Expand Alumni Involvement in Recruitment starting with VSU Alumni Educators in Secondary Schools   | Alumni Office, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, COE | TBD   | Spring 2026 | On-going        |

|   |  |                               |             |                      |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Reimagine V-State Experience (VSE) with targeted events in primary and secondary markets  | AVP-EM, Admissions Leadership Team                         | Funded                        | Fall 2025   | Annually             |
| Enhance Campus Visit Program: Redesign campus visit experience to ensure every prospective student and family receives a high-touch, personalized, and engaging experience that reflects the VSU brand. This includes improved tour guide training, themed visit days, affinity-based experiences, and a concierge-style visitor follow-up process. | AVP-EM - Admissions Leadership Team                        | In-kind                       | Summer 2025 | On-going             |
| Increase prospect pool with new name sources (Niche, Naviance, Apply)   | AVP-EM   | \$50,000                      | Spring 2026 | Annually             |
| Refine Institutional Value Messaging: Clarify the student success value and integrate in recruitment and enrollment marketing and career outcomes (paid internships); capture the stories and integrate with recruitment messaging.   | Admission, Marketing, Student Success, Academics           | In-kind                       | Fall 2025   | Fall 2026 and Beyond |
| Create Digital & Print Collateral for Target Populations: Focusing on growth areas like Dual Enrollment Certificates, Financial Aid (Value), Academic Colleges, New Programs (Data Science), Outcomes, Greek Life   | Marketing & AVP-EM - Assoc. Dir. Admissions Communications | See Enrollment Marketing Plan | Summer 2025 | Fall 2025            |
| Launch Immersive Virtual Campus Tour (e.g., YOUvisit-style) - Utilize current funded Concept 3D platform to build out tours with videos, social media, photos, and marketing focused verbiage.  | AVP-EM, Enrollment Marketing, IT/Web Design                | In Kind                       | Fall 2025   | Spring 2026          |
| Develop VSU YouTube video series across enrollment funnel   | Marketing & AVP-EM - Assoc. Dir. Admissions Communications | See Enrollment Marketing Plan | Summer 2025 | Spring 2026          |

|  |  |  |             |          |
|--|--|--|-------------|----------|
| Expand Digital Advertising Footprint   | AVP-EM and Marketing                                     | See Enrollment Marketing Plan                              | Fall 2025   | On-going |
| Strengthen STEM Recruitment Campaign   | Marketing with STEM academic area and AVP-EM/ Admissions | See Enrollment Marketing Plan                              | Fall 2026   | On-going |
| Implement Parent Engagement Strategy (CampusESP/Slate Parent Portal). Initial investment in Campus ESP with transition to SLATE Parent Portal by 2028. | AVP-EM, DCO SRA, IT/Web                                  | \$84,643<br>Year 1 Funded from FY25 Institutional Year-End | Summer 2025 | Ongoing  |

### Projected Enrollment Impact

| Student Category          | Baseline  | Historical |           | Projections |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                           | Fall 2023 | Fall 2024  | Fall 2025 | Fall 2026   | Fall 2027 | Fall 2028 | Fall 2029 | Fall 2030 |
| New Freshmen              | 1,068     | 1,131      | 1,242     | 1,200       | 1,296     | 1,334     | 1,372     | 1,410     |
| TUG Learning Opportunity  | 1,019     | 1,079      | 1,114     | 1,106       | 1,198     | 1,230     | 1,263     | 1,295     |
| OCCA Learning Opportunity | 49        | 52         | 128       | 94          | 98        | 104       | 109       | 115       |

## Action Plan: Transfer Student Enrollment

| <b>KPI:</b><br>Number of Submitted, Completed, and Accepted Applicants<br>New Transfer Enrollment on campus   |  |             |            |                 |
|---|--|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>Develop strategies to have a positive impact on transfer enrollment and include those strategies in the current Strategic Recruitment Plan 2023-2028.   |  |             |            |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>  |  |             |            |                 |
| Steps   | Responsibility   | Cost        | Start Date | Completion Date |
| <b>Increase TCSG Transfer Student Enrollment</b>  |  |             |            |                 |
| Conduct a comprehensive inventory of existing articulation agreements with the TCSG system, assess maintenance requirements, and designate a central coordinator or office to manage these agreements efficiently.  | AVP Enrollment,<br>Director<br>Institutional<br>Effectiveness                | In-kind     | Fall 2025  | Spring 2026     |
| Prioritize feeder TCSG institutions and North Florida colleges, prioritize VSU programs, determine how to centralize contact with TCSG. Enhance academic pathways by identifying TCSG programs that align with Valdosta State University's offerings to expand and strengthen technical school articulation agreements. | Provost, AVP<br>Enrollment,<br>Director of<br>Institutional<br>Effectiveness | In-kind     | Fall 2025  | On-going        |
| Hire an additional transfer admissions recruiter with focus on pathways and TCSG students. As inquiries increase, this population is more time intensive to discuss transfer credits, program pathways, etc.  | Director of<br>Undergraduate<br>Admissions                                   | \$65,000    | Fall 2027  | On-going        |
| Increase TCSG Transfer credit articulation agreements by program and TCSG institution until policy changes or system-wide articulations between USG and TCSG become standardized.   | Provost, Deans,<br>Department<br>Heads                                       | In-kind     | Fall 2025  | On-going        |
| <b>Increase Transfer Enrollment</b>   |  |             |            |                 |
| Establish a dedicated one-stop center to support adult learners and transfer students, providing streamlined resources and personalized assistance.   | AVP Enrollment<br>/ Advising   | \$37,500.00 | Fall 2026  | Fall 2027       |

|   |   |   |             |             |
|---|---|---|-------------|-------------|
| Dedicated advisor to support the registration of new transfer students. Proactively reaching out to new admits securing a schedule for the first term   | Advising  | \$65,000.00                                   | TBD         | TBD         |
| Implement a standardized enrollment process for first-term students, similar to the approach used for freshmen, by providing a pre-set schedule to simplify and streamline the enrollment experience.   | AVP Enrollment / Advising                           | In-Kind                                       | Fall 2025   | On-going    |
| Standardize and automate student-facing processes through online guides and streamline and simplify website information for improved clarity and accessibility.   | IT / AVP Enrollment                                 | In-Kind                                       | Summer 2025 | On-going    |
| Develop enrollment market plans customized to institutions / VSU programs - Digital Marketing, Geo-fencing, and Retargeting   | Marketing / AVP Enrollment                          | \$65,000                                      | Fall 2026   | On-going    |
| Propose pilot programs with local institutions - reverse transfer, partner, joint admission, transient.   | Provost   | TBD   |             |             |
| Create a comprehensive re-engagement campaign to reintroduce stop-out students to online programs, leveraging print materials, digital advertising, and targeted email communications.  | AVP Enrollment                                      | \$15,000.00                                   | Fall 2025   | On-going    |
| Strengthen the partnership with SGSC's Valdosta Entry Program by offering deferred acceptance options and encouraging students to enroll in a VSU course as transient students.   | AVP Enrollment                                      | In-Kind                                       | Fall 2024   | On-going    |
| Improve the transfer evaluation process by implementing automation tools to reduce manual entry and leverage existing and emerging technologies—including AI—to accelerate transcript evaluation and award transfer credit more efficiently and consistently. | AVP_EM, Registrar, Assc. Dir. Admissions Operations | \$48,000 first year then \$2,300 a year after | Fall 2026   | On-going    |
| Redesign the application process to provide a tailored experience for transfer and non-traditional students and conduct a thorough review of current admissions requirements to ensure alignment with their unique  | AVP Enrollment / SLATE integration                  | In-kind                                       | Fall 2025   | Spring 2026 |

|  |                            |         |             |           |
|--|----------------------------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| needs. Reviewing Accuplacer test for admissions  |                            |         |             |           |
| Design certificate programs, short-term credentials, and stackable credentials that seamlessly integrate into four-year degree pathways without requiring additional coursework. | Provost, AVP-EM, COSM Dean | In-kind | Fall 2025   | On-going  |
| Establish transparent methods of granting credit for life and work experience and ensure consistent practices across multiple programs and majors                                | Provost / AVP Enrollment   | In-kind | Spring 2026 | Fall 2026 |
| Adopt a five-term academic calendar to better serve non-traditional and online students, enhancing flexibility and accessibility in course scheduling.                           |                            |         |             |           |

## Projected Enrollment Impact

| Student Category          | Baseline  | Historical |           | Projections |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                           | Fall 2023 | Fall 2024  | Fall 2025 | Fall 2026   | Fall 2027 | Fall 2028 | Fall 2029 | Fall 2030 |
| New Transfers             | 555       | 515        | 581       | 569         | 671       | 691       | 714       | 737       |
| TUG Learning Opportunity  | 368       | 300        | 337       | 300         | 282       | 247       | 204       | 156       |
| OCCA Learning Opportunity | 187       | 215        | 244       | 269         | 389       | 444       | 510       | 581       |

## Action Plan: Graduate School Enrollment

| <b>KPI:</b><br>Number of Submitted, Completed, and Accepted Applicants<br>New Student Graduate Enrollment  |  |                                       |             |                 |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>Develop a graduate strategic recruitment plan and strategic enrollment marketing plan for graduate programs. Assess graduate programs based on demand and capacity. Determine where demand exists and capacity could be added.   |  |                                       |             |                 |
| <b>Alignment with VSU 2023:</b><br>Goal One - marketing; aligning university academic portfolio with demand. Goal 3: Maximizing growth - 3.2.a - implement a strategic recruitment plan. 3.2.b - Meet established graduate enrollment goals identified in SEP. Develop admission and recruitment infrastructure. assess SEARCH (graduate name buys), document best practices, and develop scalable approaches to graduate faculty recruitment. Detail on-campus and online graduate program recruitment, enrollment marketing and delivery plans. Coordinate international, housing, marketings, web, student success and academic portfolio SEP action plans. |  |                                       |             |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>   |  |                                       |             |                 |
| Steps  | Responsibility                             | Cost                                  | Start Date  | Completion Date |
| <b>I. Develop Graduate Recruitment Plan integrated with program capacity and demand analysis:</b>  |  |                                       |             |                 |
| A. Conduct capacity analysis; establish a process for assessing capacity annually. Align demand data with capacity.  | Assoc. Provost for Graduate Studies, Deans | In-kind                               | Summer 2025 | Annually        |
| B. Develop a formalized recruitment strategy and plan for graduate programs. RNL consulting for Fall 2025.   | RNL, Assoc. Provost for Graduate Studies   | Funded for FY26 - Institutional Lapse | Fall 2025   | Fall 2025       |
| C. Recruit VSU undergraduates into graduate programs: 1) Increase 4+1 pathway into grad programs: advisors speak to juniors, add any other programs 4+1, etc. 2) Direct admit top 5% into programs with capacity. 3) Invite all other VSU undergrads to apply to VSU grad programs (waive application fee month) 4) Invite UG students who graduated a year or two ago to apply. 5) Host informational sessions for UG students about graduate school/programs.  | Graduate Admissions                        | In Kind                               | Summer 2025 | on-going        |
| D. Recruit from USG institutions without grad programs and/or participate in institution career fairs to promote graduate programs. Expand recruitment to include military, governmental entities, and regional industries for career advancement. Admissions  | Graduate Admissions                        | \$80,000                              | Fall 2025   | On-going        |



|  |   |   |             |             |
|--|---|---|-------------|-------------|
| recruiter position, program registrations, and travel budget needed.   |   |   |             |             |
| F. Conduct a comprehensive graduate assistantship study to include price sensitivity, research impact, campus dependence for staffing / tasking.                                 | Graduate Assistant Taskforce  | In-kind                                   | Fall 2026   | Spring 2027 |
| J. Establish timely outreach to RFIs and graduate prospect inquiries, graduate applicants in the admissions funnel to convert a larger number of graduate prospects to enrolled. | Grad School   | Funded: New Position approved Spring 2025 | Fall 2025   | on-going    |
| <b>II. Develop recommendations for marketing &amp; communications:</b>   |   |   |             |             |
| A. Recommend priorities for enrollment marketing through increased digital advertising, social media presence and video content. Align with SEO initiatives                      | RNL, Enrollment Marketing, Graduate Admissions                                      | See Enrollment Marketing Plan             | Summer 2025 | on-going    |
| B. Expand, refine and customize by program the Communication Plan in Slate   | RNL, Enrollment Marketing, Graduate Admissions, DCO – Strategic Research & Analysis | See Enrollment Marketing Plan             | Summer 2025 | on-going    |

## Projected Enrollment Impact

| Student Category      | Baseline     | Historical   |              | Projections  |              |              |              |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                       | Fall 2023    | Fall 2024    | Fall 2025    | Fall 2026    | Fall 2027    | Fall 2028    | Fall 2029    | Fall 2030    |
| <b>Graduate Total</b> | <b>2,921</b> | <b>3,099</b> | <b>3,236</b> | <b>3,416</b> | <b>3,619</b> | <b>3,839</b> | <b>4,072</b> | <b>4,325</b> |
| Masters               | 1,867        | 1,990        | 2,075        | 2,221        | 2,356        | 2,494        | 2,649        | 2,817        |
| New                   | 554          | 525          | 579          | 609          | 653          | 693          | 737          | 785          |
| Continuing            | 1,313        | 1,465        | 1,496        | 1,612        | 1,703        | 1,801        | 1,912        | 2,032        |
| Specialist            | 482          | 538          | 553          | 571          | 555          | 593          | 630          | 673          |
| New                   | 121          | 132          | 135          | 141          | 116          | 124          | 133          | 143          |
| Continuing            | 361          | 406          | 418          | 430          | 439          | 469          | 497          | 530          |
| Doctorate             | 462          | 481          | 497          | 510          | 598          | 642          | 683          | 725          |
| New                   | 104          | 113          | 100          | 105          | 122          | 130          | 139          | 148          |
| Continuing            | 358          | 368          | 397          | 405          | 476          | 512          | 544          | 577          |
| Other                 | 110          | 90           | 111          | 114          | 110          | 110          | 110          | 110          |

## Action Plan: STEM Cluster

| <b>KPI(s):</b>  |                |                    |             |                 |
|---|----------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Program enrollment growth in each of the majors within College of Science and Technology  |                |                    |             |                 |
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b>  |                |                    |             |                 |
| <p>The College of Science and Math worked closely with RNL to examine the content offerings in each of the academic departments. RNL program demand research informed the creation of STEM cluster of content at the undergraduate level. The STEM includes a new data science program and additional concentration tracks for Geosciences, Computer Science, and Engineering Management. The College of Science and Math has identified resources to build capacity around the new content areas. The College also requests focused STEM recruiting and enrollment marketing as well as resources to support a STEM affinity group. The College of Science and Math has identified summer bridge programs and high school outreach that can enhance student academic preparation for rigorous math and science content. CoSM has also identified an urgent need for computer lab space to be shared between the newly approved data science program and the proposed CIS tracks. New tracks for CS and CIS have been created by the CS faculty. The new content is intended to be delivered on-campus initially and could be extended to the OCCA CIS program in the future.</p> <p>The Engineering Technology department reviewed market demand research and determined that the department has subject matter expertise and capacity to offer a significant portion of the curriculum required for systems engineering technology for the immediate future an adjunct instructor is needed for circuits technology. The department is also planning to work with the transfer admission team to form articulation agreements with two-year institutions to support future transfer enrollment.</p> |                |                    |             |                 |
| <b>Further Description/Explanation:</b>   |                |                    |             |                 |
| CoSM is also developing a non-thesis master's degree in biology to be delivered online, additional tracks for undergraduate biology, and enhanced outreach through the ROTC which resides in the college. These initiatives have not been included in the Action Plan and Enrollment Projections.   |                |                    |             |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>  |                |                    |             |                 |
| Steps   | Responsibility | Cost               | Start Date  | Completion Date |
| <b>Data Science</b>   |                |                    |             |                 |
| Transition Department of Applied Mathematics and Physics to new Department of Data Science  | COSM           | In-kind            | Summer 2025 | Fall 2025       |
| Launch BS in Data Science with the following concentrations/tracks:<br>- Business Analytics<br>- Supply Chain & Logistics<br>- Computer Science and Engineering   | COSM           | In-kind            | Fall 2025   | Ongoing         |
| Computer Lab upgrades to support new software and curriculum  | COSM           | \$350,000 One-time | Summer 2026 | Fall 2026       |
| Faculty development in data science curriculum and training.  | COSM           | \$100,000 One-time | Fall 2025   | Summer 2026     |
| Faculty compensation assessment and potential adjustment to recruit and retain Data Science program expertise with new CIP. USG has class and comp changes on hold. May be addressed through attrition and rehire of specific positions until USG moratorium is lifted.   | COSM           | \$70,000 estimated | TBD         | TBD             |

|  |  |                   |             |             |
|--|--|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Department of Biology  |  |                   |             |             |
| Revise BS in Biology curriculum to increase completion rates and decrease DFWI grades in gatekeeper courses (BIOL 1107).   | Biology  | In-kind           | Spring 2025 | Ongoing     |
| Evaluate degree requirements and eliminate unnecessary courses.  | Biology  | In-kind           | Spring 2025 | Ongoing     |
| Establish a recruitment and retention plan for Biology majors to better attract new students and reduce melt from the program in 1st and 2nd year students.  | Biology, Admissions, DCO Strategic Research and Analysis | In-kind           | Fall 2025   | Fall 2025   |
| Explore concentrations/tracks that align with high-demand career fields to package the value and outcomes of a biology degree.   | Biology, AVP-EM  | In-kind           | Summer 2025 | Fall 2025   |
| Complete development of a Non-Thesis MS in Biology program to be offered fully online. Face-to-face MS in Biology to remain as the Thesis option.  | Biology, Academic Affairs                                | In-kind           | Fall 2025   | Spring 2026 |
| Department of Computer Science and Engineering Technology  |  |                   |             |             |
| Establish concentrations/tracks in BS in Computer Science:<br>- Artificial Intelligence<br>- Machine Learning<br>Intended for face-to-face modality but will be designed with consideration to future expansion into OCCA. | Computer Science and Engineering Technology              | In-kind           | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Establish Concentration/track in BS in Computer Information Science:<br>- Cybersecurity<br>Will be part of existing OCCA degree program.   | Computer Science and Engineering Technology              | In-kind           | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Establish Concentration/track in BS in Engineering Technology:<br>- Systems Engineering<br>- Manufacturing Engineering   | Computer Science and Engineering Technology              | In-kind           | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Faculty development in curriculum and training.  | COSM   | \$50,000 One-time | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Apply for NSA CAE designation.   | Computer Science and Engineering Technology              | In-kind           | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Align all curriculum with the needs of AFROTC.   | Computer Science and Engineering Technology              | In-kind           | Fall 2027   | Summer 2028 |
| Department of Chemistry and Geosciences  |  |                   |             |             |

|   |   |                               |             |             |
|---|---|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Establish Concentrations/Tracks in BS in Environmental Geosciences:<br>- Geography (existing)<br>- Geology (existing)<br>- Environmental and Climate Sciences<br>- Environmental Sustainability<br>- Geospatial Intelligence and Urban Planning<br>- Natural Hazards Management | Chemistry and Geosciences                                 | In-kind                       | Fall 2026   | Summer 2028 |
| Faculty development in curriculum and training.   | COSM  | \$50,000 One-time             | Fall 2026   | Summer 2027 |
| Align Climate Science with Atmospheric Science track for AFROTC.  | Chemistry and Geosciences                                 | In-kind                       | Fall 2027   | Summer 2028 |
| All COSM STEM Cluster Programs  |   |                               |             |             |
| Integrate STEM program for specific marketing and develop additional STEM outreach to complement Undergraduate Recruitment Plans.   | RNL, Enrollment Marketing, Undergraduate Admissions, COSM | See Enrollment Marketing Plan | Summer 2025 | Ongoing     |
| Develop a STEM Prep summer academy and/or STEM Prep First-year co-curricular program to help improve academic prep of students pursuing STEM degrees.   | COSM, AVP-EM, Office of Student Success                   | In-kind                       | Summer 2025 | Summer 2026 |
| Develop the STEM INQR curriculum that helps motivate first-year students towards STEM degrees and career fields.  | COSM, Advising, Office of Student Success                 | In-kind                       | Summer 2025 | Ongoing     |

## Action Plan: Enrollment Marketing

### **Situation:**

University marketing promotes the overall brand and reputation of the institution, focusing on visibility, credibility, and prestige with broad audiences such as the public, alumni, donors, and partners. While enrollment marketing is more targeted, driving student recruitment and retention by engaging prospective students and their families through program promotion, application campaigns, and yield strategies.

Over the past three years, VSU's marketing efforts have primarily emphasized brand recognition and general brand awareness. Initially, the Marketing unit was charged with executing a comprehensive, university-wide brand strategy, assessing current expenditures and staffing models, and making long-term recommendations. Campaigns have been actively managed using industry-standard performance metrics, including impressions, click-through rates, conversions, and applications. Campaign performance has been continually refined through data-driven adjustments. While this has contributed to increased visibility, the need to expand marketing efforts to include enrollment-specific marketing was identified.

While progress has been made in elevating brand visibility and generating enrollment interest across traditional undergraduate, online, and graduate student populations, demand for marketing support continually exceeds available resources. This has required prioritization, which limits the depth of program-specific marketing that can be executed and the ability to provide dedicated full-funnel enrollment marketing.

