

4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates. **(Student achievement)**

Compliance Status: Compliance

The College of Coastal Georgia employs various strategies to assess student achievement across its curriculum. Among these strategies are course completions, retention, evaluation of laboratory/clinical performance, and state/national licensing examinations. The USG Board of Regents also compiles system-wide data, including a breakdown by institution, on [degree program completion by discipline](#) and [retention rates](#).

Student retention, course completion, and graduation data are produced each year (see Tables 1 and 2 – sample data) by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). Data reports are shared with administrators and faculty through the OIE’s Intranet website.

Table 1: Degrees Conferred by Discipline – Five-Year Snapshot¹

Degree Level	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Associate of Arts	3	4	12	9	8
Associate of Science	144	147	171	170	132
Career Associate	76	101	97	90	79
Associate of Applied Science	22	19	10	29	10
Certificates ²	131	114	124	92	48
Total	376	385	414	390	277

Table 2: First-Year Retention Rates – First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen³

Fall Term	N	Retained	Retention Rate	Retained in USG	USG Retention Rate
2009	568	327	57.57%	356	62.68%
2008	433	262	60.97%	282	65.59%
2007	394	231	59.39%	245	62.70%
2006	394	231	59.39%	245	62.70%
2005	381	199	54.59%	224	60.40%

¹ USG Office of Planning and Policy; College of Coastal Georgia, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

² The final cohort of certificate students graduated in Spring Semester 2010

³ USG Office of Planning and Policy; College of Coastal Georgia, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

As the College has been a two-year institution prior to its conversion in 2008 to a four-year, state college, it has not systematically gathered information such as job placement rates. Instead, the College focused on transfer rates, along with graduation rates at similar two-year institutions. However, in preparation for baccalaureate candidates, the College increased administrative staffing responsible for creating and implementing appropriate tracking, assessment and job placement rates; e.g., a Career Counselor joined the College in September 2010, and this position, serving as a liaison between students and employers, will be responsible for accumulating job placement data, among other duties.

Course Completion Rates

Course completion rates are available through the Banner Student Information System database. In Fall Semester 2010, 86 percent of enrolled students passed all credit hours attempted. Grade distributions for each course are available and reported by individual instructor or all sections, and by term or passage or withdrawals. These reports ([sample screen shot](#)) are used by School Deans in annual evaluations of faculty, in tenure and promotion decisions, and/or for planning purposes.

The College also tracks course completion rates as a result of the need to evaluate student success as a component of its participation in Title IV federal programs. The College was approved for re-certification for eligibility to participate in Title IV Student Aid Programs based on confirmation (electronic re-certification process) of the College's academic and administrative capability, as required by 34 CFR, Part 600, Subpart A, and 34 CFR, Part 668.16, Sec 498(a) of Title IV).

Additionally, the Financial Aid Office monitors student achievement of financial aid recipients according to standards specified in its [Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#). To continue to be eligible for financial aid, students must demonstrate academic progress by completing a specific number of credit hours relative to hours attempted.

For official purposes and financial aid verification, faculty members report student attendance and those who missed all class meetings in the first week of a given course; they will have their financial aid adjusted to reflect correct aid disbursement for the actual number of credit hours they attended. Students who stop attending a course will have the last date of attendance entered into their student record for that course. Periodic state and internal audit reviews for financial aid (see [Federal Requirement 4.7](#) and [Comprehensive Standard 3.10.3](#)) demonstrate that the College is correctly tracking both satisfactory academic progress and official withdrawal rates.

Degree Progress/Completion Rates

Degree progress/completion rates are an important indicator of student achievement. Degree progress rates are tracked on a system-wide level by institution and discipline – sample fiscal years [2010](#), [2009](#) and [2008](#). The USG also reports graduation and retention rates for particular cohorts. Programs track degree completion rates in their annual reports at the College and in [comprehensive program reviews](#) required by the USG as an indicator of viability and effectiveness. All programs are reviewed every seven years following the Academic Program Review process; the College's most recent one for its Associate of Arts/Associate of Science Core Curriculum took place in academic year 2007-2008. The review schedule is established

by the USG. In cases where a national or regional accreditation review is conducted, that self-study constitutes the program evaluation. The results of the review are the basis for program modification, improvement, and/or termination.

