



ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Complete College Georgia – Summer 2013 Report

Executive Summary

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's Complete College Georgia plan consists of 12 goals that are organized under two themes: *Student Access* and *Student Success*. During the academic year that ended in May of 2013, ABAC met, or exceeded 8 of the 12 goals. The College has raised the bar on these eight goals and will continue to work on them during the current academic year. The College will fortify its effort and expects to meet or exceed the remaining four goals in the coming year. ABAC's CCG effort resulted in more opportunities and greater access for Georgia students, as evidenced by increased participation in the ACCEL program (dual enrollment) and by increased on-line enrollment via eCore. ABAC's CCG effort increased student success as evidenced by a rise in first-year retention rate, a decline in the number of students on academic suspension and an increase in the number and percentage of graduates.

Signature achievements in Student Access during the last year

Number of high schools where ABAC teaches ACCEL (dual enrollment) classes doubled from 2 to 4.

Number of students participating in ACCEL (dual enrollment) increased from 68 to 178, more than 160%.

Number of baccalaureate students increased from 494 (fall '11) to 647 (fall '12), or more than 30%.

Number of students enrolled in online courses (eCore) increased from 84 to 261, or more than 210%.

Signature achievements in Student Success during the last year

Number of graduates increased from 432 to 482, or more than 11%.

Virtually all students who participated in a pilot program that offered concurrent delivery of English Learning Support (ENG 99) with Freshman English (ENG 1101), were successful in one attempt.

A required intervention program for first-semester students who go on academic probation resulted a doubling (from 25% to 52%) in the number of first-year students who were placed on academic probation returning the following year.

Prescriptive scheduling for selected groups of first-semester freshman students simplified enrollment and reduced advising errors for these students.



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Background

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's *Complete College Georgia* (CCG) plan is undergirded by a traditional and long-standing principle that dates by back more than 105 years to the founding of the ABAC's predecessor institution, the 2nd Congressional District A&M High School, and which has proven to be an unwavering strength of the College through the decades. Opportunity is essential for self-improvement through education. Providing young Georgians with the opportunity for life-changing education is the legacy of ABAC.

So, quite naturally, ABAC's CCG plan reflects a contemporary view of two essential elements of opportunity – **access** and **success**. These became the themes of ABAC's CCG plan, each encompassing several goals.

Theme I - Access

Goal 1	Joint Enrollment (ACCEL).
Goal 2	Recruitment and admission of students from certain target groups.
Goal 3	Student participation in on-line education (eCore).
Goal 4	Participation in the USG REACH Scholarship Program.
Goal 5	Increase pathways for TCSG students.
Goal 6	Increase military friendliness.

Theme II - Success

Goal 7	Improve student success in Learning Support.
Goal 8	Improve student retention by modifying Standards of Academic Progress to support an early intervention program.
Goal 9	Improve retention and progression by reducing/eliminating restrictive holds on student accounts.
Goal 10	Improve student retention and progression by reducing advising errors via prescriptive scheduling.
Goal 11	Improve progression and increase graduation by simplifying and condensing the college curriculum.
Goal 12	Increase enrollment and graduation by re-enrolling students who attended but departed before completing a degree.



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Progress and future work

Theme 1 Access, Goal 1 – Joint enrollment (ACCEL)

Students benefit from a “college” experience while in high school in several ways. For academically high-achieving students, dual enrollment presents the students with the opportunity to earn college credits while fulfilling the requirements for high school graduation. For students who attend high schools with limited Advanced Placement course offerings, dual enrollment provides the opportunity for advanced course work. Finally, for students who have had little exposure to the college environment, or who are possibly the first in their family to attend college, dual enrollment is an opportunity to slowly and affordably begin the college experience college.

Two joint enrollment metrics were used: 1) the number of sites at which ABAC offers ACCEL coursework and 2) the total number of students (unduplicated headcount) that participate in ACCEL coursework through ABAC. ABAC exceeded its projected metric gains in both cases. The number of sites where ACCEL coursework was offered increased from four (4) in AY10/11 and AY11/12 to six (6) during AY12/13. This is a 50% increase in effort. ACCEL coursework was offered at ABAC’s main campus in Tifton, ABAC on the Square in Moultrie, Tift County High School (Tifton), Tiftarea Academy (Tifton), Colquitt County High School (Moultrie) and Ben Hill County High School (Fitzgerald). Non-duplicated headcount enrollment in ACCEL was 53, 68 and 178 in the fall of 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively.

ABAC will continue to expand student access to ACCEL coursework.

Theme 1 Access, Goal 2 – Recruitment and enrollment of students from target groups

In recent years, ABAC has been particularly effective in increasing enrollment by using targeted recruiting programs, that is, programs that focus on students with particular academic interests that are well aligned with the institution’s programmatic strengths. Past efforts have focused on STEM, Phi Theta Kappa transfers, students who have taken AP exams via the College Board, students from International Baccalaureate high schools, FFA, FCCLA and underserved minorities via AAMI, HEP, CAMP.