### **Overarching Strategies:**

- **Align Marketing with Enrollment Goals** - Ensure enrollment marketing strategies are directly tied to enrollment objectives and involve academic and enrollment leaders in planning.
- **Use Full-Funnel Metrics** - Continue tracking impressions, CTR, inquiries, applications, and conversions as complementary measures across the enrollment funnel, ensuring both top-of-funnel growth and bottom-of-funnel conversion are supported.
- **Strengthen Program-Specific Campaigns** - Highlight the distinct value of individual programs through targeted messaging, outcomes, and student success stories.
- **Optimize Digital Marketing Impact** - Refine SEO, retargeting, and paid media campaigns with data-driven adjustments. Partner with a contract expert in enrollment marketing for additional resources and expertise.
- **Expand Audience Reach** - Use data-informed insights to strengthen performance with core audiences while identifying opportunities to grow in new or underserved segments.
- **Invest in Enrollment Marketing Capacity** - Build in-house expertise, tools, and collaboration across departments to support sustained marketing performance.
- **Advance Data-Informed Strategy** - Partner with a contract expert in enrollment marketing to apply analytics at every stage of the funnel to optimize campaigns, improve ROI visibility, and continuously refine enrollment marketing tactics.

### **Further Description/Explanation:**

Valdosta State University's overall marketing and brand recognition efforts play a vital role in strengthening the institution's reputation both within the region and the local community. While these initiatives are essential, enrollment marketing requires additional, targeted strategies to translate brand visibility into inquiries, applications, and enrollments.

To ensure both areas receive the attention and strategic focus they require, we recommend restructuring the current University Marketing team into two distinct units—one dedicated to institutional branding and community engagement, and the other focused specifically on enrollment marketing. This division will allow each team to concentrate on its core objectives, enabling VSU to maintain a laser-sharp focus on both brand elevation and student recruitment. To maximize the impact of both areas, VSU should ensure clear roles, strong collaboration, and appropriate resources for both University Marketing and Enrollment Marketing.

#### Implementation Schedule/Timetable

| Steps  | Responsibility                        | Cost  | Start Date | Completion Date |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Align Enrollment Marketing with Enrollment Goals</b>  |                                       |   |            |                 |
| Restructure the current University marketing team into two distinct units - one dedicated to institutional branding and community engagement; the other focused specifically on enrollment marketing.  | CO to President, VPESA                |   |            | 7/1/2025        |
| Move the Enrollment Marketing unit to report to Enrollment Management and retain the University Marketing team with the Office of the President.   | CO to President, VPESA                |   |            | 7/1/2025        |
| Associate Director of Enrollment Marketing to serve as RNL Marketing project lead to establish goals and ensure deliverables align with the SEP and institutional expectations.  | AD of Enrollment Marketing            |   | 7/1/2025   |                 |
| <b>Traditional Undergraduate Enrollment Marketing</b>  |                                       |   |            |                 |
| <b>Enhance Student Search and Applicant Cultivation Campaigns</b><br>- Launch student search campaign targeting up to 175,000 purchased records through email, direct mail, calling, and digital advertising.<br>- Conduct up to six outreach campaigns via email and direct mail to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.<br>- Deploy up to 735,000 digital ad impressions .<br>- Launch two segmented phone campaigns utilizing 1,120 hours of outbound calling to support yield and engagement.<br>- Integrate campaign leads and engagement data into Slate CRM through RNL data automation tools. | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing, RNL | \$515,125.33 - RNL Year 1. Funded from FY25 year-end. | 7/1/2025   | Ongoing         |

|  |                                       |  |          |         |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|----------|---------|
| <b>Strengthen Application Marketing and Yield Messaging</b><br>- Utilize up to 35,000 applicant records for targeted communication and follow-up.<br>- Launch three email and phone campaigns with personalized messaging and outreach, supported by up to 147,000 digital impressions.<br>- Include personalized letters and inserts in campaign strategy to increase yield among admitted students.<br>- Track campaign results through RNL SmartView and adjust in real-time. | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>Leverage Predictive Modeling and Market Analysis</b><br>- Use RNL's Search Model and ForecastPlus to identify geographic markets with high enrollment potential.<br>- Analyze three years of historical data to prioritize territories and refine recruitment strategies.<br>- Incorporate insights into travel planning, outreach segmentation, and student search targeting.  | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>Optimize CRM Communication Flows</b><br>-Develop drip campaigns for up to two enrollment funnel stages.<br>-Create and deploy 15 email messages, 5 text messages, and 2 printed assets.<br>-Integrate VSU messaging, calls to action, and program highlights.<br>-Build and launch CRM workflows in Slate with reporting tools to evaluate engagement.  | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>Increase Awareness Through Digital Boost Campaigns</b><br>- Launch location-targeted digital ad campaigns in key feeder markets.<br>-Deliver 684,600 total impressions across Student Search and Applicant Cultivator audiences.<br>-Create seven ads per campaign and adjust based on performance analytics.<br>-Focus efforts on underserved geographic markets and new audience segments.  | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |

|  |   |   |             |          |
|--|---|---|-------------|----------|
| <b>Targeted Digital Advertising</b> for VSU recruitment events, retargeting for funnel progression, recruitment initiatives (No Fee Months, Project Idaho)   | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing                      | \$100,000<br>Funded from FY25 Division ESA Lapse Funds                            | Fall 2025   | Annually |
| <b>Targeted Billboard Advertising</b> for VSU recruitment events, retargeting for funnel progression, recruitment initiatives (No Fee Months, Project Idaho)   | Admissions, Enrollment Marketing                      | \$150,000<br>Funded from FY25 Institutional Lapse Funds                           | Fall 2025   | Annually |
| Social media brand ambassadors aligned with recruitment brand and messaging targeting funnel progression.  | AVP-EM, Assoc. Dir. Enrollment Marketing              | Funded within Admissions Operating  | Summer 2025 | Annually |
| <b>Graduate and Online Enrollment Marketing</b>  |   |   |             |          |
| <b>Launch Funnel-Based Communication Campaigns</b><br>- Design targeted communication flows for two key funnel stages.<br>- Produce up to 15 emails, 5 SMS messages, 1 postcard, and 1 mailer per campaign.<br>- Include program-specific value propositions and calls to action.<br>-Implement and monitor campaigns in Slate, including CRM dashboards for performance review. | Graduate School, Enrollment Marketing, CRM Admin, RNL | \$649,444.23 - RNL Year 1<br><br>\$1.1 million - Marketing and Advertising budget | 7/1/2025    | Ongoing  |
| <b>Execute Targeted Digital Lead Generation for Graduate Programs</b><br>-Launch up to 11 distinct digital advertising campaigns.<br>-Build and deploy audience personas and messaging tailored by program type.<br>-Host landing pages and thank-you pages to capture inquiry data.<br>-Optimize campaigns monthly across platforms like LinkedIn, Google, and YouTube.         | Graduate School, Enrollment Marketing, CRM Admin, RNL | Funded from FY25 year-end.  | 7/1/2025    | Ongoing  |



|  |  |  |          |         |
|--|--|--|----------|---------|
| <b>Execute Targeted Digital Lead Generation for Online College Programs</b><br>- Design campaigns targeting adult learners and those with some college but no degree.<br>- Build customized ads with motion graphics and landing pages optimized for conversion.<br>- Focus delivery across platforms most used by adult students (Google, Facebook, LinkedIn).<br>- Evaluate success using monthly dashboard reports tied to the enrollment funnel. | Online College, Enrollment Marketing, CRM Admin, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>Create Funnel-Based Communication for Online Students</b><br>- Build segmented drip campaigns aligned with online program cycles and decision windows.<br>- Develop 15 email messages, 5 SMS messages, and print assets.<br>- Sync messaging with application deadlines, flexible start dates, and career-aligned benefits.<br>- Launch flows in Slate and evaluate engagement using campaign reports.  | Online College, Enrollment Marketing, CRM Admin, RNL |  | 7/1/2025 | Ongoing |

## Action Plan: Digital Transformation

| <b>KPI:</b><br>New student enrollment - funnel metrics - recruitment and admission timing and productivity (automated)  |   |         |                       |                          |
|---|---|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Situation:</b><br>Fully implement and utilize SLATE to support dynamic enrollment management and engaged, customized communication. Fund and implement a staffing plan that ensures full utilization of SLATE.   |   |         |                       |                          |
| <b>Overarching Strategies:</b><br>Positioning SLATE to drive the funnel with all levels and student types. Determine how to maintain and optimize the system. Ensure timely communication. Automate communication for graduate coordinators. Enhance training for Graduate Coordinators. Shift from ad-hoc or reactive solutions to sustained approaches. Integrate and enhance the transition from marketing to SLATE. |   |         |                       |                          |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>  |   |         |                       |                          |
| Steps   | Responsibility                                | Cost    | Start Date            | Completion Date          |
| Implement the SLATE Task Force. Identify VSU SLATE experts (Captains). Determine user expectations and protocols. Determine user levels: establish competency fundamentals expectations; create training guides and sessions for respective roles. Document department SLATE use.   | AVP-EM / DCO- Strategic Research and Analysis | In-kind | Fall 2025             | On-going                 |
| Map the student journey by student type, level, program, and persona with SLATE milestone points - Develop master communication architecture framework for new and continuing students.   | Slate Taskforce                               | In-kind | Fall 2025 - Framework | On-going dynamic updates |
| Redesign key sections of the Enrollment Management website to shift from an informational hub to a conversion-driven digital experience that encourages prospective students to: Visit, Apply, and complete the next enrollment steps.  | IT/ AVP-EM / Enrollment Marketing             | Funded  | Spring 2025           | On-going                 |
| Expand and continue to build communication architecture for OCCA and Graduate - Making them Personalized and Relevant (Liquid Markup)   | AVP-EM / Graduate School                      | Funded  | Spring 2025           | Spring 2026              |
| Build out SLATE communication for online, non-traditional, transient, and transfer UG   | AVP-EM - Assoc Director CRM                   | Funded  | Spring 2025           | Fall 2025                |
| Build customized SLATE communication architecture for Graduate  | Graduate School                               | In kind | Fall 2024             | On-going                 |

|   |   |                          |             |             |
|---|---|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Elevate Axiom development for SLATE to Banner integration with USG ITS. Necessary to process admissions applications in SLATE and reduce duplication of processes.  | AVP-EM                                  | \$15k 1X + \$2500 annual | Fall 2024   | Summer 2025 |
| Automate UG and Graduate processing in SLATE (documents in extender, uploads of transcripts, evaluations, etc...)   | Graduate School / Admissions Operations | In kind                  | Spring 2025 | Fall 2025   |
| Integrate digital marketing into the enrollment funnel (automate): Inquiry-applicant-admit-enrolled   | Slate Taskforce/ Marketing              | \$80,000.00              | Spring 2026 | On-going    |
| Build out student success communications - Segmenting populations and consolidating messaging across the institution  | Student Success                         | In kind                  | Fall 2024   | Fall 2025   |
| Codify SLATE reporting structure - Funnel Reports and ROI Reports   | AVP-EM                                  | Funded                   | Spring 2025 | Summer 2026 |
| Train graduate coordinators (semi-annual meetings)  | Graduate School / Slate Taskforce       | In-kind                  | Fall 2025   | Fall 2026   |
| Implement the graduate inquiry communication plan - Making them Personalized and Relevant (Liquid Markup)   | Graduate School                         | In-kind                  | Summer 2024 | On-going    |
| Create, Coordinate, and Implement a Social Media Communication Plan at all learning opportunities and integrate into the communication plan   | AVP-EM                                  | Funded                   | Spring 2025 | Fall 2025   |
| Review all Student forms and convert to digital through Decisions   | AVP-EM                                  | Funded / Decisions       | Summer 2025 | Fall 2026   |
| Student Status Visual -Develop a student-facing status visualization tool—similar to an online order tracking system—that clearly communicates where a student is in the enrollment process and highlights next steps (e.g., Complete Application, Submit Missing Documents, FAFSA, Orientation, Housing, Register). This visual guide should be integrated into the applicant/admitted student portal and updated in real time through Slate or MyVSU. | DCO-Strategic Research and Analysis     |                          | Fall 2025   | Summer 2026 |
| Utilize AI solutions for improved student communications and satisfaction   | IT / AVP-EM                             | Funded / Druid           | Summer 2025 | On-going    |

## Action Plan: Student Success

| <b>KPI:</b><br>Increased persistence rates (term-to-term)<br>Increased retention rates (fall-to-fall)<br>Increased graduation rates (6-year rates)   |                |         |            |                 |
|--|----------------|---------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Situation:</b><br>Valdosta State University's efforts to increase student retention, persistence, and completion have highlighted the need for stronger alignment across advising, academic intervention, tutoring, and onboarding efforts. While each area contributes to student success, the current efforts operate with limited coordination, resulting in weakening the effectiveness. Timely communication with students and across units is inconsistent, reducing our ability to intervene early and follow through consistently. Many new students struggle to form meaningful connections within their academic communities. Students deemed at-risk often need more intentional support at an early stage in the semester to build these connections and stay engaged throughout their academic journey. Orientation and transition programs are not yet fully leveraged to connect students with the academic support structures they will rely on throughout their journey. As a result, VSU is missing critical opportunities to reinforce expectations, build confidence, and establish early pathways to success. To improve outcomes, VSU must create an integrated, student-centered model connecting early onboarding to sustain academic support, fosters a strong sense of belonging within academic communities, and ensures coordinated, timely communication throughout the student lifecycle. |                |         |            |                 |
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>VSU will implement a proactive student success intervention strategy as part of the Strategic Enrollment Plan. This strategy will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a unified student success support structure</li> <li>• Implement proactive and timely communication across support units</li> <li>• Foster belonging and early academic intervention within academic communities</li> <li>• Leverage orientation, transition programs, and INQR as gateways to academic support</li> <li>• Re-engage and retain returning students</li> <li>• Personalize outreach using predictive nudging strategies</li> <li>• Strengthen family engagement as a partner in student success</li> </ul>  |                |         |            |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>   |                |         |            |                 |
| Steps  | Responsibility | Cost    | Start Date | Completion Date |
| <b>Step 1: Build a unified student success support structure</b>   |                |         |            |                 |
| <b>1.1 Realign Cross-Functional Student Support Offices Through Data and Technology:</b><br>-Align student-facing offices through a shared data and technology infrastructure to enable coordinated support across Institutional Research, SLATE, Advising, Academic Intervention, Orientation, and Tutoring.  | DCO SRA        | In-kind | July 2025  | July 2025       |

|  |                                       |         |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------|--|--|
| <b>1.2 Map Existing Academic Advising, Interventions, and Support Services to Identify Duplication of Efforts and Gaps:</b><br>-Conduct a structured review of support services, including advising, intervention, and tutoring.<br>-Identify duplication, fragmentation, gaps, and services for at-risk students.<br>-Highlight scalable models for broader implementation.   | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR Dirs)            | In-kind | Initial:<br>Aug 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Aug           | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept    |
| <b>1.3 Leverage Student Assessments to Inform Proactive Support:</b><br>-Deploy the CSI and MYSA to gather insights on students' academic risk and openness to assistance.<br>-Use findings to customize outreach, guide intervention strategies, and connect students to appropriate resources early.<br>-Distribute actionable reports to advisors and retention teams to support timely, student-centered engagement.                               | DCO SRA +<br>RNL +<br>(UA + SSR Dirs) | In-kind | Initial:<br>Aug 2025<br><br>Ongoing<br>Each Aug        | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br><br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec |
| <b>1.4 Develop a Coordinated Student Support System that Enhances Transitions and Strengthens Collaboration Across Advising, Intervention, and Other Support Offices:</b><br>-Create an integrated, student-centered model to ensure smooth transitions and strengthen collaboration across advising, intervention, tutoring, orientation, and related services.<br>-Clarify roles and handoff procedures to streamline navigation and reduce overlap. | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR Dirs)            | In-kind | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept          | Initial:<br>Apr 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Oct     |
| <b>1.5 Define Shared Goals, Metrics, and Student Success Indicators Across Support Units:</b><br>-Define shared goals and performance indicators to align student support efforts and measure progress toward improved outcomes.   | DCO SRA                               | In-kind | Initial<br>Review:<br>Apr 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov | Initial:<br>June 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec    |

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| <b>1.6 Train Staff and Faculty for a Coordinated Student Support Model:</b><br>-Provide joint training for staff and faculty to clarify roles, workflows, and responsibilities in the student support system. Include early alert training and incorporate into annual professional development.              | DCO SRA<br>(UA Assoc. Dirs,<br>Student Success<br>Mgr and Coach,<br>SLATE Admin) | In-kind | Initial:<br>July 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan    | Initial:<br>Aug 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Apr     |
| <b>1.7 Assess and Refine the Coordinated Student Support Model:</b><br>-Evaluate the integrated student support system and use findings to refine processes before broader implementation.  | DCO SRA  | In-kind | Ongoing:<br>Each May                             | Ongoing:<br>Each July                            |
| <b>Step 2: Implement proactive and timely communication across support units</b>  |  |         |  |  |
| <b>2.1 Audit Existing Student Communications Across Units:</b><br>-Review all student-facing communications to identify redundancies, gaps, and inconsistencies.<br>-Use findings to inform a coordinated communication calendar and targeted outreach strategy.  | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin,<br>UA + SSR)  | In-kind | Initial:<br>Sept 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept   | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Oct     |
| <b>2.2 Define Communication Goals by Phase of the Student Journey:</b><br>-Define communication objectives for each stage of the student journey, aligning messages to goals like early engagement, help-seeking, academic preparedness, and retention. Use these goals to guide tone, timing, and content.   | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR)  | In-kind | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Oct     | Initial:<br>Feb 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov     |
| <b>2.3 Establish a Student Success Communication Calendar:</b><br>-Develop a shared communication calendar across student-facing units to clarify who sends what, to whom, when, and why.<br>-Organize it by student lifecycle phases and integrate with SLATE to improve coordination and reduce redundancy. | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin,<br>UA + SSR)  | In-kind | Initial:<br>Feb 2026<br><br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec | Initial:<br>Feb 2026<br><br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan |
| <b>2.4 Create Standardized Templates and Message Libraries:</b><br>-Create standardized, student-centered message templates for common outreach scenarios with guidance on tone, timing, and personalization. A shared library will promote consistent  | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin,<br>UA + SSR)  | In-kind | Initial:<br>Mar 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Feb     | Initial:<br>Mar 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Feb     |

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| language, reduce duplication, and reflect VSU's support-first communication style.  |                                   |         |   |  |
| <b>2.5 Automate and Personalize Communications Using SLATE:</b><br>-Set up SLATE to automate student communications based on key milestones, behaviors, or risk indicators.<br>-Personalize messages using student data such as major, risk level, or past engagement to ensure timely follow-up, reduce manual work, and improve consistency across departments.                       | DCO SRA (SLATE Admin)             | In-kind | Initial: Apr 2026<br>Ongoing: Each Mar  | Initial: Apr 2026<br>Ongoing: Each Mar   |
| <b>2.6 Train Staff on Communication Best Practices:</b><br>-Provide training to help staff use student-centered, timely, and coordinated communication strategies. Focus on message tone, timing, use of platforms like SLATE, and follow-up protocols.<br>-Clarify roles and timing to prevent conflicting or duplicate outreach.  | DCO SRA (SLATE Admin, UA + SSR)   | In-kind | Initial: May 2026<br>Ongoing: Each Apr  | Initial: May 2026<br>Ongoing: Each Apr   |
| <b>2.7 Monitor Engagement and Adjust Strategy:</b><br>-Track engagement metrics (e.g., open rates, click-throughs, responses) and gather feedback from students and staff to evaluate communication effectiveness.<br>-Use results to adjust message content, timing, and channels to keep the strategy relevant and impactful.   | DCO SRA (UA + SSR)                | In-kind | Initial: June 2026<br>Ongoing: Each May | Initial: July 2026<br>Ongoing: Each July |
| <b>Step 3: Foster belonging and early academic intervention within academic communities</b>   |                                   |         |   |  |
| <b>3.1 Launch and Refine First-Year Academic Belonging Initiatives Through Block Scheduling and INQR Courses:</b><br>-Use block scheduling and INQR courses to group first-year students by major or meta-major, fostering cohort-based connections.<br>-Integrate faculty engagement, peer interaction, and resource awareness to strengthen belonging and academic identity early on. | DCO SRA (UA + SSR, Gen Ed Coord.) | In-kind | Initial: Aug 2025<br>Ongoing: Each Jan  | Initial: Aug 2025<br>Ongoing: Each Jan   |
| <b>3.2 Embed Early Academic Intervention and Supplemental Instructors</b>   | DCO SRA (SSR)                     | In-kind | Initial: Sept 2025                      | Initial: Oct 2025                        |