The mission of the College's associate degree program is to support the successful transition to baccalaureate degree programs. A key indicator of this comes from transfer rates. The College submits information to the National Student Clearinghouse to track transfer students. Of those students transferring recently (2008-2010), Georgia Southern University (Statesboro) and Armstrong Atlantic State University (Savannah) were the top two transfer destination institutions. Over the last three academic years, the average transfer rate to two-year institutions has been 64 percent and to four-year institutions 27 percent.⁴ The USG also provides an annual undergraduate [student transfer report](#) that tracks the number of University System students transferring to another System institution.

Academic Standards of Progress

The College has in place academic standards of progress to continually evaluate whether students are making standard progress in their chosen curricula and to identify and provide assistance to students who experience academic difficulties. If a student has earned 0-29 credits with less than a 1.5 GPA, 30 credits with less than a 1.7 GPA, or 51+ credits with less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA, the student is considered to be on Academic Warning and is encouraged to contact the Office of Academic Advising and Learning Center.

Additionally, a student whose term GPA or Institutional (adjusted) cumulative GPA at the end of any semester is less than the minimum satisfactory average shall be placed on Academic Warning. Further, a student on Academic Warning whose Institutional (adjusted) GPA is below the Minimum Satisfactory Requirement for any term of enrollment will be placed on Academic Probation. Finally, a student on Academic Probation whose Institutional (Adjusted) cumulative GPA for the semester of probation is below the Minimum Satisfactory Requirement shall be dismissed for one semester for the first occurrence or two semesters (one calendar year) for the second occurrence. Upon readmission to the College, students whose term GPA is 2.0 or higher will continue on probation until their Institutional (adjusted) cumulative GPA reaches the appropriate level.

Graduation Requirements

The College also demonstrates student achievement through prescribed [graduation requirements](#).

Associate Degree Candidates

- Successfully complete all courses required in a degree program
- Complete physical education as required
- Earn a minimum overall Grade Point Average of 2.0 (C)
- Meet the State of Georgia requirement for proficiency in United States and Georgia history and U.S. and Georgia constitutions. An explanation of the requirements can be found in the catalog section entitled, Legislative Requirement in History and Constitution

⁴ Student transfer data, National Student Clearinghouse (2008, 2009 & 2010)

- Satisfy Regents' Reading and Writing requirements, if required
- Complete 20 of the last 30 semester hours preceding graduation at the College
- Graduation application must be on file in the Registrar's Office prior to completing course work at another institution
- Satisfy all financial obligations to the College
- Complete the student satisfaction survey
- Take the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP)
- Receive formal approval by the faculty after all the grades have been reported to the Registrar

Baccalaureate Degree Candidates

All students graduating with a baccalaureate degree must meet the following requirements:

- Earn an overall Grade Point Average of 2.0 (C)
- Successfully complete a minimum of 120 semester credits
- Successfully complete all courses required in the degree program
- Successfully complete a minimum of 42 general education credits (Areas A - E) as established by the College
- Successfully complete a minimum of 25 percent of course work (approximately 30 semester hours for most programs) at the College and meet any additional program requirements for minimum number of credits to be earned in the major
- Earn a "C" or better in all Area F courses
- Meet the State of Georgia requirement for proficiency in United States and Georgia history and U.S. and Georgia constitutions. An explanation of the requirements can be found in the catalog section entitled, Legislative Requirement in History and Constitution
- Complete physical education as required
- Satisfy Regents' Reading and Writing requirements
- Satisfy all financial obligations to the College
- Complete the student satisfaction survey
- Complete all program specific requirements and testing
- Receive formal approval by the faculty after all the grades have been reported to the Registrar

Baccalaureate-Specific Requirements

Biological Sciences – Coastal Ecology Track

A grade of "C" or better in all Area F courses with a 2.5 GPA in area F courses; an overall GPA of 2.0; successful completion of the Regents Examination; transfer students must be accepted to the College and meet the requirements for admission to a baccalaureate program; and a minimum of 30 hours of upper division level credit (3000-4000) courses must be obtained in residence at the College.

Biological Sciences – Pre-Professional Track

A grade of “C” or better in all Area F courses; an overall GPA of 2.0; successful completion of the Regents Examination; transfer students must be accepted to the College and meet the requirements for admission to a baccalaureate program; and a minimum of 30 hours of upper division level credit (3000-4000) courses must be obtained in residence at the College.

Biological Sciences – Secondary Education Track

Students entering the Biology Education track must meet the entry requirements of the Bachelor of Science in Education Program; students must have an overall GPA of 2.5 for acceptance into education program and must maintain an overall GPA of 2.75 in all education courses; students must successfully complete the Regents Examination; transfer students must be accepted to the College and meet the requirements for admission to a baccalaureate program; and a minimum of 30 hours of upper division level credit (3000-4000) courses must be obtained in residence at the College.