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| <b>Strategies in Gateway and High-DFW Courses:</b><br>-Collaborate with faculty in high-DFW and gateway courses to identify and support at-risk students early.<br>-Use structured checkpoints like early assessments and attendance tracking, and activate SLATE-triggered interventions such as tutoring referrals, advisor outreach, or academic coaching within the first 4 to 6 weeks.  |                                    |         | Ongoing:<br>Each Aug                          | Ongoing:<br>Each Sept                          |
| <b>3.3 Develop Targeted Intervention Programs and Peer Mentor Programs Within Academic Communities:</b><br>-Create academic intervention programs and peer mentoring within departments to support students showing early signs of struggle.<br>-Use proactive outreach and resource referrals to guide students.<br>-Pair mentors by major or pathway to offer encouragement, academic tips, and support, building a sense of belonging and timely connection to help | DCO SRA<br>(SSR)                   | In-kind | Initial:<br>Nov 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept | Initial:<br>Jan 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov   |
| <b>3.4 Use SLATE to Track Participation and Identify Disengaged or At-Risk Students:</b><br>-Use SLATE to track student participation in engagement programs like block scheduling, mentoring, and interventions.<br>-Identify students showing signs of disengagement or risk, then prompt timely follow-up by advisors, intervention staff, or faculty to ensure early support and reduce the chance of students being overlooked.                                   | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin, UA + SSR) | In-kind | Initial:<br>Jan 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov  | Initial:<br>Feb 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec   |
| <b>3.5 Assess Impact Through Student Feedback and Engagement Outcomes:</b><br>-Assess belonging and early intervention efforts using student feedback and data on engagement and performance.<br>-Collect insights through surveys, focus groups, and participation metrics like event attendance, peer mentor contact, and academic alerts. Use results to  | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR)              | In-kind | Initial: May<br>2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each May  | Initial:<br>July 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each July |



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| improve programs and guide future scaling.   |                                   |         |  |  |
| <b>Step 4: Leverage orientation and Transition programs as gateways to academic support</b>  |                                   |         |  |  |
| <b>4.1 Map Existing Components Integrated Within Orientation and Transition Programs:</b><br>-Review current orientation and transition programs to evaluate how and when academic support services are introduced.<br>-Identify effective touchpoints for promoting resource awareness and belonging, as well as gaps where academic engagement could be strengthened.  | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR)             | In-kind | Initial:<br>Nov 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov | Initial:<br>Jan 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan |
| <b>4.2 Adjust Orientation Content to Strengthen the Transition Process:</b><br>-Enhance orientation and transition programs to strengthen academic integration.<br>-Improve sessions to clearly introduce academic expectations, support services, and success strategies, ensuring students feel welcomed and equipped to navigate their academic environment from the start.   | DCO SRA<br>(Orient Mgr)           | In-kind | Initial:<br>Jan 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan | Initial:<br>Jan 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan |
| <b>4.3 Develop a Pre-Semester and Early-Semester Academic Engagement Campaign Framework:</b><br>-Design an academic engagement campaign that begins post-orientation and continues through the first six weeks of the semester.<br>-Outline communication goals, timing, delivery methods, responsible offices, and tailored content by student group to guide coordinated outreach from advising, tutoring, intervention, and peer support teams. | DCO SRA<br>(Orient Mgr, UA + SSR) | In-kind | Initial:<br>Mar 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Mar | Initial:<br>Mar 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Mar |

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| <b>4.4 Launch Pre-Semester and First-Six-Weeks Academic Connection Campaigns:</b><br>-Implement a communication and engagement campaign that begins after orientation and extends through the first six weeks of the semester.<br>-Advisors, tutoring staff, academic coaches, and peer mentors will provide targeted outreach to reinforce support awareness, guide next steps, and sustain momentum.<br>-Key touchpoints will include personalized nudges, academic checklists, welcome messages, and reminders based on each student's academic profile. | DCO SRA<br>(Orient Mgr, UA + SSR)                    | In-kind | Initial: Apr 2026<br>Ongoing: Each May, Nov       | Initial: May 2026<br>Ongoing: Each July, Jan     |
| <b>4.5 Evaluate the Impact of Orientation Changes on Early Academic Engagement:</b><br>-Evaluate the impact of orientation and transition adjustments using both qualitative and quantitative data.<br>-Gather student feedback on academic readiness, support awareness, and sense of belonging.<br>-Analyze trends in advising, tutoring, and early alerts compared to prior cohorts.<br>-Use findings to refine content, timing, and follow-up strategies for future orientation cycles.   | DCO SRA<br>(Orient Mgr)                              | In-kind | Initial: June 2026<br>Ongoing: Each June          | Initial: Aug 2026<br>Ongoing: Each Aug           |
| <b>Step 5: Re-engage and retain returning students</b>  |  |         |   |  |
| <b>5.1 Re-Engage Returning Students Through Targeted Outreach and Programming:</b><br>-Identify and support students returning after a stop-out, extended leave, or academic difficulty.<br>-Provide tailored re-entry programming with individualized advising, academic planning, peer support, and connections to tutoring and financial services.<br>-Begin outreach before re-enrollment and continue through the first 6–8 weeks of the return semester to ensure successful integration.   | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE, UA Director, Student Success Mgr) | In-kind | Initial: Oct 2025<br>Ongoing: Each Oct, Mar, July | Initial: Nov 2025<br>Ongoing: Each Nov, Apr, Aug |

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| <b>5.2 Implement a Stop-Out Re-Engagement Campaign:</b><br>-Use enrollment data to identify students who stopped out within the last 1 to 3 terms.<br>-Launch personalized outreach campaigns that address common barriers such as holds, financial aid, or advising, and offer re-enrollment coaching or concierge-style support.  | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin, UA Director, Student Success Team) | In-kind | Initial:<br>Nov 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov, Apr, July | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec, May, Aug |
| <b>5.3 Monitor and Outreach to Potential non-Returning Students:</b><br>-Track students who drop courses mid-semester, are placed on academic probation, or fail to register for the next term.<br>-Use SLATE to trigger nudges and assign advisors or intervention staff to follow up promptly for re-engagement.  | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin, Student Success Mgr)               | In-kind | Initial:<br>Feb 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept, Feb      | Initial:<br>Apr 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Nov, Apr      |
| <b>Step 6: Personalize outreach using predictive nudging strategies</b>   |   |         |   |  |
| <b>6.1 Build a Predictive Framework to Identify At-Risk Students Early:</b><br>-Work with Institutional Research and SLATE Admin to build a predictive model using historical data such as GPA trends, course withdrawals, early alerts, and LMS activity to identify students at higher risk of attrition.<br>-Use this framework to guide targeted outreach and assign follow-up cases to advisors or intervention staff. | DCO SRA<br>(IR + SLATE Admin)                               | In-kind | Initial:<br>Sept 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept          | Initial:<br>Oct 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Oct           |
| <b>6.2 Segment Student Communication Based on Risk and Engagement Profiles:</b><br>-Create student subgroups based on predictive data and behavioral indicators, such as disengaged, high-risk, and moderately engaged.<br>-Use SLATE to send tailored messages, nudges, and reminders aligned with each subgroup's specific needs and behaviors.   | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE, Student Success Mgr, Tutor Coord)        | In-kind | Initial:<br>Oct 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Oct            | Initial:<br>Dec 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec           |

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| <b>6.3 Test and Refine Nudging Strategies Using Student Behavior Data:</b><br>-Test different messaging strategies such as tone, channel, and timing, and track which ones lead to student actions like scheduling appointments, completing early alerts, or attending tutoring.<br>-Use A/B testing in SLATE to evaluate effectiveness and improve future nudges.   | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin + Student Success Mgr)       | In-kind | Initial:<br>Jan 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Jan            | Initial:<br>Feb 2025<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Feb               |
| <b>6.4 Assess Effectiveness and Scale Predictive Nudging Strategies:</b><br>-Assess the impact of predictive nudging on outcomes like advising participation, tutoring use, early alert follow-up, and course success.<br>-Gather feedback from students and staff to determine what works best, then expand effective strategies to more student groups and refine workflows for future use.  | DCO SRA<br>(UA + SSR Dirs)                           | In-kind | Initial:<br>June 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each June          | Initial:<br>June 2026<br>Ongoing:<br>Each June             |
| <b>Step 7: Strengthen family engagement as a partner in student success</b>  |  |         |   |  |
| <b>7.1 Develop a Central Family Resource Hub Within the SLATE Family Portal:</b><br>-Create a centralized Family Resource Hub in the SLATE Family Portal for FERPA-authorized family members.<br>-Include academic calendars, support service overviews, deadlines, and tips for promoting student independence.<br>-Segment content by student type and align updates with the academic calendar.<br>-Ensure consistency with SLATE's communication workflows and VSU's support-first approach. | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin, Orient. Mgr, UA + SSR Dirs) | In-kind | Initial:<br>Oct 2026                                    | Initial:<br>Jan 2027                                       |
| <b>7.2 Integrate Family Messaging into Orientation and Transition Communications:</b><br>-Incorporate family-focused materials into orientation, transition communications, and early-semester outreach.<br>-Offer clear guidance on supporting student academic habits while respecting boundaries.<br>-Provide early FERPA release   | DCO SRA<br>Co: Orient. Mgr<br>(SLATE Admin, UA)      | In-kind | Initial:<br>Jan 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Fall, Spr, Sum | Initial:<br>May 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Fall, Spr, Summer |

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| opportunities and ensure messaging aligns with student support priorities.   |  |         |  |  |
| <b>7.3 Host Family Info Sessions and Virtual Town Halls:</b><br>-Host virtual or hybrid town halls on advising, financial aid, academic expectations, and student success resources.<br>-Promote through email and social media using SLATE audience lists for FERPA-cleared contacts.<br>-Schedule events around key transition points such as midterms and registration periods. | DCO SRA<br>Co: Orient. Mgr<br>(SLATE Admin, UA, FinAid, House ADs) | In-kind | Initial:<br>May 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Sept, Mar | Initial:<br>July 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each Dec, May |
| <b>7.4 Assess Family Engagement Impact and Iterate:</b><br>-Gather feedback from families and students on the clarity and impact of family-facing content and events.<br>-Review engagement metrics such as attendance and resource clicks to improve communication and programming.<br>-Use insights to guide annual enhancements and expansion efforts.                          | DCO SRA<br>(SLATE Admin, UA + SSR)                                 | In-kind | Initial:<br>July 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each June     | Initial:<br>July 2027<br>Ongoing:<br>Each July     |

## Action Plan: Housing and Residence Life

| <b>Situation:</b><br>Valdosta State University's efforts to increase student retention, persistence, and completion have highlighted the need for stronger alignment across advising, academic intervention, tutoring, and onboarding efforts. While each area contributes to student success, the current efforts operate with limited coordination, resulting in weakening the effectiveness. Timely communication with students and across units is inconsistent, reducing our ability to intervene early and follow through consistently. Many new students struggle to form meaningful connections within their academic communities. Students deemed at-risk often need more intentional support at an early stage in the semester to build these connections and stay engaged throughout their academic journey. Orientation and transition programs are not yet fully leveraged to connect students with the academic support structures they will rely on throughout their journey. As a result, VSU is missing critical opportunities to reinforce expectations, build confidence, and establish early pathways to success. To improve outcomes, VSU must create an integrated, student-centered model connecting early onboarding to sustained academic support, fosters a strong sense of belonging within academic communities, and ensures coordinated, timely communication throughout the student lifecycle. |                       |                    |            |                 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>The overarching strategies will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the impact of residential life on student retention</li> <li>• Build purposeful residential communities that promote connection and belonging</li> <li>• Embed academic success into the residential environment</li> <li>• Increase occupancy through housing communication and engagement.</li> </ul>  |                       |                    |            |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>   |                       |                    |            |                 |
| Steps  | Responsibility        | Cost               | Start Date | Completion Date |
| <b>Step 1: Strengthen the impact of residential life on student retention</b>  |                       |                    |            |                 |
| <b>1.1 Monitor and Support First-Semester Academic Progress of Residential Students</b><br>-Coordinate with academic intervention staff to receive early alerts on residents with attendance or grade concerns.<br>-Have RHDs or RAs follow up directly with flagged students.   | D for HRL + AD for RL | In-Kind            | Aug 2025   | Ongoing         |
| <b>1.2 Celebrate Academic Success within the Halls</b><br>-Recognize students earning a 3.0+ GPA with certificates, bulletin boards, or small recognition events.<br>-Feature student stories in newsletters or social media.  | Housing Sups + RHD    | \$300 for supplies | Oct 2025   | Ongoing         |

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| <b>1.3 Increase Resident Participation in Academic Milestone Events</b><br>-Host midterm and finals week programs in the halls in collaboration with Academic Affairs and Student Success & Retention.<br>-Promote LLC- and theme-related academic programming.   | D for HRL + AD for RL                     | \$1,000 for supplies | Oct 2025  | Ongoing |
| <b>1.4 Establish RA-Led Academic Check-Ins</b><br>-Train RAs to conduct early-semester academic check-ins and refer students to support services as needed.<br>-Integrate into rounds and progress notes.   | D for HRL + AD for RL                     | In-Kind              | Sept 2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>1.5 Coordinate Monthly Collaboration with Academic Support Services</b><br>-Hold monthly touchpoints between Residence Life and campus partners (e.g., Advising, Academic Intervention, Tutoring) to identify trends and plan co-curricular support for residents.   | D for HRL + AD for RL                     | In-Kind              | Aug 2025  | Ongoing |
| <b>1.6 Develop, Pilot, and Implement a Peer Academic Support Model in Residence Halls</b><br>-Design a peer-based academic support model that positions residents to promote study habits, share academic resources, and lead informal study sessions.<br>-Pilot the model in select halls, assess engagement and impact, and implement across all residence halls based on findings. | D for HRL + Housing Sups + RHD            | \$500 for supplies   | 10/1/2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>Step 2: Build purposeful residential communities that promote connection and belonging</b>   |   |                      |           |         |
| <b>2.1. Reinforce Community Building Beginning on Move-In Day</b><br>-Host welcome events, mixers, and hall-based activities during the first week to introduce students to peers and residence life staff.<br>-Incorporate icebreakers and connection-focused programming into first-month events.   | D for HRL + AD for RL + Housing Sup + RHD | \$1,000 for supplies | Aug 2026  | Ongoing |

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| <b>2.2. Expand and Promote Themed Living Communities</b><br>-Advertise themed and LLC communities early in the housing application process.<br>-Add new options (e.g., STEM, transfer) based on student population needs.  | D for HRL + AD for RL           | \$500 for supplies   | Aug 2026  | Ongoing |
| <b>2.3. Revise Residence Life Programming Model to Prioritize Engagement</b><br>-Require each hall to deliver one educational and one social program monthly.<br>-Assign thematic focuses such as community building, academic success, life skills, and career readiness. | D for HRL + AD for RL           | In-Kind              | Jan 2026  | Ongoing |
| <b>2.4. Structure RA &amp; RHD Training Around Community Engagement</b><br>-Deliver training that emphasizes relationship-building, inclusive practices, and peer connection strategies.<br>-Include engagement-specific sessions for RAs working in themed communities.   | D for HRL + AD for RL           | In-Kind              | June 2026 | Ongoing |
| <b>2.5. Strengthen SPARK Participation and Peer Interaction Goals</b><br>-Require RAs to promote SPARK events through multiple channels, escort residents, and log communication.<br>-Establish SMART goals for RA engagement and resident participation.                  | D for HRL + AD for RL           | In-Kind              | Aug 2026  | Ongoing |
| <b>Step 3: Embed Academic Success into the Residential Environment</b>   |                                 |                      |           |         |
| <b>3.1. Collaborate With Faculty to Support Academic Onboarding</b><br>-Coordinate house calls by faculty during the first week of each semester to welcome students and share success strategies.   | D for HRL + AD for RL           | In-Kind              | July 2026 | Ongoing |
| <b>3.2 Improve Academic Intervention Response in Residence Halls</b><br>-Set up an internal process where housing staff receive academic alerts and follow up with residents flagged for class attendance or performance issues.   | D for HRL + AD for RL + AI Team | In-Kind              | Aug 2025  | Ongoing |
| <b>3.3. Create Dedicated Study Zones in Common Areas</b><br>-Designate and furnish quiet study spaces in residence halls using calming colors and collaborative layouts.   | D for HRL + AD for RL           | \$5,000 for supplies | Oct 2025  | Ongoing |



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| <b>3.4. Coordinate Academic Success Programming in the Halls</b><br>-Host time management, study skills, and exam prep sessions each semester in collaboration with Academic Affairs and Career Services.  | D for HRL + AD for RL          | In-Kind              | Jan 2026  | Ongoing |
| <b>3.5. Recognize and Celebrate Academic Achievement in the Residential Community</b><br>-Distribute recognition certificates for students with a 3.0+ GPA each semester.<br>-Post congratulatory messages in halls and social media spotlights.   | D for HRL + Housing Sups + RHD | In-Kind              | Jan 2026  | Ongoing |
| <b>Step 4: Increase Occupancy Through Improved Housing Communication and Engagement</b>  |                                |                      |           |         |
| <b>4.1. Improve Housing Selection Experience for Returning Students</b><br>-Host a Housing Info Day with application guidance, room selection support, and hall tours.<br>-Offer early access to upperclassmen hall tours to generate excitement and encourage returning student applications. | D for HRL + AD for H           | \$1,000 for supplies | Dec 2025  | Ongoing |
| <b>4.2. Enhance Marketing and Storytelling Around On-Campus Living</b><br>-Film and publish updated residence hall videos highlighting amenities and student experiences.<br>-Share student testimonials and community highlights on social media and the VSU housing website.                 | D for HRL + AD for H           | \$2,500 for supplies | Oct 2025  | Ongoing |
| <b>4.3. Strengthen Year-Round Communication Plan for Housing Selection</b><br>-Launch strategic email and postcard campaigns for both current and incoming students.<br>-Ensure consistent messaging around application deadlines, room selection, and community features.                     | D of HRL + AD for H            | In-Kind              | Sept 2025 | Ongoing |
| <b>4.4. Implement Ongoing Outreach to Incomplete Applicants</b><br>-Conduct weekly check-ins with students who have not submitted or completed housing applications.<br>-Align outreach with key institutional   | D for HRL + AD for H           | In-Kind              | Jan 2026  | Ongoing |

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| milestones like registration and financial aid disbursement.   |                     |         |           |         |
| <b>4.5. Execute Timely Move-In and Transition Messaging</b><br>-Roll out a summer communication series, including move-in assignments, hall-specific guides, and onboarding materials.<br>-Include essential information on work orders, RA connections, and key housing procedures. | D of HRL + AD for H | In-Kind | June 2026 | Ongoing |

## Action Plan: Value and Affordability

| <b>KPI:</b><br>New and continuing UG Enrollment   |                                     |         |            |                 |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Overarching Strategy:</b><br>Leverage financial aid to increase and sustain undergraduate enrollment. This strategy supports new student enrollment growth and retention improvement   |                                     |         |            |                 |
| <b>Further Description/Explanation:</b><br>Understand Pell and Hope eligibility impact on retention and how to leverage improvement.  |                                     |         |            |                 |
| <b>Implementation Schedule/Timetable</b>  |                                     |         |            |                 |
| Steps   | Responsibility                      | Cost    | Start Date | Completion Date |
| Review and update enrollment funnel communication flow and customize with aid information and how to navigate - plan specific web information   | Financial Aid / SLATE communication | In-kind | Fall 25    | Spring 26       |
| Implement a targeted communication plan for new students—covering inquiries, applicants, admits, and enrolled—to provide clear guidance on the FAFSA, VSU scholarships and HOPE scholarship processes   | Director of Financial Aid           | In-kind | Fall 25    | Spring 26       |
| Implement a targeted communication plan and integrate with SLATE for returning students—to provide clear guidance on the FAFSA, VSU scholarships and HOPE scholarship processes   | Director of Financial Aid           | In-kind | Spring 26  | Summer 26       |
| Identify a communication plan for HOPE admits that attend 2-year institution  | Financial Aid / SLATE communication | In-kind | Fall 25    | Spring 26       |
| Implement a focused communication plan for at-risk students, specifically those approaching loan limits, nearing maximum time frames, or at risk of not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards.   | Director of Financial Aid           | In-kind | Fall 25    | On-going        |
| <b>Develop early alert action reports to proactively identify at-risk students.</b>   |                                     |         |            |                 |
| Develop a pro-active initiative (financial aid and advising) to ensure student success for Hope recipients. Automate reporting and communication outreach to students, advisors, and faculty. Target mid-term grades at risk with detail on their HOPE & PELL status. | AVP Enrollment                      | In-Kind | Summer 25  | Fall 25         |

|  |   |          |           |           |
|--|---|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Establish a proactive initiative in collaboration with Financial Aid, Academics, and Advising to identify students at risk of not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at the spring checkpoint. Provide targeted guidance on the SAP appeal process and strategies to maintain federal aid eligibility. Implement automated reporting and communication outreach to students, advisors, and faculty, focusing on students with at-risk mid-term grades and detailing their SAP status. Align with DFW reduction action plan | AVP Enrollment  | In-kind  | Summer 25 | Spring 26 |
| Leverage predictive analytics to identify first-year students most at-risk of losing financial aid or not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Develop a targeted support course focusing on financial literacy and academic success to proactively support these students in their first term at VSU.  | AVP Enrollment  | \$65,000 | Spring 26 | Fall 26   |
| Add an affordability alert in the student advising records to identify students facing financial challenges and provide targeted support to address affordability concerns.  | AVP Enrollment  | In-kind  | Spring 26 | Summer 26 |
| Review the financial holds, Foundation Guarantee, and enrollment eligibility based on BOR policy, state law, and enrollment impact.  | VPSAEM  | In-kind  | Summer 25 | On-going  |
| Improve collection rate of balance due each semester through multichannel approach (MyVSU pop-up, call team, text, email)  | AVP Enrollment  | In-kind  | Summer 25 | On-going  |
| <b>Explore strategies to effectively leverage financial aid offerings as a tool to boost student enrollment.</b>   |   |          |           |           |
| Formalize the scholarship process, application and award timeline specific to new and continuing students, campus-wide oversight/governance of process to ensure consistency and succession of issuing funds.  | AVP Enrollment / Foundation / Director of FA / Academic Deans | In-kind  | Fall 25   | Spring 26 |
| Continue implementing the Scholarship Universe platform to standardize the scholarship awarding process, aligning  | Scholarship Committee   | Funded   | Completed | Completed |

|   |  |         |             |             |
|---|--|---------|-------------|-------------|
| the university's practices with best practices in scholarship distribution.   |  |         |             |             |
| Develop predictive analytics to inform strategies for optimizing scholarship allocation, maximizing the impact of scholarship dollars to drive enrollment growth. Determine opportunities for AI automation.                                    | AVP Enrollment                                       | TBD     | Fall 25     | Summer 26   |
| Retarget unused scholarship funds for Spring and Summer push  | AVP Enrollment / Dir. FA                             | In-kind | In-progress | In-progress |
| <b>Emphasize Valdosta State University's value and affordability at each stage of the enrollment funnel to attract and retain prospective students.</b>   |  |         |             |             |
| Create and execute a comprehensive marketing plan targeting prospective and current students across multiple channels, including social media, search engines, video content, and testimonials that highlight college experiences and outcomes. | AVP Enrollment / Enrollment Marketing / Dir Fin. Aid | \$0     | Fall 26     | On-going    |
| Proactively educate parents as partners and provide parent financial literacy communication flow.   | Dir. FA / Vendor                                     | Funded  | Summer 25   | On-going    |

## Appendix A: NISS Summary and VSU Response

### NISS Summary<sup>3</sup>

In Spring 2023, Valdosta State University partnered with the National Institute for Student Success (NISS) to conduct a campuswide diagnostic review. The benchmarking analysis revealed:

1. First-year retention rate of VSU (56%) trails behind the national average (75%) by 10 percentage points.
2. Six-year graduation rates for VSU (41%) are behind the national average (66%) and state peers (55%) by 14 percentage points.