Business

Once admitted to the business program, students are required to get a “C” or better in all required BBA courses, as well as to be in alignment with the College’s policy for baccalaureate candidates. Students are required to take and pass both an internship (BUSA 4900) and capstone course (MGMT 4200) in order to be eligible to graduate. Further, students are advised and will be monitored on a semester-to-semester basis to ensure steady academic progress.

Health Informatics

In addition to the general College baccalaureate requirements, Health Informatics (HI) has the following additional requirements: at least 30 hours in HI courses must be taken at the College; courses taken as required for Area F cannot be counted toward the residency requirement; the following courses must be taken in the student’s 4th year of study at the College: HINF 4900 – Health Informatics Internship I (Fall Semester) and HINF 4901 – Health Informatics Internship II (Spring Semester).

Teacher Education

Once admitted to the teacher education program, teacher candidates are required to maintain a 2.75 GPA or higher to remain in the program. Periodic department monitoring by the program faculty with regard to teacher candidate progress on their knowledge, skills, and dispositions is conducted to ensure that teacher candidates meet high standards. Completion of professional education course work includes lecture courses, practicum courses where teacher candidates’ work in public schools with children under the supervision of a certified teacher and a university supervisor, seminar courses that provide overview information about upcoming course work, and professional development seminars that provide supplemental knowledge and skills beyond lecture courses. For graduation, all teacher candidates will be required to successfully complete the Capstone Integrated Internship, as well as pass the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) required for certification.

Nursing

Continuation in the nursing program requires a minimum grade of “C” in all nursing, biology and English courses, as well as an overall GPA in all courses required in the nursing curriculum:

- Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN): 2.0 GPA
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN): 2.75 GPA

All non-nursing academic courses should be completed before the ASN student enters NURS 2112, the last nursing course. Courses may include a medication calculation requirement that must be satisfied to progress to the next semester. All nursing courses must be completed within four years of the date of entry into the first nursing course. Academic misconduct may result in removal from the program.

State Licensing Examinations and Pass Rates

Levels of student performance are assessed through licensure examinations for specialized accreditation programs, such as clinical laboratory technology, radiography and nursing. Curricula are reviewed and evaluated by discipline faculty, specialized discipline accreditation agencies, and advisory committees. The College tracks licensure rates and records them in departmental annual reports. A sampling of College’s pass rates follows:

- Clinical Laboratory Technician Certification Examination results indicate an 88 percent pass rate since 2006
- Radiologic Science program students achieved a registry pass rate of 100 percent in six of the last eight years; in 2006 it was 89 percent and in 2010 it was 87 percent
- A summary of National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) pass rates indicates 98 percent for 2010 and 94 percent for 2009

Graduation and Placement Data

Each program of study at the College utilizes program completion data, graduation rates and employment data to assess the viability of the program. Based on the analysis of completion and placement data, as well as consideration of other reportable factors, programs make recommendations and set goals and objectives for improvement. These goals and objectives are related to program productivity, program quality and continued viability.

Enrollments in graduate programs and graduation rates for the College’s students are tracked through the National Student Clearinghouse, identifying where drop-outs transferred and where each of the College’s graduates chose to pursue further study. From 2008 to 2010, students transferring out of the College enrolled in both two-year and four-year institutions. Table 3 provides a listing and count for the “Top 10” destination institutions based on National Student Clearinghouse student transfer data.

Table 3: Transfer Student Destination Institutions (2008-2010)⁵

Institution	N
Georgia Southern University	104
Armstrong Atlantic State University	63
University of Phoenix	55
Altamaha Technical College	42
Valdosta State University	33
Okefenokee Technical College	21
University of Georgia	17
East Georgia College	9
Gordon College	9
Mountain State University (WV)	9

Career associate degree programs track graduates and job placements via benchmarks established by the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.

The Clinical Laboratory Technology program, for example, assessed graduation and placement rates over a three-year evaluation period (2007-2009), whereby each instructor had to meet benchmarks of 7.0 enrollments, 7.0 graduates and 7.0 placements – see Table 4.

Table 4: Clinical Laboratory Technology Graduation and Placement Rates

Graduation Year	Fall Enrollment	Graduates	Placements
2007	10	8	6
2008	11	9	5 ⁶
2009	11	10	7

Conversely, the Radiologic Science program completes an annual report that is submitted to the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology. Table 5 offers a snapshot of recent graduates and placements.

Table 5: Radiologic Science Graduation and Placement Rates

Graduation Year	Fall Enrollment	Graduates	Placements
2008	26	13	12
2009	15	9	8

For all baccalaureate degree programs, graduate placement rates will become an annual assessment component, beginning with the first inaugural graduating classes in Spring Semester 2011.

⁵ National Student Clearinghouse data extract, April 2010

⁶ Several students in this class chose not to seek employment after graduation due to family responsibilities.

Currently, the Office of Career Services assists departments with graduate tracking by conducting an alumni survey via *Coastal Career Link* ([sample screen shot](#)). Additionally, employers and/or graduate coordinators of graduate schools that either employ or have enrolled these graduates are asked to fill out a simple questionnaire ([sample screen shot](#)), requesting information concerning the respondents overall satisfaction with the performance level of the graduate.

Course offerings are evaluated based on analysis of results of the Graduating Student Satisfaction with College Programs and Services Survey in order to determine if academic offerings are responsive to the local, national and international economy.

Systematic and ongoing data analysis conducted by the OIE and provided to academic departments offers the necessary evidence in support of program planning regarding the direction of academic offerings, as well as student support services.

Use of Data for Improvement

Two major efforts to address both retention issues related to course and degree completion involved the College's engagement in a recent national (*Foundations of Excellence*) and a state-wide (*USG Graduation & Retention Task Force*) assessment review process from which collected data was used to formulate curricular improvement strategies.

Foundations of Excellence (FOE)

The College was selected as one of 12 institutions in the nation to participate in the 2009-10 class of four-year institutions with Foundations of Excellence® (FOE) in the First College Year – a partnership with the respected Policy Center on the First Year that enhances an institution's ability to align its goals and action plans for student learning, success and persistence in a liberal education curriculum. This rigorous program is designed to help institutions identify areas needing improvement and map pathways to success.

The College has begun to utilize the FOE study to promote excellence in student support services for overall student success, as well as address retention issues related to course and degree completion rates. In the context of the FOE needs assessment, the College collected and analyzed survey data during late Fall Semester 2009 and early Spring Semester 2010.

Following are a few of the recommendations put forth by the FOE steering committee in its [final report](#):

- Increase advising center staff and mission to include intrusive advisement of learning support students
- Review and revise CCGA 1101 (*College Success Seminar*)
- Charge a committee to coordinate communication and programming of the first year
- Enhance and broaden the Supplemental Instruction (SI) program

- Implement an [Early Alert Program](#) to inform students of their overall success in each course by the end of the fourth week of the term so that those who are not doing well will have the encouragement, support, and time to make changes and end the term successfully

USG Graduation & Retention Report

In Spring Semester 2010, the College was engaged in a USG Board of Regents' graduation and retention assessment process that culminated in an [institutional report](#) to the Board for improving graduation and retention rates at the College over a three-year period. A broad-based approach was used to create four overarching strategies focused on imbedding philosophies and building processes in the near term which will ensure improved retention, progression and degree completion in the long term.

The key strategies are:

- Implement student-centered policies and programs which focus on retention
- Reduce barriers to student performance and progression
- Integrate Foundations of Excellence (FOE) recommendations to foster student success
- Establish clear student progression and graduation targets and goals and ensure all members of the campus community are accountable for their achievement.

Each of these strategies aligns with the College's institutional goals and Strategic Master Plan. The retention strategies were linked with findings and recommendations from the FOE process along with best practices in the field, which include early connections, high expectations and aspirations, a clear academic plan and pathway, an effective track to college readiness, engaged learning, and academic and social support network ([College's three-year action plan](#)).

Supporting Documentation

[USG Office of Research and Policy Analysis Degrees Conferred Reports](#)

[USG Retention Rate Report](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia grade distribution report – sample screen shot](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#)

[2010 USG Degree Progress Report](#)

[2009 USG Degree Progress Report](#)

[2008 USG Degree Progress Report](#)

[USG Board of Regents Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.3.6](#)

[USG Student Transfer Reports](#)

[2010-2011 College of Coastal Georgia Catalog](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia, Coastal Career Link – sample screen shot](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia, Coastal Career Link questionnaire – sample screen shot](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia Foundations of Excellence Report](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia Early Alert Program memo](#)

[USG Graduation & Retention Report, College of Coastal Georgia](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia Graduation and Retention Three-Year Action Plan](#)