The study identified four central barriers to student success:

### Diagnostic Executive Summary



|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Current situation</b> | Valdosta State University promotes a culture of excellence and works to solidify its role as South Georgia's flagship institution by prioritizing the success of its students. Commendably, VSU has made recent progress in closing gaps in graduation rates based on students' race and their Pell status. First-year retention and six-year graduation rates, though, consistently lag state and national benchmarks. Overall, nearly 60% of students who begin their studies at VSU transfer or stop out by the six-year mark, suggesting that there are still significant opportunities to improve student outcomes (and grow revenues).   |
| <b>Key strengths</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Through efforts such as the Center for South Georgia Regional Impact, VSU's leadership and its strategic plan maintain a clear focus on improving student success while promoting growth with the city of Valdosta and surrounding communities.</li><li>▪ Graduation rates have improved slightly over the past several years, and success rates are largely consistent across different racial and ethnic groups.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Key challenges</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Undercoordinated academic advising:</b> With advising units and advisors across campus at times employing a range of practices, some of which are counter to VSU's adopted advising model, students receive advising supports that can differ in nature and quality depending on their academic unit or advisor.</li><li>▪ <b>Non-systematic financial outreach:</b> Financial Aid communications and outreach to students are limited in scope, and financial aid is often disconnected from other student support units. Student financial risk data are not being consistently incorporated to anticipate and respond to students who may experience financial difficulties.</li><li>▪ <b>High DFW and fill rates in critical courses:</b> Academic data on course availability, non-pass rates, and academic interventions are not being leveraged systematically to improve academic outcomes in the first year and beyond.</li><li>▪ <b>Underutilized targeted communications:</b> While VSU maintains a call center, chatbot capabilities, and several applicable software platforms, these resources are undercoordinated and sporadically implemented, thus preventing the university from communicating with students in a clear, consistent, and proactive manner.</li></ul> |

1. **Undercoordinated Academic Advising:** While VSU had an established professional advising model, inconsistent implementation across academic units led to inaccurate guidance, excess credit hours, and student confusion. Advisors often lacked an institutional standard of training and support needed to provide consistent, proactive engagement.
2. **Non-systematic Financial Outreach:** Financial aid processes were similarly described as confusing and reactive, with students reporting unclear policies, and lack of timely communication and support. Students frequently struggle to understand Satisfactory Academic Progress, and returning students often feel overlooked in ongoing outreach. Stakeholders called for more population-specific and proactive communication strategies and stronger integration between financial aid and student support services.

<sup>3</sup> Full NISS findings and Playbook documents are retained by the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis.

3. **Inconsistent Academic Design and Support:** While VSU tracks DFW and course fill rates, particularly in high-impact STEM and gateway courses, these insights are not routinely converted into coordinated intervention strategies. Academic support services, such as Supplemental Instruction, are unevenly distributed and not consistently aligned with student needs. Adjustments to curriculum and pedagogical strategies were also suggested. Stakeholders noted that DFW analyses are rarely discussed or used to inform decision-making, limiting their impact.
4. **Underutilized Targeted Communications:** While VSU has invested in strong communication tools, the platforms were not used in a unified or student-centered way. Students often receive redundant or unclear messaging - a result of fragmented communication across units. Many messages were sent to all students via email rather than targeted messaging for the population needing specific information or call to action. These findings point to the need for cross-functional collaboration and a centralized communication approach that ensures every student receives timely, accurate, and relevant information.

As a result of the consultation, the following Prioritized Actions were recommended.

## Playbook Executive Summary



|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Prioritized actions</b>           | Valdosta State is poised to take a significant leap in improving student success outcomes as the university commits to identifying and implementing the next phase of student-success initiatives. To take this leap and to eliminate critical barriers to completion, VSU must work to deliver coordinated, systematic support for students at scale. This work should include standardizing advising systems and practices; operationalizing the use of financial wellness data across student support units; delivering proactive student support in critical courses; and better coordinating communications across institutional units and the student body. |
| <b>1</b>                             | <b>Standardize academic advising systems, protocols, training, and practices for professional and faculty advisors to ensure students receive consistent, proactive support across all advising units and colleges.</b>   |
| <b>2</b>                             | <b>Strengthen the financial support of students through the better use of financial data, collaboration across units, and proactive and timely outreach to students.</b>  |
| <b>3</b>                             | <b>Normalize the practice of using academic data to identify high-enrollment, high non-pass rate courses; realign and target academic supports; and inform course and program redesign.</b>   |
| <b>4</b>                             | <b>Coordinate student communications and scale the use of the chatbot to prioritize and direct information to all students in a timely, proactive, and personalized manner.</b>   |
| <b>Alignment with Strategic Plan</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Foster Student Success:</b> VSU will help students succeed in life by continuing to prioritize retention and degree completion and expanding experiential opportunities and career focus.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sustain Institutional Strength:</b> VSU will manage its resources efficiently and responsibly, making informed decisions and investments that ensure long-term organizational strength.</li> </ul>  |

## VSU's Strategic Response to NISS Recommendations

VSU restructured the decentralized professional advising offices into three coordinated offices to enhance consistency, clarity, and support across the student journey at VSU. A hybrid advising model was implemented bringing faculty advisors into the process once the student completes the CORE curriculum.

- The Office of University Advising focuses on first- and second-year students, ensuring a strong and consistent foundation through core curriculum and early academic planning.
- Online College for Career Advancement Advising supports students enrolled in online undergraduate programs, providing specialized advising aligned with flexible, workforce-focused pathways.
- The Office of Student Success and Transition is responsible for academic intervention, assessing early alerts, coordinating tutoring and supplemental instruction, and helping new students acclimate to VSU through orientation and first-year engagement programming.

These structural changes are supported by investments in key systems such as SLATE, which not only tracks the student journey but also enables targeted and timely communication across touchpoints.



## Appendix B: RNL Current Student Survey Summary

In Spring 2024, as part of the RNL partnership, VSU students were invited to participate in a Student Satisfaction Survey.<sup>4</sup> Feedback from the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey further illustrated the strengths and challenges shaping life at VSU. Students consistently praised faculty within their majors for their care and commitment to student success, especially in high-performing programs such as nursing, sociology, and criminal justice. However, students expressed concerns with instructional inconsistency in general education and high-enrollment courses, limited opportunities for experiential learning, and a lack of clarity around course relevance and expectations. Advising was also a consistent area of concern, with students citing frequent turnover, lack of personalized guidance, and confusion stemming from the recent transition to faculty-based advising. Many students called for a more structured, proactive advising model supported by better training and consistent communication.

Operational feedback reflected similar themes of inconsistency and underutilization. Students cited poor conditions, delayed maintenance, and a mismatch between what they pay and the living experience they receive. Campus life was described as welcoming but lacking in depth, variety, and inclusivity, particularly for commuters, transfer students, and those outside of Greek life or athletics. Students called for more weekend programming, recognition of non-Greek organizations, and better use of engagement platforms. Financial concerns were also prevalent. Many students felt mandatory fees for unused services were unfair, especially among commuters and online learners. Students also expressed frustration with rising housing costs and the limited funding available for graduate and out-of-state students. Additionally, many cited dissatisfactions with billing transparency and the responsiveness of financial aid offices. Online learners appreciated the flexibility of remote education, which allowed them to balance academics with work and personal responsibilities. However, they noted challenges with a sense of belonging, unclear instructional expectations, and delayed communication from instructors. In addition, many objected to being charged for on-campus amenities they do not use. Across all populations, students conveyed a clear desire for more inclusive, transparent, and coordinated systems.

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<sup>4</sup> Full data set and dashboard access is retained with the Office of Strategic Research & Analysis.

## Student Satisfaction Inventory: Traditional Undergraduate

### Valdosta State University - SSI - 2/2024-Feb 2024

#### Bottom Line Indicators

##### Satisfied / Very Satisfied

How satisfied are our students compared with students nationally?

Percentages below indicate the students indicating Satisfied/Very Satisfied.

46%

Our Institution

53%

National

##### Probably / Definitely Yes

How likely are our students to enroll again, if they had it to do over?

Percentages below indicate the students indicating Probably/Definitely yes.

51%

Our Institution

62%

National

#### Gender

| Demographic Responses               | N   | %       |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---------|
| Female                              | 477 | 70.88%  |
| Male                                | 159 | 23.63%  |
| Prefer not to respond               | 14  | 2.08%   |
| Transgender                         | 1   | 0.15%   |
| Genderqueer                         | 16  | 2.38%   |
| Additional gender category or Other | 6   | 0.89%   |
| Total                               | 673 | 100.00% |
| No Answer                           | 103 |         |

#### Class Level

| Demographic Responses | N   | %       |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|
| Freshman              | 144 | 18.60%  |
| Sophomore             | 155 | 20.03%  |
| Junior                | 210 | 27.13%  |
| Senior                | 189 | 24.42%  |
| Special student       | 1   | 0.13%   |
| Graduate/Professional | 59  | 7.62%   |
| Other class level     | 16  | 2.07%   |
| Total                 | 774 | 100.00% |
| No Answer             | 2   |         |

#### Institutional Choice

| Demographic Responses | N   | %       |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|
| 1st choice            | 402 | 54.99%  |
| 2nd choice            | 229 | 31.33%  |
| 3rd choice or lower   | 100 | 13.68%  |
| Total                 | 731 | 100.00% |
| No Answer             | 45  |         |

Students attending their first-choice institution are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels overall.

#### Strengths

| Item   |
|--|
| ★ Campus item: The most important links to student information within MyVSU are easily accessible. |
| ★ I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.                                     |
| ★ Major requirements are clear and reasonable.   |
| ★ Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.                                      |
| ★ I am able to experience intellectual growth here.  |
| ★ There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.                                      |
| ★ The staff in the health services area are competent.   |
| ★ Tutoring services are readily available.   |
| ★ Library resources and services are adequate.   |
| ★ Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.                               |
| ★ Freedom of expression is protected on campus.  |
| ★ Library staff are helpful and approachable.  |
| ★ Student disciplinary procedures are fair.  |
| ★ The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable.                                   |

#### Challenges

| Item   |
|--|
| ✖ Adequate financial aid is available for most students.                   |
| ✖ The campus is safe and secure for all students.                          |
| ✖ Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students. |
| ✖ Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.                                 |
| ✖ It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.            |

A total of approximately 775 students responded to the survey and consisted of 18.6% freshman, 20% sophomore, 27% junior, 24.4% senior, and 7.6% graduate classifications.

Regarding the level of satisfaction with VSU, 46% were satisfied or very satisfied with the institution as compared to 53% of students in the southern region (4-year institutions) that were satisfied or very satisfied with their respective institution. Of the VSU student respondents, 51% were probably or definitely likely to enroll again at our institution versus 62% of respondents in the southern region.

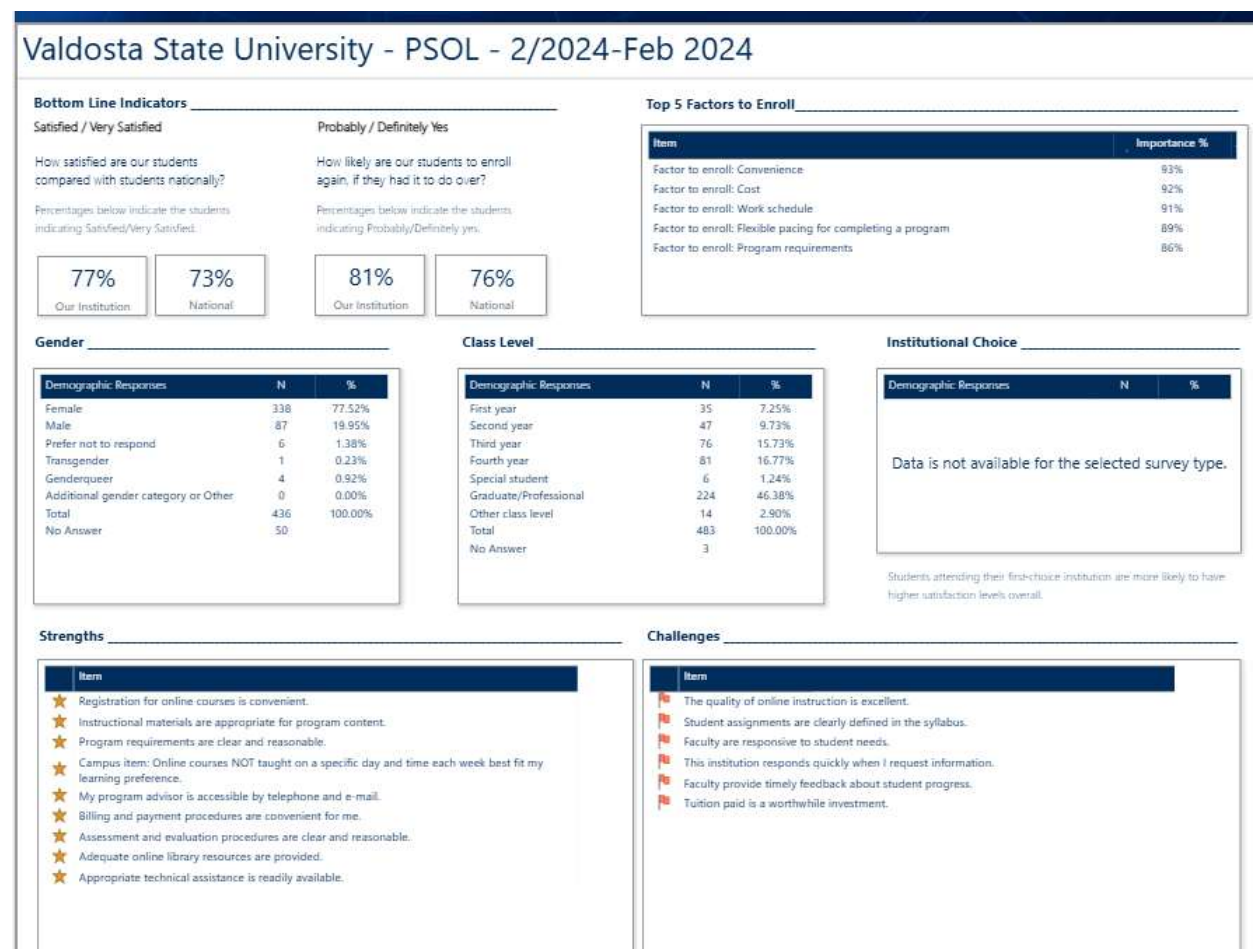
Respondents identified financial aid, cost, academic reputation, campus appearance, and geographic location as the top five factors to enroll in an institution.

The respondents also identified the following strengths of VSU:

- The most important links to student information within MyVSU are easily accessible.
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
- Major requirements are clear and reasonable.

- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here.
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.
- The staff in the health services area are competent.
- Tutoring services are readily available.
- Library resources and services are adequate.
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.
- Freedom of expression is protected on campus.
- Library staff are helpful and approachable.
- Student disciplinary procedures are fair.
- The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable.
- Challenges were also identified:
- Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
- The campus is safe and secure for all students.
- Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.
- Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
- It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.

## Student Satisfaction Inventory: Undergraduate and Graduate Online



**Gender**

| Demographic Responses               | N   | %       |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---------|
| Female                              | 338 | 77.52%  |
| Male                                | 87  | 19.95%  |
| Prefer not to respond               | 6   | 1.38%   |
| Transgender                         | 1   | 0.23%   |
| Genderqueer                         | 4   | 0.92%   |
| Additional gender category or Other | 0   | 0.00%   |
| Total                               | 436 | 100.00% |
| No Answer                           | 50  |         |

**Class Level**

| Demographic Responses | N   | %       |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|
| First year            | 35  | 7.25%   |
| Second year           | 47  | 9.73%   |
| Third year            | 76  | 15.73%  |
| Fourth year           | 81  | 16.77%  |
| Special student       | 6   | 1.24%   |
| Graduate/Professional | 224 | 46.38%  |
| Other class level     | 14  | 2.90%   |
| Total                 | 483 | 100.00% |
| No Answer             | 3   |         |

**Institutional Choice**

| Demographic Responses                               | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Data is not available for the selected survey type. |   |   |

Students attending their first-choice institution are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels overall.

**Strengths**

| Item   |
|--|
| ★ Registration for online courses is convenient.   |
| ★ Instructional materials are appropriate for program content.   |
| ★ Program requirements are clear and reasonable.   |
| ★ Campus item: Online courses NOT taught on a specific day and time each week best fit my learning preference. |
| ★ My program advisor is accessible by telephone and e-mail.  |
| ★ Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me.  |
| ★ Assessment and evaluation procedures are clear and reasonable.   |
| ★ Adequate online library resources are provided.  |
| ★ Appropriate technical assistance is readily available.   |

**Challenges**

| Item  |
|---|
| ✖ The quality of online instruction is excellent.               |
| ✖ Student assignments are clearly defined in the syllabus.      |
| ✖ Faculty are responsive to student needs.                      |
| ✖ This institution responds quickly when I request information. |
| ✖ Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress.       |
| ✖ Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.                      |

A total of 486 students responded to the survey and consisted of 7.25% first year, 9.73% second year, 15.7% third year, 16.77% fourth year, 1.24% special, and 46.38% graduate classifications.

Regarding the level of satisfaction with VSU, 77% were satisfied or very satisfied with the institution as compared to 73% of students nationwide that were satisfied or very satisfied with their respective institution. Of the VSU student respondents, 81% were probably or definitely likely to enroll again at our institution versus 76% of respondents nationwide.

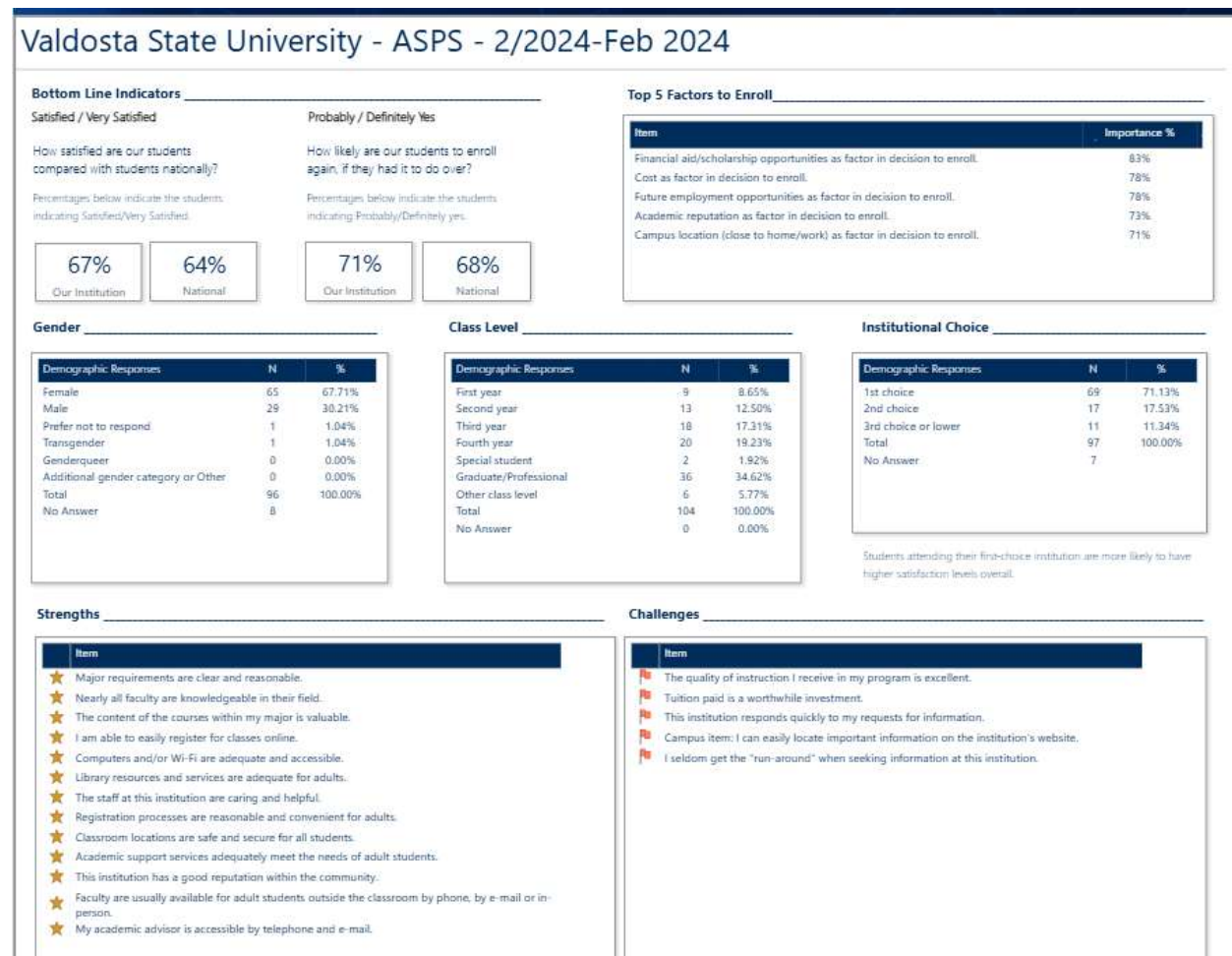
Respondents identified convenience, cost, work schedule, flexible pacing for completing a program, and program requirements as the top five factors to enroll.

The respondents also identified the following strengths of VSU:

- Registration for online courses is convenient.
- Instructional materials are appropriate for program content.
- Program requirements are clear and reasonable.
- Online courses NOT taught on a specific day and time each week best fit my learning preference.
- My program advisor is accessible by telephone and email.

- Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me.
- Assessment and evaluation procedures are clear and reasonable.
- Adequate online library resources are provided.
- Appropriate technical assistance is readily available.
- Challenges were also identified:
- The quality of online instruction is excellent.
- Student assignments are clearly defined in the syllabus.
- Faculty are responsive to student needs.
- This institution responds quickly when I request information.
- Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress.
- Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.

## Student Satisfaction Inventory: Undergraduate and Graduate Adult Learner



**Top 5 Factors to Enroll**

| Item   | Importance % |
|--|--------------|
| Financial aid/scholarship opportunities as factor in decision to enroll. | 83%          |
| Cost as factor in decision to enroll.                                    | 78%          |
| Future employment opportunities as factor in decision to enroll.         | 78%          |
| Academic reputation as factor in decision to enroll.                     | 73%          |
| Campus location (close to home/work) as factor in decision to enroll.    | 71%          |

**Gender**

| Demographic Responses               | N  | %       |
|-------------------------------------|----|---------|
| Female                              | 65 | 67.71%  |
| Male                                | 29 | 30.21%  |
| Prefer not to respond               | 1  | 1.04%   |
| Transgender                         | 1  | 1.04%   |
| Genderqueer                         | 0  | 0.00%   |
| Additional gender category or Other | 0  | 0.00%   |
| Total                               | 96 | 100.00% |
| No Answer                           | 8  |         |

**Class Level**

| Demographic Responses | N   | %       |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|
| First year            | 9   | 8.65%   |
| Second year           | 13  | 12.50%  |
| Third year            | 18  | 17.31%  |
| Fourth year           | 20  | 19.23%  |
| Special student       | 2   | 1.92%   |
| Graduate/Professional | 36  | 34.62%  |
| Other class level     | 6   | 5.77%   |
| Total                 | 104 | 100.00% |
| No Answer             | 0   | 0.00%   |

**Institutional Choice**

| Demographic Responses | N  | %       |
|-----------------------|----|---------|
| 1st choice            | 69 | 71.13%  |
| 2nd choice            | 17 | 17.53%  |
| 3rd choice or lower   | 11 | 11.34%  |
| Total                 | 97 | 100.00% |
| No Answer             | 7  |         |

Students attending their first-choice institution are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels overall.

**Strengths**

| Item   |
|--|
| ★ Major requirements are clear and reasonable.   |
| ★ Nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their field.   |
| ★ The content of the courses within my major is valuable.  |
| ★ I am able to easily register for classes online.   |
| ★ Computers and/or Wi-Fi are adequate and accessible.  |
| ★ Library resources and services are adequate for adults.  |
| ★ The staff at this institution are caring and helpful.  |
| ★ Registration processes are reasonable and convenient for adults.   |
| ★ Classroom locations are safe and secure for all students.  |
| ★ Academic support services adequately meet the needs of adult students.                                   |
| ★ This institution has a good reputation within the community.   |
| ★ Faculty are usually available for adult students outside the classroom by phone, by e-mail or in-person. |
| ★ My academic advisor is accessible by telephone and e-mail.   |

**Challenges**

| Item   |
|--|
| ✖ The quality of instruction I receive in my program is excellent.                     |
| ✖ Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.   |
| ✖ This institution responds quickly to my requests for information.                    |
| ✖ Campus item: I can easily locate important information on the institution's website. |
| ✖ I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information at this institution.          |

A total of 104 students responded to the survey and consisted of 8.65% first year, 12.5% second year, 17.3% third year, 19.2% fourth year, 1.9% special, and 34.62% graduate classifications.

Regarding the level of satisfaction with VSU, 67% were satisfied or very satisfied with the institution as compared to 64% of students nationwide that were satisfied or very satisfied with their respective institution. Of the VSU student respondents, 71% were probably or definitely likely to enroll again at our institution versus 68% of respondents nationwide.

Respondents identified financial aid/scholarship opportunities, cost, future employment opportunities, academic reputation, and geographic location as the top five factors to enroll.

The respondents also identified the following strengths of VSU:

- Major requirements are clear and reasonable.
- Nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their field.
- The content of the courses within my major is valuable.
- I am able to easily register for classes online.
- Computers and/or Wi-Fi are adequate and accessible.
- Library resources and services are adequate for adults.
- The staff at this institution are caring and helpful.
- Registration processes are reasonable and convenient for adults.
- Classroom locations are safe and secure for all students.
- Academic support services adequately meet the needs of adult students.
- This institution has a good reputation within the community.
- Faculty are usually available for adult students outside the classroom by phone, by email or in-person.
- My academic advisor is accessible by telephone and email.
- Challenges were also identified:
  - The quality of instruction I receive in my program is excellent.
  - Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
  - This institution responds quickly to my requests for information.
  - I can easily locate important information on the institution's website.
  - I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information at this institution.

In response, this Strategic Enrollment Plan establishes a coordinated framework to support student achievement, strengthen institutional practices, and ensure every learner is guided from enrollment to graduation.

## Appendix C: Enrollment Deep Dive



### Enrollment Update & Review

Academic Year 2022 - 2023



Need Your Best Ideas



### Current Enrollment Update: Spring 2023

Point in time comparison.

| Current Day | Overall Enrollment |             |                           |                        | Fall 2022 Cohort |                  |                             |                  | MC                     |            |             |                        |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
|             | Enrollment         | Return Rate | Daily Goal to Reach 82.2% | Performance Over/Under | Enrolled Spring  | Persistence Rate | One-year Retention Forecast | Daily Goal 82.1% | Performance Over/Under | Enrollment | Return Rate | Performance Over/Under |
| 2/2/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/3/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/4/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/5/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/6/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/7/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |
| 2/8/2022    | 9,424              | 80.2%       | 9,424                     | 0.00%                  | 954              | 88.2%            | 64.2%                       | 996              | -4.2%                  |            |             |                        |

| Learning Opportunity | Spring (28 days after) |       |         |         |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------|---------|---------|
|                      | 2022                   | 2023  | Number  | Percent |
| 1. On-Campus         | 7,474                  | 6,109 | (1,365) | -18.1%  |
| 2. eDegree Campus    | 381                    | 798   | 417     | 109.4%  |
| 3. Grad School       | 2,599                  | 2,534 | (65)    | -2.5%   |
| Total                | 10,454                 | 9,441 | (1,013) | -9.7%   |

Fall 2020: 82.1%  
Fall 2021: 86.1%



### Current Enrollment Update: Spring 2023

Online College for Career Advancement (eDegree)

| Learning Opportunity | Spring (28 days after) |       |         |         |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------|---------|---------|
|                      | 2022                   | 2023  | Number  | Percent |
| 1. On-Campus         | 7,474                  | 6,109 | (1,365) | -18.1%  |
| 2. eDegree Campus    | 381                    | 798   | 417     | 109.4%  |
| 3. Grad School       | 2,599                  | 2,534 | (65)    | -2.5%   |
| Total                | 10,454                 | 9,441 | (1,013) | -9.7%   |

- Average age 27 years old
- 75.1% female
- 53.3% white, 31.5% African American, 9.1% Hispanic
- 85.6% Georgia residents
- 33,523 hours of credit transferred in
- 125 of 798 in traditional face-to-face VSU majors and migrated to eDegree



### Summer 2023 Enrollment Tracking

Point in time comparison. As of 2.7.23

| Current Day | Enrollment |             |            |             | Return Rate (Enroll) |             |            |             | Performance Over/Under |             |            |             | New Student Enrollment |             |            |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
|             | Enrollment | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment           | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment             | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment             | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance |
| Goal        | 5,215      |             |            |             |                      |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/4/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/5/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/6/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/7/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/8/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/9/2023    | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/10/2023   | 5,070      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| Goal        | 4,834      |             |            |             |                      |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/4/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/5/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/6/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/7/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/8/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/9/2023    | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/10/2023   | 4,834      | 80.2%       | 82.0%      | 2,675       | 25.0%                | 33          | 37         | -16.2%      |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |



### Summer 2023 Enrollment Tracking

Point in time comparison. As of 2.7.23

| Current Day | Enrollment |             |            |             | Return Rate (Enroll) |             |            |             | Performance Over/Under |             |            |             | New Student Enrollment |             |            |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
|             | Enrollment | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment           | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment             | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance | Enrollment             | Return Rate | Daily Goal | Performance |
| Goal        | 2,075      |             |            |             |                      |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/4/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/5/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/6/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/7/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/8/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/9/2023    | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/10/2023   | 1,734      | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 1,518       | 24.5%                | 3           | *          |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| Goal        | 2,075      |             |            |             |                      |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/4/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/5/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/6/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/7/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/8/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/9/2023    | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |
| 2/10/2023   | 892        | 25.0%       | 26.0%      | 850         | 24.5%                | 24          | 25         | 32.0%       |                        |             |            |             |                        |             |            |             |





### Fall 2023 Enrollment Tracking

Point in time comparison.

Undergraduate: 183 days until start of term

| Term      | Date         | Applied | Applied % Change | Accepted | Accepted % Change |
|-----------|--------------|---------|------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Fall 2019 | Feb 17, 2019 | 8,758   | 22.44%           | 3,423    | 24.47%            |
| Fall 2020 | Feb 16, 2020 | 7,643   | -12.74%          | 3,320    | -3.01%            |
| Fall 2021 | Feb 14, 2021 | 8,546   | 11.81%           | 3,750    | 13.00%            |
| Fall 2022 | Feb 13, 2022 | 7,229   | -15.41%          | 2,948    | -26.90%           |
| Fall 2023 | Feb 12, 2023 | 7,350   | 1.70%            | 2,808    | -4.75%            |

Pre-COVID: ACT/SAT Test Score Required.  
Test Score Waived: 2.6 GPA  
3.2 GPA Test Score Waived.  
Below 3.2 GPA, test required.

Graduate – Master and Specialist: 183 days until start of term

| Term      | Date         | Applied | Applied % Change | Accepted | Accepted % Change |
|-----------|--------------|---------|------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Fall 2019 | Feb 17, 2019 | 563     | 16.50%           | 26       | 23.03%            |
| Fall 2020 | Feb 16, 2020 | 511     | -9.24%           | 23       | -11.54%           |
| Fall 2021 | Feb 14, 2021 | 462     | -9.59%           | 27       | 17.39%            |
| Fall 2022 | Feb 13, 2022 | 484     | 4.78%            | 60       | 44.44%            |
| Fall 2023 | Feb 12, 2023 | 477     | -1.45%           | 59       | -16.67%           |



### Fall 2023 Enrollment Tracking

Point in time comparison.

Doctorate: 183 days until start of term

| Term      | Date         | Applied | Applied % Change | Accepted | Accepted % Change |
|-----------|--------------|---------|------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Fall 2019 | Feb 17, 2019 | 232     | 14.59%           | 5        | 25.00%            |
| Fall 2020 | Feb 16, 2020 | 172     | -25.86%          | 1        | -80.00%           |
| Fall 2021 | Feb 14, 2021 | 223     | 29.65%           | 1        | 0.00%             |
| Fall 2022 | Feb 13, 2022 | 106     | -52.47%          | 2        | 100.00%           |
| Fall 2023 | Feb 12, 2023 | 102     | -3.77%           | 4        | 100.00%           |



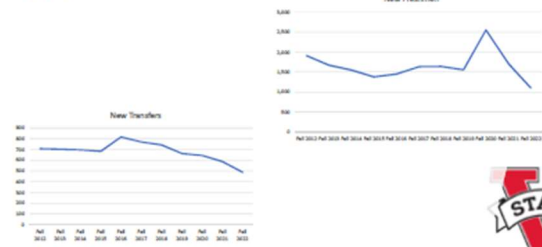
### Enrollment: Ten Year Trend

2012 - 2022



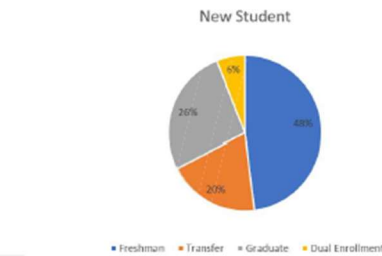
### Enrollment: Ten Year Trend

2012 - 2022



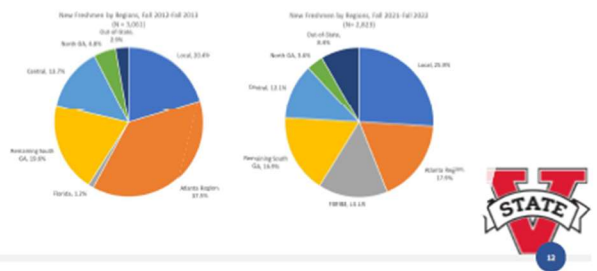
### Enrollment: New Student By Student Type

Fall 2021 and Fall 2022



### Enrollment: New Freshman By Region

Side by Side of Fall 2021 - 2022 and Fall 2021 - 2022



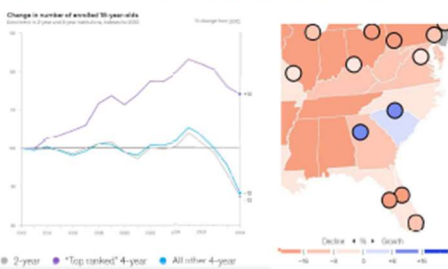
### Enrollment: Admitted to VSU but Enrolled other USG

Fall 2022

| Institution Name                     | Headcount | Percent of Headcount |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY          | 296       | 20.40%               |
| KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY            | 267       | 18.40%               |
| GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY             | 129       | 8.90%                |
| ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY              | 67        | 4.60%                |
| UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA           | 63        | 4.30%                |
| UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA          | 61        | 4.20%                |
| COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY            | 56        | 3.90%                |
| ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE | 54        | 3.70%                |
| FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY         | 53        | 3.70%                |
| SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY            | 53        | 3.70%                |
| AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY                   | 53        | 3.70%                |

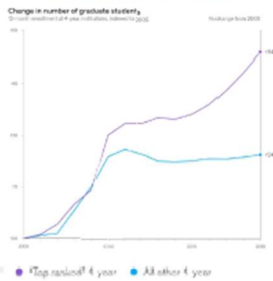


### Enrollment: Higher School Graduate Demographic Trends

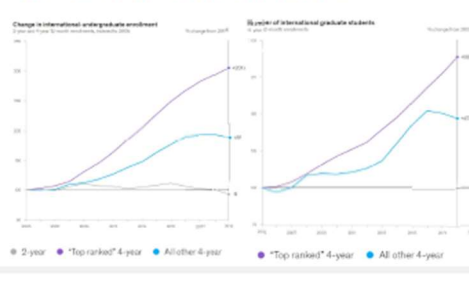




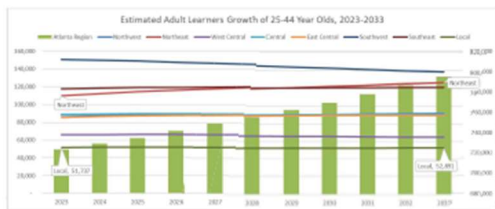
### Enrollment: Graduate School Enrollment Trends



### Enrollment: International Student Enrollment Trends

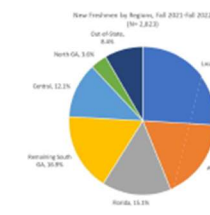


### Enrollment: Non-Traditional Population Shifts (25-44 years old)



### Admission Strategies

#### Territory Management



- Primary Market
  - Local
  - Metro Atlanta
  - Florida
  - High Producing Areas
- Secondary Markets
  - Lower Producing Areas - Still important!
- Goals by Territory
  - KPI
    - Visits Made (Quality)
    - Student Contacts
    - Applications
    - Accepts
    - Enrolled



### Admission Strategies

#### Leveraging Technology



- Find Students Earlier to Build Relationships
  - Name Purchases
  - Events - on and off campus
- Communication
  - Timely
  - Relational
  - Mix
    - Text
    - Email - Academic Partnership
    - Phone
    - Print
    - Social Media
- Funnel Driven
  - Prospects
  - Inquiries
  - Applicants
  - Admits
  - Enrolled
- Data Informed Decisions
  - Tracking Interactions
  - ROI



### Admission Strategies

#### Signature Events

#### The Three Big Signature Events

- Daily Campus Tours
- Open Houses
- Votate Experience

#### Events that will be Added/Modified

- Virtual Votate Experience - Fall/Spring
  - College
  - Major
  - Interests
- Scholarship/Honors Day - Winter
- Accepted Student Days - Spring/Summer
- Counselor Breakfast - Fall



2015 & 2016  
70-80 Taskforce

2016 - 2022  
Student Success Council



Fall 2012 to Fall 2021: First-time Freshmen



### Point in time comparison



## First-time, full-time, freshmen – as reported to IPEDS

Exhibit 1: Retention Scenarios for Fall 2020 to Fall 2022 FTTF Cohorts



## First-time, full-time, freshmen – as reported to IPEDS

Exhibit 1: Four to Six Year Graduation Rates with School



## Fall 2012 to Fall 2021 First-time Transfers



© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 105–112

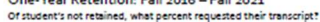
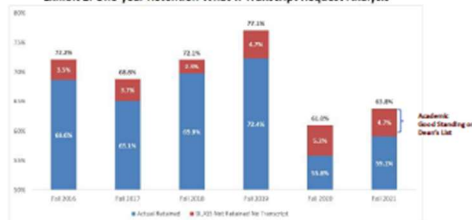


Exhibit1: One-year Retention and Transcript Request Status, Fall 2016-Fall 2021



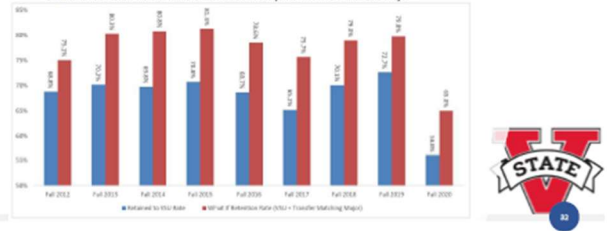
One-Year Retention: Fall 2016 – Fall 2021  
What if we could have retained those that did not request transcript BUT good standing?

Exhibit 2: One-Year Retention What-If Transcript Request Analysis



One-Year Retention: Fall 2016 – Fall 2021  
What if we could have retained those that transferred to an institution with similar degree program?

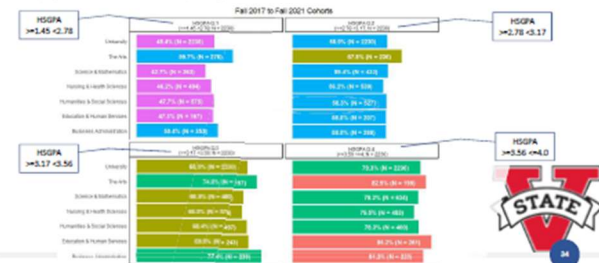
Exhibit 4: VU Actual Retention Rate and What-If Analysis of Transfers with Like Major



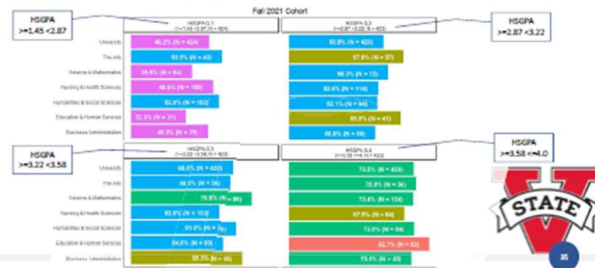
"Can you provide more department specific information so we can impact change?"



One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time, Freshmen Fall 2017 – Fall 2021  
By High School GPA Quartile and By College



One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time, Freshmen Fall 2021 Cohort  
By High School GPA Quartile and By College



One-Year Retention: First-time Transfer Fall 2017 – 2021 Cohort  
By Transfer GPA Quartile and By College



One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshman with Midterm Grades Feedback  
By Number of grades and By College

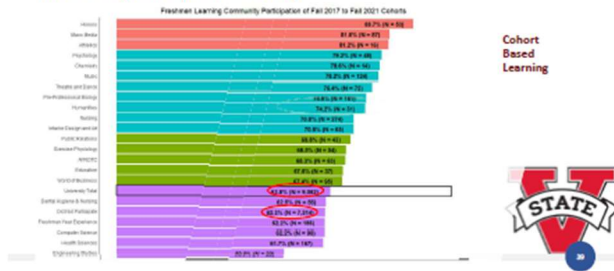


One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshman with Midterm Grades Feedback  
By Number of grades and By College

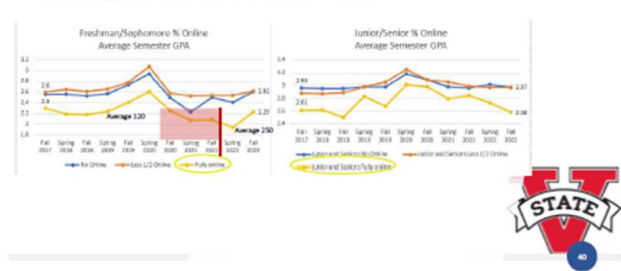




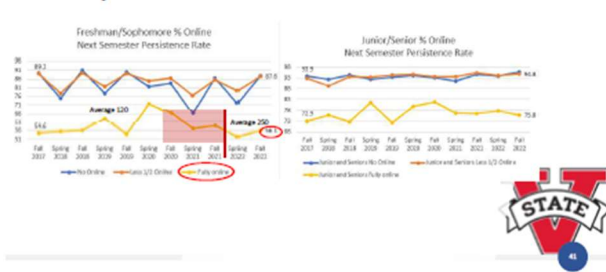
One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshman  
Freshmen Learning Community: Cohort Based Learning



Modality: Percent Online Average Semester GPA  
Excludes: eDegree, Graduate, Dual-Enrollment, Transient, Summer Term



Modality: Percent Online Persistent Rate  
Excludes: eDegree, Graduate, Dual-Enrollment, Transient, Summer Term



One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshman  
By Financial Aid Award Type



One-Year Retention: First-time Transfer Students  
By Financial Aid Award Type



One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshmen  
By Race/Ethnicity, Gender, College



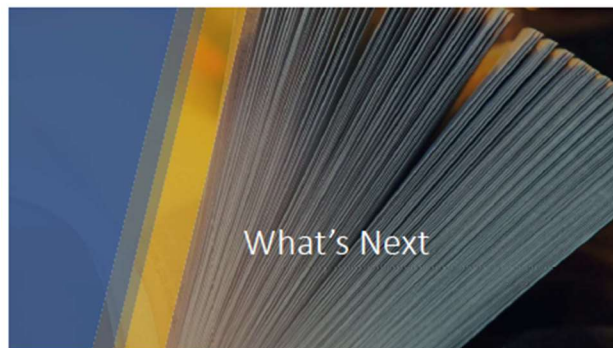
One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshmen  
By Housing Status



## One-Year Retention: First-time, Full-time Freshmen By Student Engagement



## One-Year Retention: Transfer Students By Student Engagement



## National Institute for Student Success - NISS

### NISS - Three Core Principles



"Our mission is to increase the ability of colleges and universities to identify and resolve institutional barriers to equity and college completion by increasing their capacity to implement proven student success systems and data-driven information used to assess campus change to institutional processes and structures."

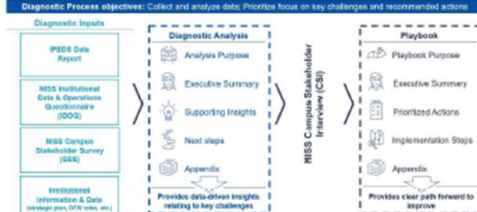
- 1 Institutions inadvertently hinder their students' success through policies, practices, and structures that are among the key drivers of equity gaps.
- 2 Institutions can use data to identify and to understand these institutionally created barriers to completion.
- 3 Action-oriented institutions with the right coaching and support can create stronger and more equitable enrollment, retention, and graduation outcomes.



## National Institute for Student Success - NISS

### The Diagnostic Process

Diagnostic Process objectives: Collect and analyze data, Prioritize focus on key challenges and recommended actions



## National Institute for Student Success - NISS

### Stakeholder Focus Areas



## National Institute for Student Success - NISS

### Diagnostic Service Timeline for Valdosta State

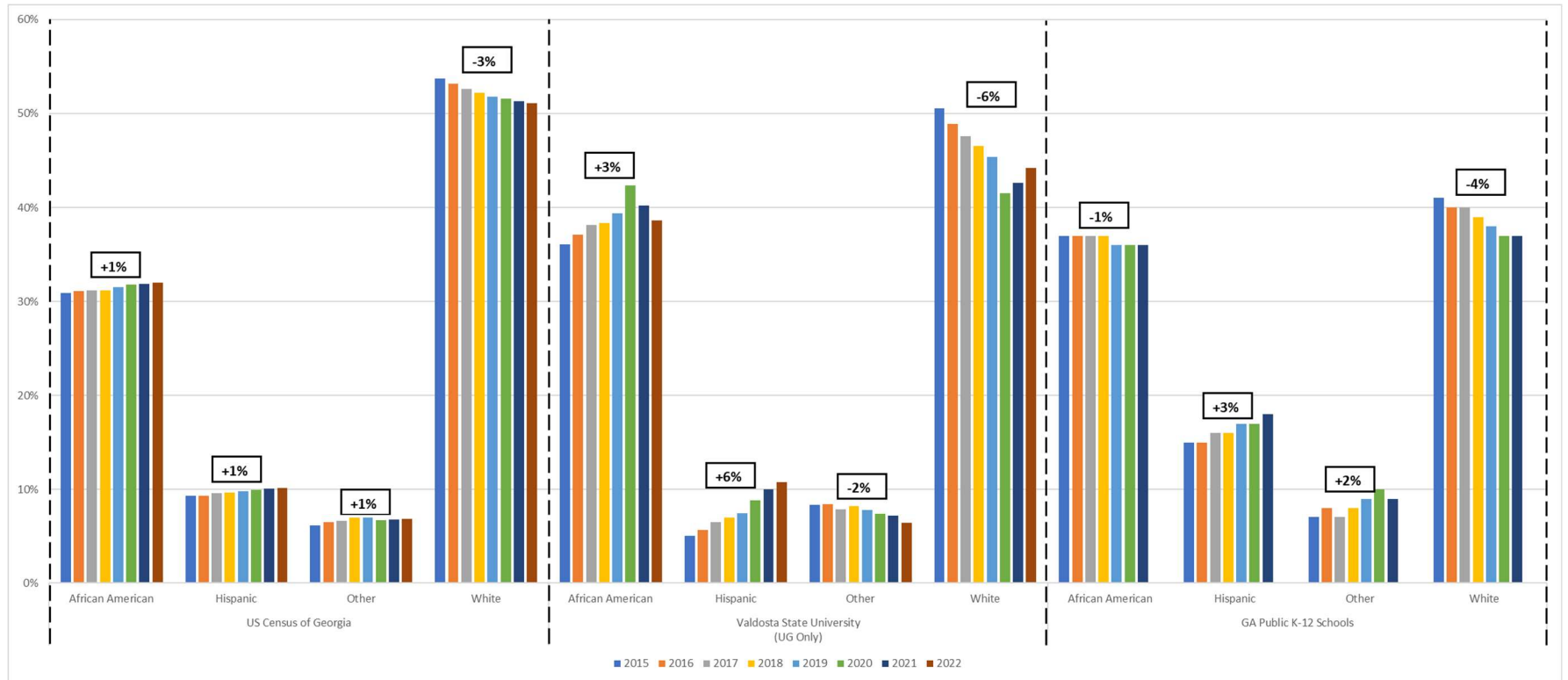


## Other ideas:

- Tell this story campus-wide and start generating ideas for how everyone can improve recruitment, retention, persistence, and graduation.
- How do these ideas turn into real Division/Department level strategic outcomes?
- Students focus group says:
  - New students finding and building their community among each other is #1 important factor to staying.
  - On-campus freshman/sophomores should not be enrolled in more than 2 online courses.
  - Professor relationship matters but don't feel like we all have that opportunity.
  - Engagement and campus services (dining) have declined but I'm paying same amount.
  - Might be more comfortable with peer-to-peer intervention and mentorship than going to adult.
- Can we find out why we are losing good students?
- Market and recruit stop-outs in academic good standing to re-enroll.
- Grow and stabilize enrollment in On-campus learning opportunity.
- Grow enrollment in eDegree and Graduate Programs.
- Enrollment Management Council
- Using Data for Early Academic Intervention
- More/restructure FLCs with dedicated FYSE Course. Required for all new students.
- Centralize tracking and leverage scholarships.

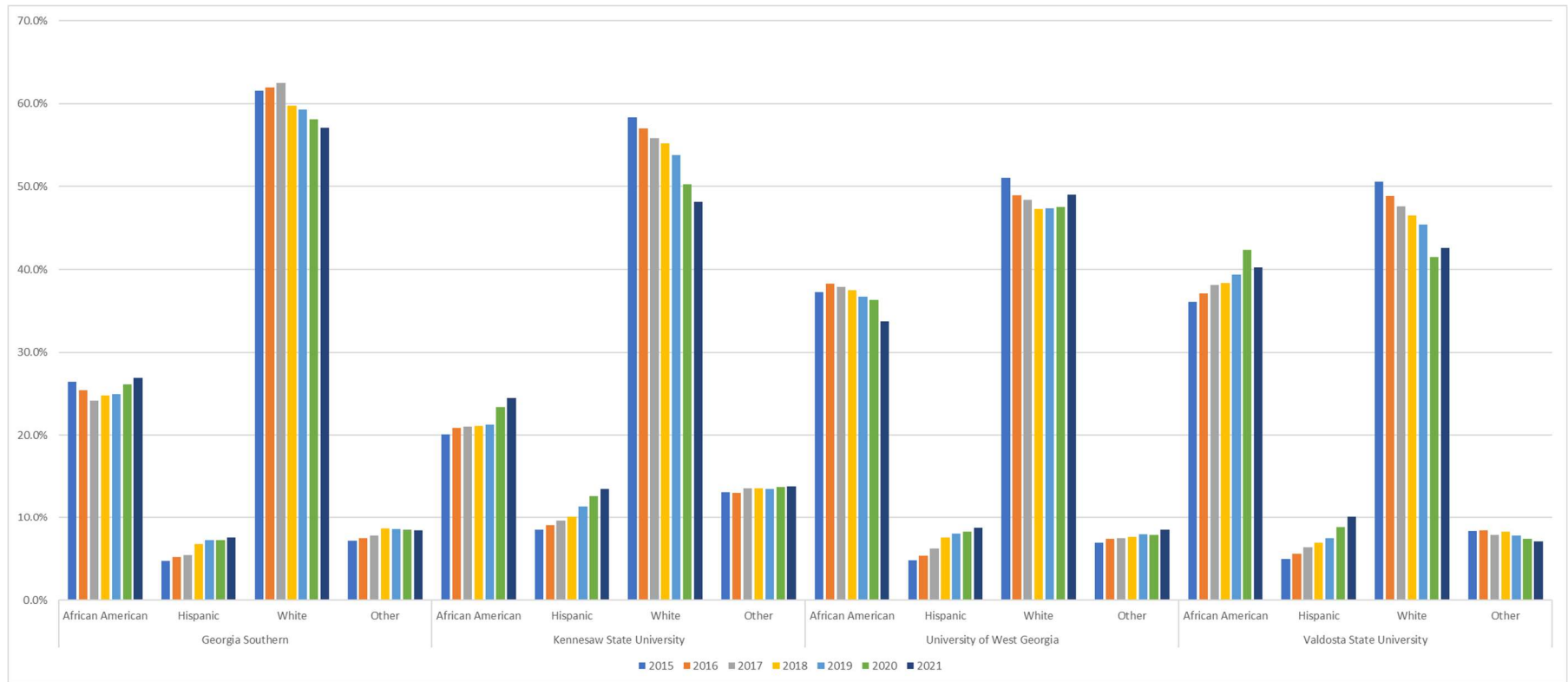
## Appendix D: Population Demographic Research

Demographics of US Census of Georgia, Valdosta State University Undergraduate Population, and GA Public K-12 Schools, 2015-2022



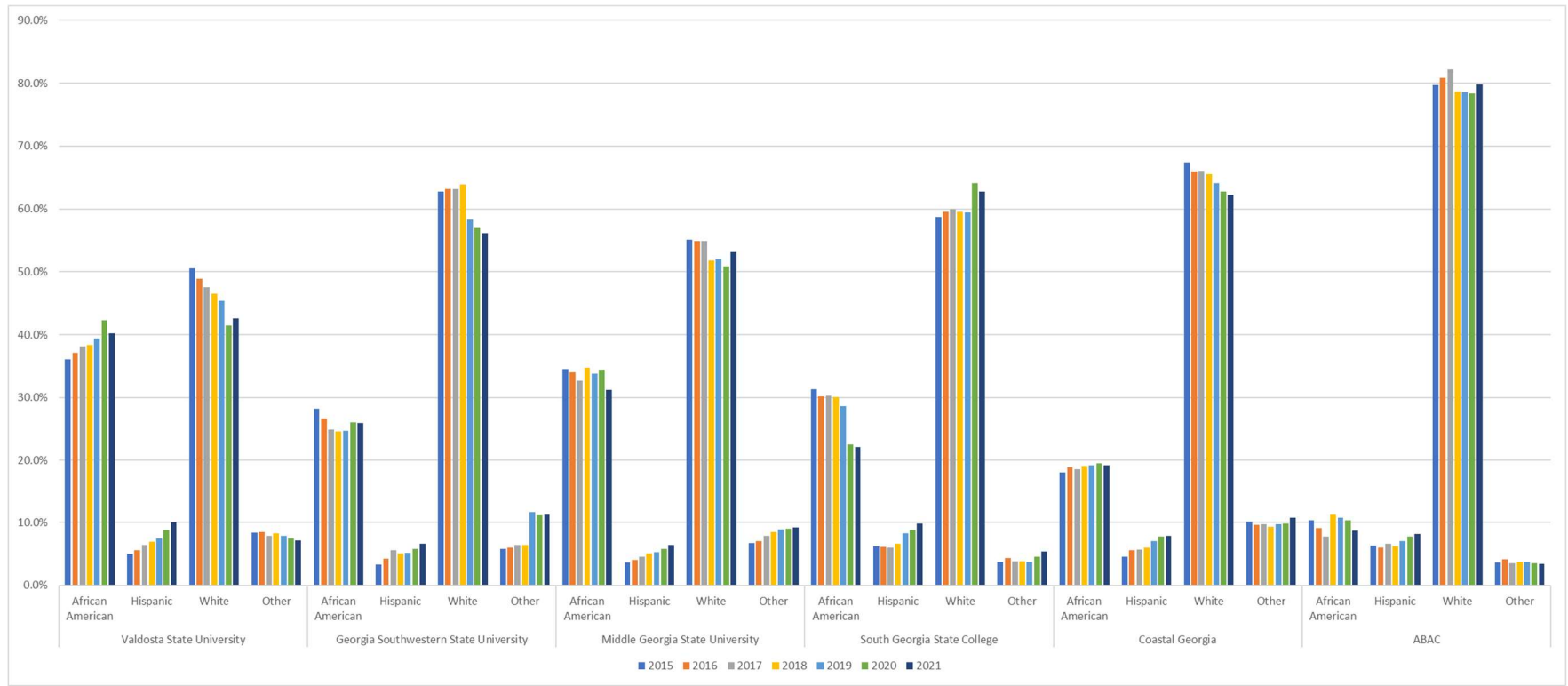
Source: VSU SRA Analysis of US Census, USG Enrollment by the Numbers, and GA GOSA, August 2023.

## Demographics of Total Enrollment for USG Regional Comprehensive Universities, 2015-2022



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG Enrollment by the Numbers, August 2023.

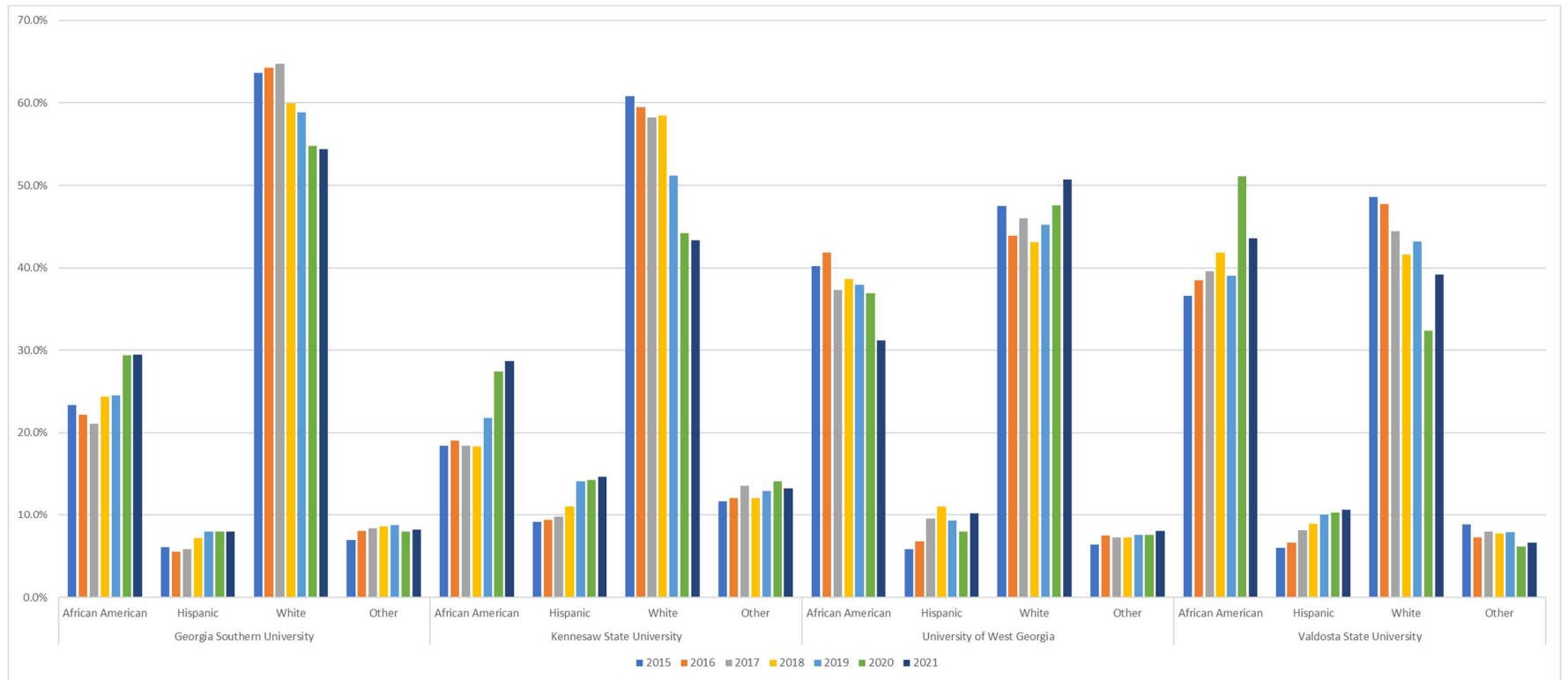
## Demographics of Total Enrollment for USG Institutions Located in South Georgia, 2015-2022



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG Enrollment by the Numbers, August 2023.

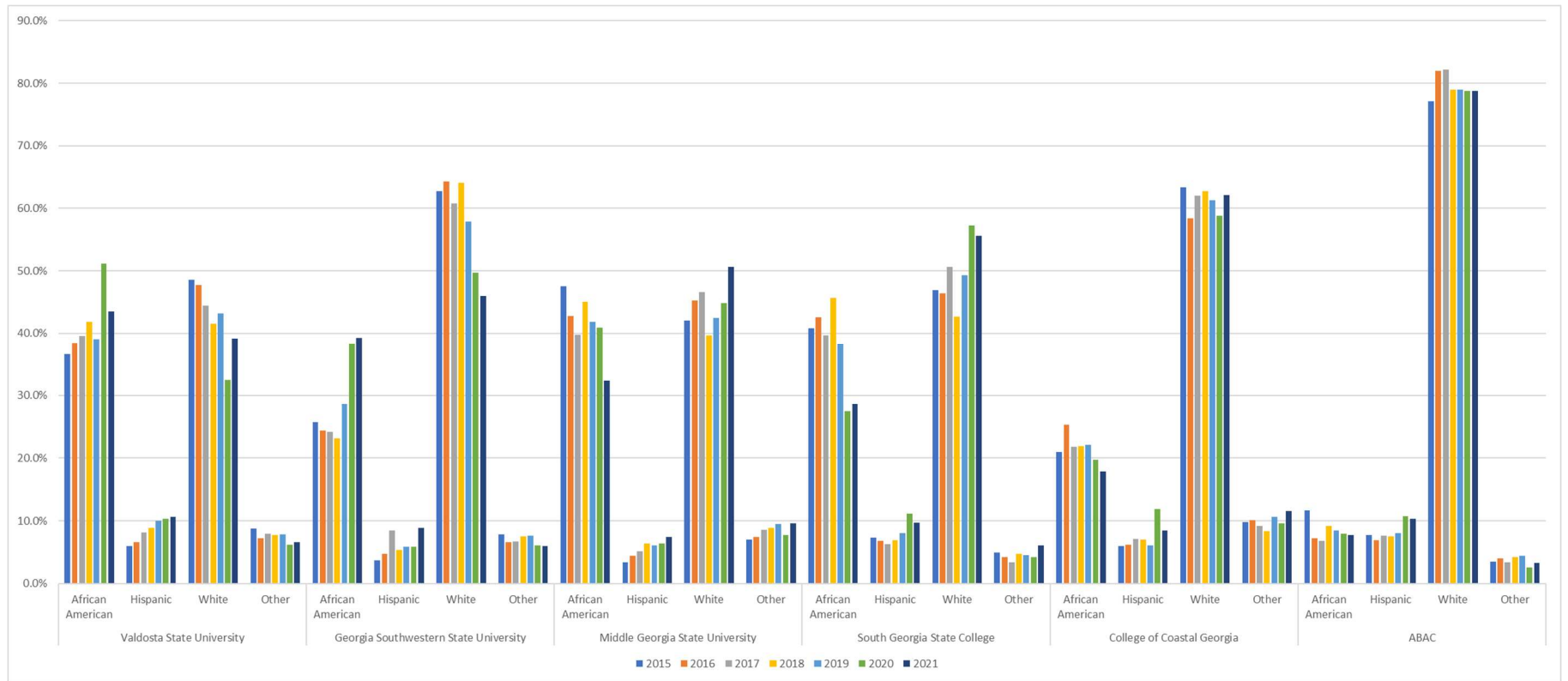


## Demographics of First-time Degree-seeking Students for USG Regional Comprehensive Universities, 2015-2022



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG Enrollment by the Numbers, August 2023.

## Demographics of First-time Degree-seeking Students for USG Institutions Located in South Georgia, 2015-2022



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of USG Enrollment by the Numbers, August 2023.

## Appendix E: Marketing Creative Asset Demographic Representation Audit

### Marketing Creative Assets - Demographic Representation Audit

Updated 9/3/2025

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| <b>Total # of ads</b>            | 63 |
| <b># of ads featuring people</b> | 52 |
| <b># of people in ads</b>        | 65 |
| <b># of people - White</b>       | 38 |
| <b># of people - Black</b>       | 19 |
| <b># of people - Other</b>       | 8  |

|              | % of all people in ads | % of all ads featuring people |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>White</b> | 58%                    | 52%                           |
| <b>Black</b> | 29%                    | 35%                           |
| <b>Other</b> | 12%                    | 15%                           |

\*Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

\*Two ads feature crowds; one is majority White; one is majority Black. They are included in this data and counted as 1 White and 1 Black.

| Row | Ad Type    | Audience | Number              |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
|-----|------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|     |            |          | Total People in Ads | White | Black | Other | Ads Featuring White | Ads Featuring Black | Ads Featuring Other |
| *3  | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| *20 | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 2   | Admissions | TUG      | 4                   | 2     | 2     |       | 1                   | 1                   |                     |
| 4   | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 5   | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 6   | Admissions | TUG      | 5                   | 5     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 7   | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 8   | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 9   | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 10  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 11  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 12  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 13  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 14  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 15  | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 16  | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 17  | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 18  | Admissions | TUG      | 0                   |       |       |       |                     |                     |                     |
| 19  | Admissions | TUG      | 1                   |       |       | 1     |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 46  | FB         | GRAD     | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 49  | FB         | GRAD     | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 52  | FB         | GRAD     | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 30  | FB         | OCCA     | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 33  | FB         | OCCA     | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 36  | FB         | OCCA     | 1                   |       |       | 1     |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 39  | FB         | OCCA     | 2                   | 2     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 56  | FB         | TUG      | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 56  | FB         | TUG      | 1                   |       | 1     |       |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 57  | FB         | TUG      | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 57  | FB         | TUG      | 1                   | 1     |       |       | 1                   |                     |                     |

| Row          | Ad Type | Audience | Number              |           |           |          |                     |                     |                     |
|--------------|---------|----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|              |         |          | Total People in Ads | White     | Black     | Other    | Ads Featuring White | Ads Featuring Black | Ads Featuring Other |
| 58           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 58           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 59           | FB      | TUG      | 2                   | 2         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 59           | FB      | TUG      | 2                   | 2         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 60           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 60           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 60           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 60           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 61           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 61           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 62           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 62           | FB      | TUG      | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 2            | GRAD    | GRAD     | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 3            | GRAD    | GRAD     | 2                   | 2         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 4            | GRAD    | GRAD     | 2                   | 2         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 5            | GRAD    | GRAD     | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 6            | GRAD    | GRAD     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 2            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 3            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 4            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 5            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 6            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 7            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 8            | OCCA v1 | OCCA     | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 2            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 3            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   |           | 1         |          |                     | 1                   |                     |
| 4            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 5            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 6            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 7            | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 10           | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   |           |           | 1        |                     |                     | 1                   |
| 11           | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 1                   | 1         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| 12           | OCCA v2 | OCCA     | 2                   | 2         |           |          | 1                   |                     |                     |
| <b>Total</b> |         |          | <b>65</b>           | <b>38</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>27</b>           | <b>18</b>           | <b>8</b>            |

\*The three numbers above total 53 (instead of 52) because 1 ad features 1 Black and 1 White, so it's counted twice.

## Appendix F: RNL Prospective Student Survey and Environmental Scan Summary

In Spring 2024, RNL conducted an academic program demand survey.<sup>5</sup> This survey targeted prospective undergraduate and graduate VSU students to assess their interest in current and potentially new academic programs of study, the student's preference for modality of each program, and the likelihood the student would enroll at VSU for that program.

For undergraduate prospective students, the top subject areas of interest were STEM (44%), Healthcare (35%), and Business (21%) degree programs. When asked what would indicate a high-quality program or most important factors to attend, employment outcomes and job placements, research and internship opportunities, high-quality professors, scholarships, cost/affordability, and financial aid were the common themes. Seventy percent of undergraduate prospective students who indicated they would enroll at VSU are seeking an in-person, weekday, daytime program delivery. A significant area of concern identified was only 14% of respondents reported willing to enroll for their program of choice at VSU, compared to 66% who specifically responded they would not, and 20% were unsure. Stated reasons to attend VSU include location being close to home, the campus quality and size, quality faculty, and student-faculty ratio. Reasons stated not to attend VSU included institutional reputation, lack of knowledge about VSU, location being too far away from home, and cost to attend. RNL's key recommendations are:

- A price, border state waiver, financial aid, and scholarship marketing strategy may be viable in VSU's key market.
- Address brand awareness and perception. Strengthen brand awareness and strategic position in the prospective student market.
- Top-of-funnel strategic emphasis on recruiting students to STEM, Health, and Business programs: computer science, pre-med and biology, nursing, accounting, general business, and engineering programs.
- Ensure employment outcome statistics on program landing pages or general occupational outcome statistics.
- Enhance and highlight student life on campus for those students who prefer an in-person learning experience.

For graduate prospective students, the top degree programs of interest were Business Administration – MBA, Library and Information Science – MLIS, Biology – MS, and Social Work, MSW, with top write-in graduate degree interest to include chemistry, engineering, computer and data science, and health. When asked what would indicate a high-quality program or important factors to attend, program accreditation, hands on learning, student testimonials, and outcomes (test/certification pass rates, job placement, career success), and research opportunities. Respondents were split between preferring face-to-face/in-person, hybrid, and online with a slight preference to face-to-face/in-person. Seventy-three percent indicated they would be willing to enroll at VSU. Stated reasons to attend included

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<sup>5</sup> Full survey data set and RNL findings presentation slides are retained with the Office of Strategic Research & Analysis.

reputation, history in education programs success, diversity on campus, quality of professors, being an undergraduate alum, in-state tuition. Stated reasons not to attend were less clear and included “unsure,” high tuition fees, distance from home, and modality of program of interest. RNL’s key recommendations are:

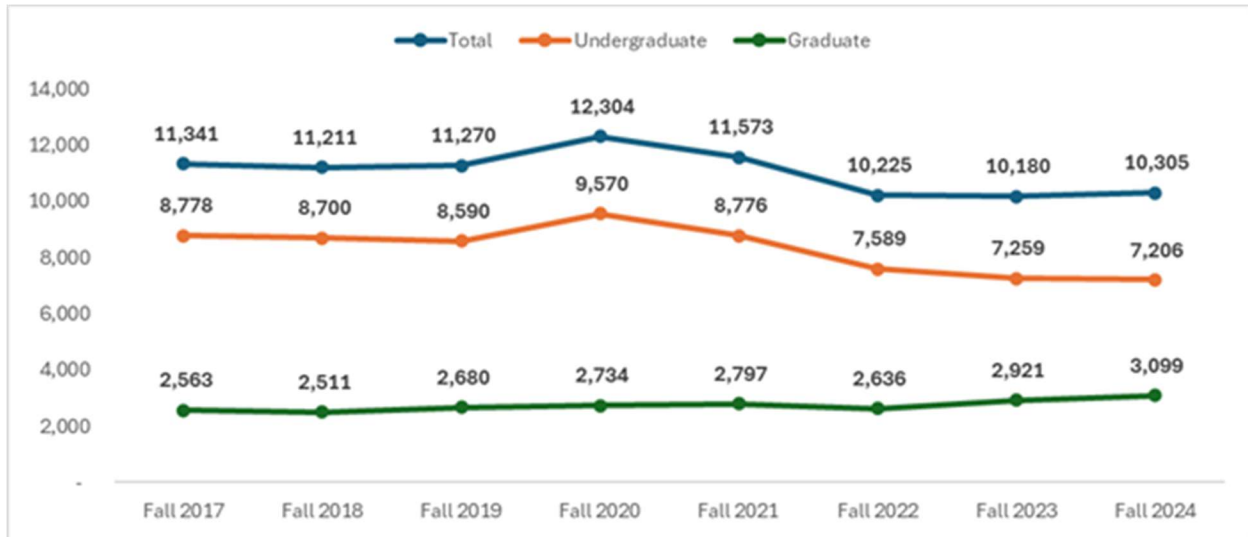
- Further create distinction between undergraduate and graduate prospective student markets.
- Build synergy and pathways between current undergraduate programs and graduate programs: ex. Direct admission, 4+1 degrees.
- Address higher levels of demand for graduate education programs, yet lower-level demand for undergraduate education.
- Create a more flexible program modality to allow students to learn in the modality they choose instead of fully online being the only choice.
- Top-of-funnel strategic emphasis on education and STEM programs, business, nursing, and social work.
- Ensure emphasis on affordability, costs, scholarship, and aid of program landing pages.

The academic program environmental scan and demand analysis revealed that the VSU program portfolio is not distinct from programs offered at competitor institutions.

## Appendix G: Data Charts to Support the Situation Analysis

The following line graph displays the total enrollment (blue line) and enrollment by student level (undergraduate and graduate) from Fall 2017 to Fall 2024. Since Fall 2017, total enrollment has decreased by 1,036 students (-9.1%). The undergraduate population for the same period has experienced a loss of 1,572 students (-17.9%), while the graduate population has gained 536 students (+20.9%).

Valdosta State University's Enrollment, Fall 2017-Fall 2024

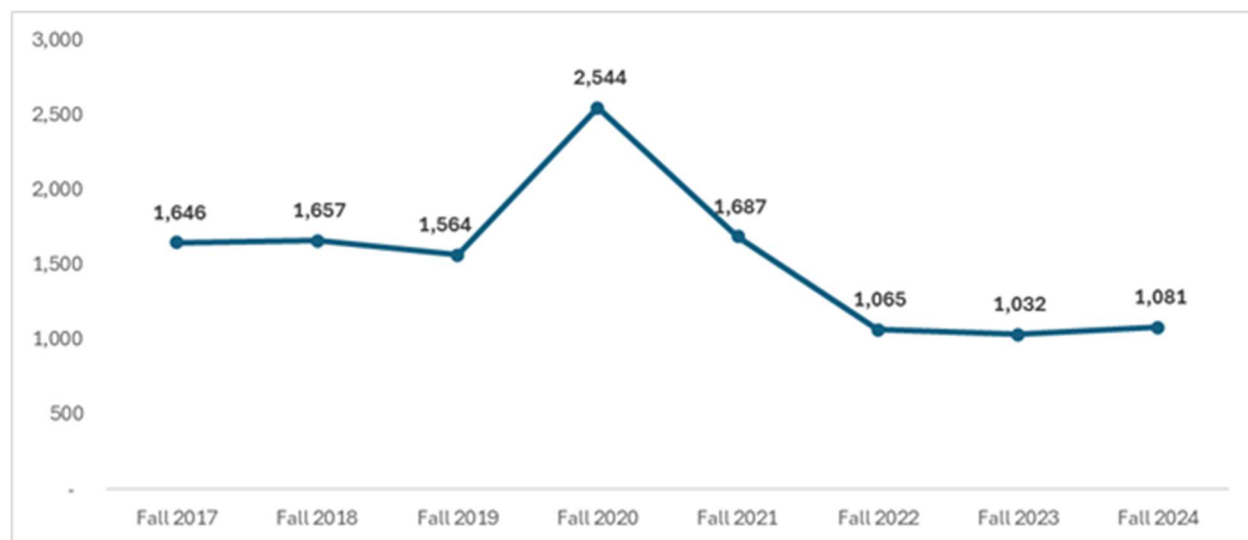


Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.

### New Freshman Enrollment in Traditional Undergraduate Programs

The following line graph provides the number of new freshmen enrolling in traditional undergraduate programs from Fall 2017 to Fall 2024. Since Fall 2017's high, new freshmen class of 1,646, the number of new freshmen in Fall 2024 has decreased by 565 students (-34.3%).

## Valdosta State University's New Freshmen Enrollment, Fall 2017-Fall 2024



Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.

Significant factors impacting the enrollment data listed:

- Prior to Fall 2020, VSU required standardized test scores to be admitted. High school GPA was not a factor. Standardized test scores were common practice for college admissions.
- For Fall 2020 and 2021, standardized test scores were not required, and 2.6 high school GPA was the minimum established by the USG due to the disruptions of COVID-19 pandemic on standardized testing and high school practices.
- For Fall 2022, standardized test scores were not required for students with a high school GPA of 3.2 or higher established by the USG. However, standardized test scores are required for students with a high school GPA lower than 3.20.
- In Spring 2022, additional changes in enrollment leadership (VP Student Success, AVP Student Success, and Director of Admission), separation of enrollment marketing from the enrollment strategy team, in addition to a failed CRM conversion to SLATE compounded challenges the institution has been working to overcome.

## Market Share in Metro Atlanta and South Georgia

VSU also experienced a decrease over the past 10 years in their market share of new, first-time students from the highly populated Atlanta area (1,290 student loss; -76.9%) while the number of students enrolled in the USG from the same geographic region increased significantly (6,337 student gain; 10.6%). In the local market area 50 miles surrounding campus, the number of new, first-time students enrolling at VSU decreased slightly (87 student loss; -10.0%) similarly the number of students enrolled in the USG from the same geographic region also decreased (796 student loss; -18.8%). VSU, however, enrolled a larger percentage of students from the decreased local region (2.2 percentage points increase).

Metro Atlanta and Local Area Market Share Analysis, 2012-13 and 2022-23



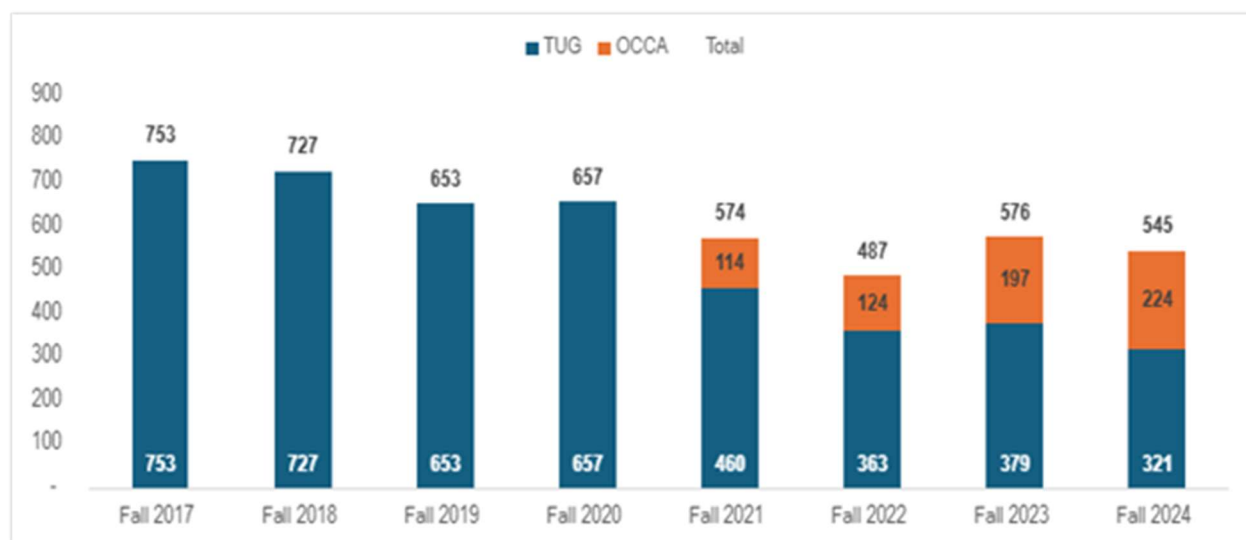
| Market Area            | 2012-13         |                 |                         | 2022-23         |                 |                         |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
|                        | Enrolled at VSU | Enrolled in USG | Percent Enrolled at VSU | Enrolled at VSU | Enrolled in USG | Percent Enrolled at VSU |
| Metro Atlanta          | 1,677           | 59,861          | 2.8%                    | 387             | 66,198          | 0.6%                    |
| Local Market (50 mile) | 870             | 4,244           | 20.5%                   | 783             | 3,448           | 22.7%                   |

Source: VSU Analysis of USG Qlik Market share, July 2025.

## Transfer Enrollment in Traditional Undergraduate Programs

The following chart displays the number of transfer students enrolled from Fall 2017 to Fall 2024. With the launch of OCCA, new transfer students are classified in the traditional undergraduate or OCCA learning opportunities. Overall, VSU experienced a total decline in students transferring into the institution (208 student loss; -27.6%). Reductions in adult and military staffing and changes in relationships with the military bases previously served partially contributed to this decline.

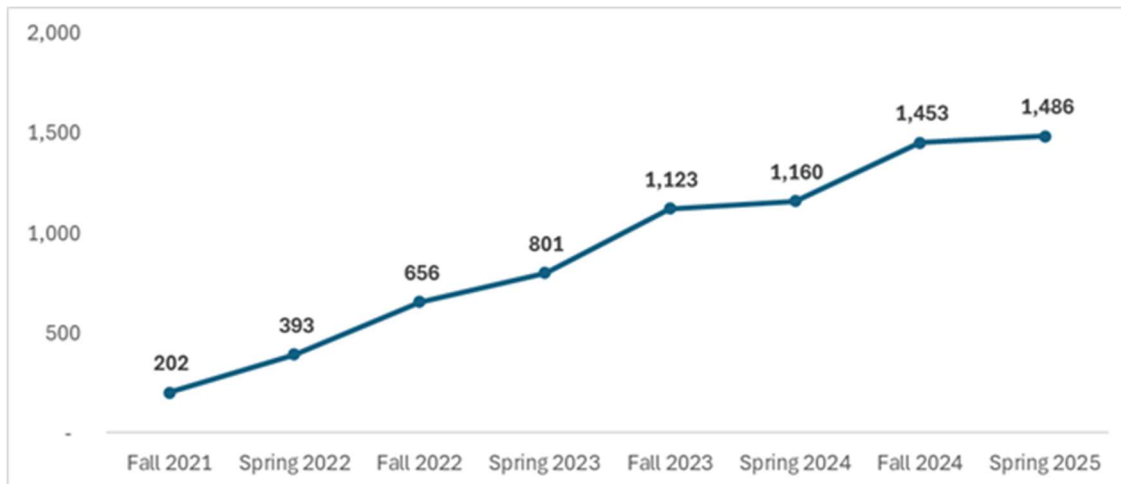
Valdosta State University's Transfer Enrollment, Fall 2017-Fall 2024



Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.

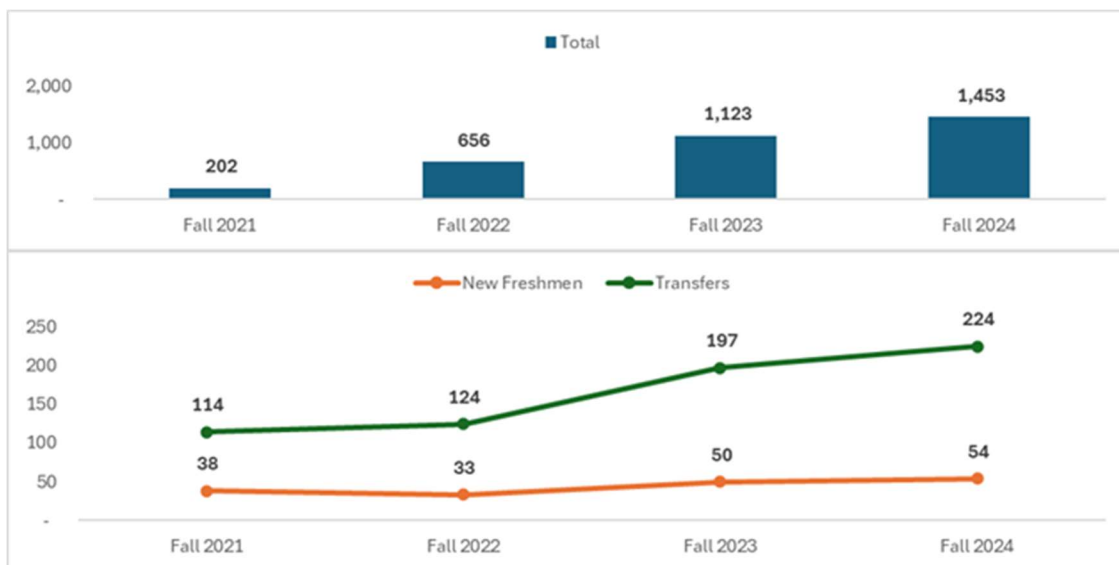
## Online College for Career Advancement

VSU launched the Online College for Career Advancement in Fall 2021. The OCCA model was created in response to increasing adult undergraduate student demand in the State of Georgia that was fulfilled by out-of-state and private-for-profit institutions. The following two graphs provide the total enrollment and the number of new freshmen and transfers for the programs within OCCA. The total enrollment has experienced a 619.3% increase (1,251 students gain) since its inaugural fall term. While the number of new freshmen entering VSU as an OCCA student has increased by 16 students, transfers have increased by 96.5% (110 students gain).



Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.

#### Valdosta State University's Online College for Career Advancement Enrollment, Fall 2017-Fall 2024



Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.

The situation analysis also revealed that there was concern over overall enrollment success. When comparing the enrollment of the TUG and OCCA programs, only one program, Elementary Education, experienced a significant increase (+2.2 percentage points) in the representation of the total UG student body. When excluding Elementary Education, OCCA assisted in growing the enrollment of Computer Information System reflected in Fall 2023.

#### Total Enrollment and Percentage of UG Total Enrollment in Programs with TUG and OCCA, Fall 2017-Fall 2023

|           | Comp Info Systems |                      |  | Criminal Justice |                      |  | Psychology |                      |  | Org. Leadership |                      |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|----------------------|--|------------|----------------------|--|-----------------|----------------------|
|           | Headcount         | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount        | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount  | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount       | % of UG Student Body |
| Fall 2017 | 124               | 1.4%                 |  | 390              | 4.4%                 |  | 541        | 6.2%                 |  | 288             | 3.3%                 |
| Fall 2018 | 122               | 1.4%                 |  | 367              | 4.2%                 |  | 623        | 7.1%                 |  | 275             | 3.1%                 |
| Fall 2019 | 111               | 1.3%                 |  | 367              | 4.2%                 |  | 607        | 6.9%                 |  | 284             | 3.2%                 |
| Fall 2020 | 92                | 1.0%                 |  | 482              | 5.5%                 |  | 709        | 8.1%                 |  | 276             | 3.1%                 |
| Fall 2021 | 98                | 1.1%                 |  | 432              | 4.9%                 |  | 710        | 8.1%                 |  | 278             | 3.2%                 |
| Fall 2022 | 112               | 1.3%                 |  | 364              | 4.2%                 |  | 646        | 7.4%                 |  | 245             | 2.8%                 |
| Fall 2023 | 153               | 1.7%                 |  | 347              | 4.0%                 |  | 626        | 7.1%                 |  | 229             | 2.6%                 |

|           | Interdisciplinary Studies |                      |  | General Business |                      |  | Management |                      |  | Elementary Ed |                      |
|-----------|---------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|----------------------|--|------------|----------------------|--|---------------|----------------------|
|           | Headcount                 | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount        | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount  | % of UG Student Body |  | Headcount     | % of UG Student Body |
| Fall 2017 | 200                       | 2.3%                 |  | 0                | 0.0%                 |  | 445        | 5.1%                 |  | 324           | 3.7%                 |
| Fall 2018 | 192                       | 2.2%                 |  | 0                | 0.0%                 |  | 522        | 6.0%                 |  | 336           | 3.8%                 |
| Fall 2019 | 194                       | 2.2%                 |  | 0                | 0.0%                 |  | 519        | 5.9%                 |  | 292           | 3.3%                 |
| Fall 2020 | 195                       | 2.2%                 |  | 0                | 0.0%                 |  | 591        | 6.7%                 |  | 329           | 3.8%                 |
| Fall 2021 | 249                       | 2.8%                 |  | 12               | 0.1%                 |  | 548        | 6.2%                 |  | 332           | 3.8%                 |
| Fall 2022 | 233                       | 2.7%                 |  | 46               | 0.5%                 |  | 511        | 5.8%                 |  | 389           | 4.4%                 |
| Fall 2023 | 215                       | 2.5%                 |  | 69               | 0.8%                 |  | 486        | 5.5%                 |  | 520           | 5.9%                 |

Source: VSU SRA Analysis of VSU Data Warehouse, February 2024.

When comparing enrollment to comparable TUG programs, the enrollment still indicates all but one OCCCA program was declining in enrollment. While Elementary Education was growing, Fall 2023 was the first term in which more students were enrolled as an OCCCA major rather than a TUG major (282 vs 238, respectively).

| STEM                         |                      |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Major                        | Learning Opportunity | Fall 2017 | Fall 2018 | Fall 2019 | Fall 2020 | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 |
| Computer Information Systems | 2.0 OCCCA            | -         | -         | -         | -         | 6         | 40        | 81        |
| Computer Information Systems | 1.1 TUG              | 124       | 122       | 111       | 92        | 92        | 72        | 72        |
| Total                        |                      | 124       | 122       | 111       | 92        | 98        | 112       | 153       |
| Percent Difference           |                      |           | -1.6%     | -9.0%     | -17.1%    | 6.5%      | 14.3%     | 36.6%     |

#### Comparable Non-OCCA Major

|                    |         |     |       |        |       |      |       |      |
|--------------------|---------|-----|-------|--------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Computer Science   | 1.1 TUG | 173 | 222   | 183    | 211   | 219  | 199   | 202  |
| Percent Difference |         |     | 28.3% | -17.6% | 15.3% | 3.8% | -9.1% | 1.5% |

| Social Sciences           |                      |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Major                     | Learning Opportunity | Fall 2017 | Fall 2018 | Fall 2019 | Fall 2020 | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 |
| Criminal Justice          | 2.0 OCCA             | -         | -         | -         | -         | 22        | 69        | 104       |
| Criminal Justice          | 1.1 TUG              | 285       | 270       | 266       | 314       | 263       | 224       | 221       |
| Criminal Justice - Online | 1.2 TUG Legacy       | 105       | 97        | 101       | 168       | 147       | 71        | 22        |
| Total                     |                      | 390       | 367       | 367       | 482       | 432       | 364       | 347       |
| Percent Difference        |                      |           | -5.9%     | 0.0%      | 31.3%     | -10.4%    | -15.7%    | -4.7%     |

|                    |                |     |       |       |       |      |       |       |
|--------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| Psychology         | 2.0 OCCA       | -   | -     | -     | -     | 42   | 145   | 233   |
| Psychology         | 1.1 TUG        | 541 | 623   | 569   | 538   | 446  | 375   | 351   |
| Psychology Online  | 1.2 TUG Legacy | -   | -     | 38    | 171   | 222  | 126   | 42    |
| Total              |                | 541 | 623   | 607   | 709   | 710  | 646   | 626   |
| Percent Difference |                |     | 15.2% | -2.6% | 16.8% | 0.1% | -9.0% | -3.1% |

|                           |          |     |       |      |       |      |        |       |
|---------------------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|------|--------|-------|
| Organizational Leadership | 2.0 OCCA | -   | -     | -    | -     | 40   | 95     | 163   |
| Organizational Leadership | 1.1 TUG  | 288 | 275   | 284  | 276   | 238  | 150    | 66    |
| Total                     |          | 288 | 275   | 284  | 276   | 278  | 245    | 229   |
| Percent Difference        |          |     | -4.5% | 3.3% | -2.8% | 0.7% | -11.9% | -6.5% |

Comparable Non-OCCA Major w/in same department

|                          |         |     |        |      |      |        |        |        |
|--------------------------|---------|-----|--------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|
| Sociology & Anthropology | 1.1 TUG | 168 | 145    | 150  | 159  | 125    | 102    | 90     |
| Percent Difference       |         |     | -13.7% | 3.4% | 6.0% | -21.4% | -18.4% | -11.8% |

Different department same college

|                    |         |     |      |       |       |        |        |        |
|--------------------|---------|-----|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Political Science  | 1.1 TUG | 142 | 142  | 129   | 148   | 121    | 96     | 82     |
| Percent Difference |         |     | 0.0% | -9.2% | 14.7% | -18.2% | -20.7% | -14.6% |

| Other                     |          |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                           |          | Fall 2017 | Fall 2018 | Fall 2019 | Fall 2020 | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 |
| Interdisciplinary Studies | 2.0 OCCA | 0         | 0         | 0         | -         | 11        | 27        | 48        |
| Interdisciplinary Studies | 1.1 TUG  | 200       | 192       | 194       | 195       | 238       | 206       | 167       |
| Total                     |          | 200       | 192       | 194       | 195       | 249       | 233       | 215       |
| Percent Difference        |          |           | -4.0%     | 1.0%      | 0.5%      | 27.7%     | -6.4%     | -7.7%     |

| Business           |          |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                    |          | Fall 2017 | Fall 2018 | Fall 2019 | Fall 2020 | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 |
| General Business   | 2.0 OCCA | -         | -         | -         | -         | 12        | 46        | 69        |
| Percent Difference |          |           |           |           |           |           | 283.3%    | 50.0%     |

|                     |                |     |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Management          | 2.0 OCCA       | -   | -     | -     | -     | 32    | 74    | 129   |
| Management          | 1.1 TUG        | 318 | 380   | 357   | 387   | 351   | 327   | 330   |
| Management - Online | 1.2 TUG Legacy | 127 | 142   | 162   | 204   | 165   | 110   | 27    |
| Total               |                | 445 | 522   | 519   | 591   | 548   | 511   | 486   |
| Percent Difference  |                |     | 17.3% | -0.6% | 13.9% | -7.3% | -6.8% | -4.9% |

Comparable Non-OCCA Major

|                    |         |     |       |      |       |       |        |       |
|--------------------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| Marketing          | 1.1 TUG | 260 | 248   | 248  | 287   | 271   | 239    | 225   |
| Percent Difference |         |     | -4.6% | 0.0% | 15.7% | -5.6% | -11.8% | -5.9% |

| Education            |          | Fall 2017 | Fall 2018 | Fall 2019 | Fall 2020 | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Elementary Education | 2.0 OCCA | -         | -         | -         | -         | 35        | 148       | 282       |
| Elementary Education | 1.1 TUG  | 324       | 336       | 292       | 329       | 297       | 241       | 238       |
| Total                |          | 324       | 336       | 292       | 329       | 332       | 389       | 520       |
| Percent Difference   |          |           | 3.7%      | -13.1%    | 12.7%     | 0.9%      | 17.2%     | 33.7%     |

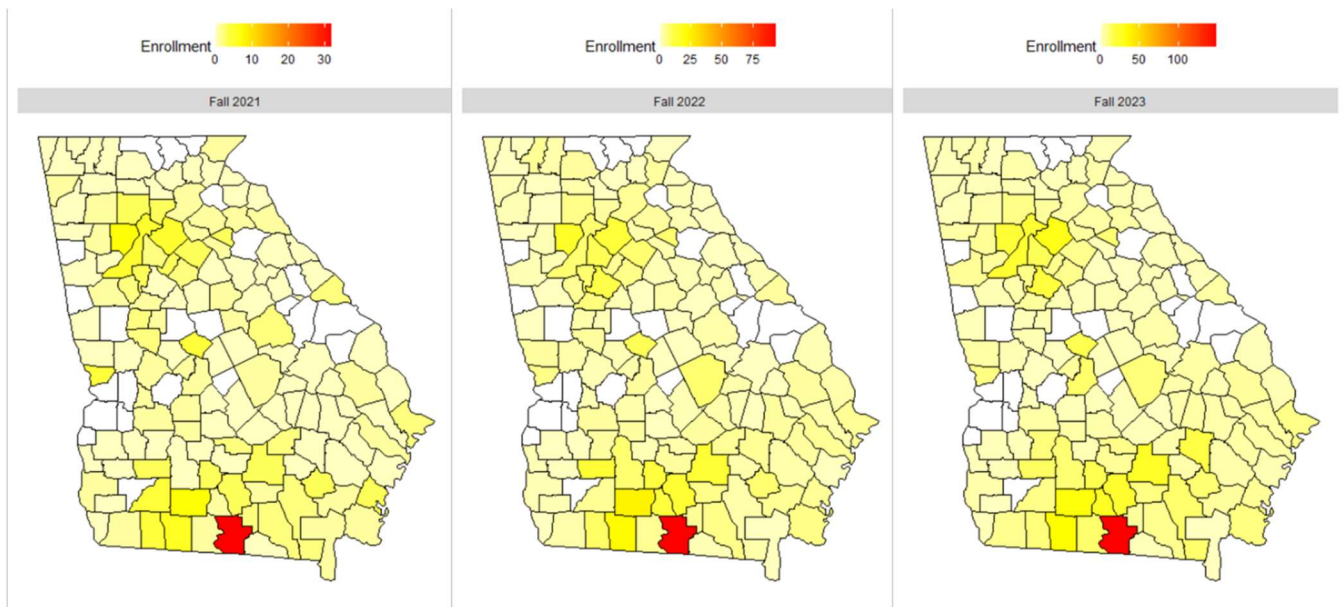
Comparable Non-OCCA Major

|                               |         |     |       |        |       |        |        |        |
|-------------------------------|---------|-----|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Middle Grades Educ-Grades 4-8 | 1.1 TUG | 163 | 158   | 117    | 112   | 84     | 66     | 54     |
| Percent Difference            |         |     | -3.1% | -25.9% | -4.3% | -25.0% | -21.4% | -18.2% |

Source: VSU SRA Analysis of VSU Data Warehouse, February 2024.

Heat maps of Georgia by county indicates the vast majority the OCCA students live in Lowndes County or the surrounding counties that are within driving distance of the institution.

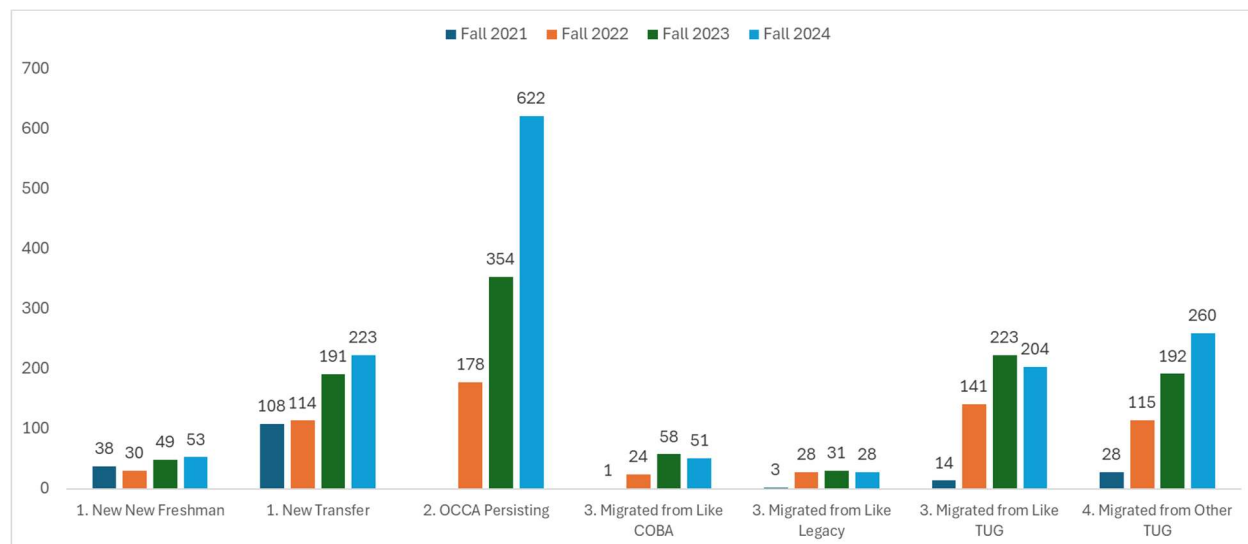
Heat Map of OCCA Enrollment by Georgia County of Origin, Fall 2021-Fall 2023



Source: VSU SRA Analysis of VSU Data Warehouse, February 2024.

From Fall 2021 to Fall 2024, new students to the institution and to the OCCA programs have been transfer students. However, there is a concern of students migrating from TUG programs, whether like TUG or other TUG programs. In Fall 2021, approximately 24.0% (46 students) migrated from a TUG program to OCCA. The percentage of students continued to increase for Fall 2022 and Fall 2023 (48.9% and 45.9%, *respectively*).

#### OCCA Enrollment Migration Analysis, Fall 2021-Fall 2024

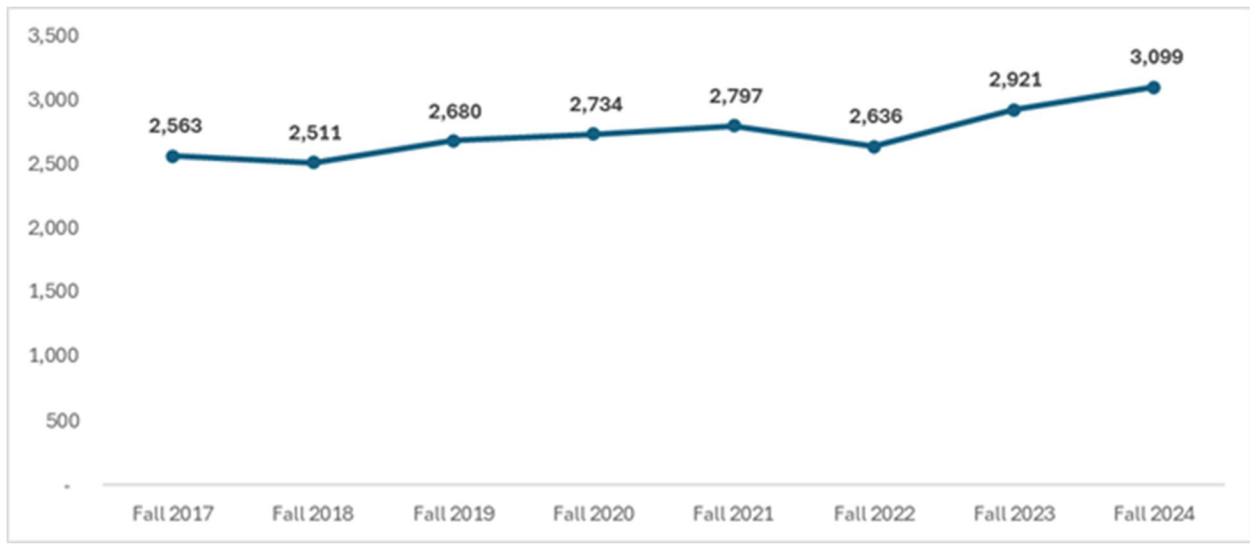


Source: VSU SRA Analysis of VSU Data Warehouse, October 2025.

## Graduate Enrollment

The following graph displays graduate enrollment from Fall 2017 to Fall 2024. The graduate enrollment has experienced an increase of 536 students (20.9%) since Fall 2017. Meanwhile, Graduate School lacks a dedicated admissions recruiter, program specific marketing, and a formalized graduate admissions and marketing plan.

### Valdosta State University's Graduate Enrollment, Fall 2017-Fall 2024



Source: VSU SRA analysis of USG academic data collection, July 2025.