During the past 12 months ABAC added four (4) new program targets: Honors Program, Georgia counties with high enrollment potential at ABAC, residential students and inbound transfer students to study in ABAC’s baccalaureate programs.

ABAC’s “targeted recruiting” effort utilizes a multifaceted approach and relies on personnel from across the campus, including, but not limited to: current ABAC students, Admissions, Student Financial Services, Academic Deans, College Administration, the ABAC Foundation Scholarship Program and the ABAC Alumni Association. These efforts continue.



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Theme 1 Access, Goal 3 – Student participation in online education through eCore

Online education is a preferred, or in some cases the only, path to a college degree. Because ABAC offers a relative small suite of online courses and no online degree programs, the College joined the suite of USG eCore institutions and undertook an aggressive campaign to promote the eCore program.

ABAC student enrollment in eCore increased from 84 during AY2011/12 to 261 during AY2012/13. This represents a more than 300% increase in online attendance. ABAC will continue to promote eCore.

Theme 1 Access, Goal 4 – Participation in the USG REACH Scholarship Program.

ABAC, through cooperation with the ABAC Foundation, Inc. committed to ten (10) REACH Scholarships of \$2,500 each, for a total of \$25,000. As the program materializes and students reach college, ABAC will re-evaluate its commitment to the program.

Theme 1 Access, Goal 5 – Increase pathways for TCSG students.

Some students who begin their higher education careers in the Technical College System of Georgia desire to articulate to the University System of Georgia. ABAC's nursing bridge program is its most popular transfer articulation pathway. The program provides LPNs and others who hold certain types of health science training from the TCSG to earn an Associate's Degree in Nursing and license as a Registered Nurse. Depending on the year, the ABAC nursing bridge program accounts for 25-40% of enrollment in ABAC's nursing program.

One new and very specific transfer articulation agreement was signed with Piedmont Technical College (South Carolina).

Theme 1 Access, Goal 6 – Increase military friendliness

Veterans are greatly underserved, but growing pool of potential college graduates. In an effort to better served veterans, ABAC 1) conducted sessions specifically for veterans at on-campus recruiting events like Stallion Days, 2) created a "veterans group" that provides support and assistance to veterans seeking enrollment at ABAC and 3) ABAC reviewed and revised its Prior Learning Assessment to make easier for veterans to seek credit for prior experience.

Theme 2 Success, Goal 7 – Improve student success in Learning Support

Many students who enroll at ABAC have learning support needs in mathematics and/or English. Inability to clear Learning Support requirements is an obstacle for some students. ABAC's goal has been for several years to identify ways to help students clear Learning Support and enroll in collegiate academic work.



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Two years ago ABAC undertook a pilot project to evaluate a concurrent delivery method for students in ENG99/ENG1101. More than 75% of the students who participated in the concurrent delivery English pilot were successful. ABAC is currently exploring ways to identify students who will most likely succeed in this delivery format. Implementation is expected shortly.

ABAC recently completed a SACS-approved five-year QEP, the focus of which was improving student performance in College Algebra. The report was completed last year and approved by SACS. Unfortunately, none of the alternative delivery programs resulted in significant improvements in student performance in College Algebra. ABAC will continue to work with the USG and aspirational peers to find ways to improve performance in mathematics.

Theme 2 Success, Goal 8 – Improve student retention by modifying Standards of Academic Progress to support an early intervention program.

Academic performance for freshmen during their first semester is often problematic. A variety of factors affect first-semester performance, but students often perform so poorly the first semester that they are not engaged in a meaningful way that by the end of their second semester, they are unlikely to return. So, ABAC undertook a revision of its Standards of Academic Progress so that early identification and intervention was possible with freshmen students. The long-term goal is to suspend fewer students, but in the short term, more will be placed on probation and required to participate in an intervention program.

As expected, significantly greater numbers of students were put on probation, suspensions at the end of spring semester were high, but the percentage of students who returned this fall (first fall since start of program) after having been suspended last spring was 52%, compared to only 25% for the two years before. This program has produced remarkable results and is viewed by many as a model program for freshmen. ABAC is continuing the program and making what are thought to be refining improvements.

Theme 2 Success, Goal 9 – Improve retention and progression by reducing/eliminating restrictive holds on student accounts.

Some students fail to return to college because of restrictive holds placed on their accounts, many of which are for non-academic reasons. ABAC undertook a comprehensive review of origin and value of restrictive holds. The status of this goal is quantitatively unknown because we did not have baseline data for comparison. However, ABAC policy/procedures were changed so that restrictive registration holds for outstanding accounts receivables for non-tuition charges will not prevent students from registering.

The College will continue its efforts to implement real-time, unified billing so that students, and their parents, can more easily monitor and pay student accounts. Creating a single pay system that includes tuition, fees, room/board charges, bookstore charges, clinical charges, parking fines etc. will reduce the number of students who face restrictive holds during registration.



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Theme 2 Success, Goal 10 – Improve student retention and progression by reducing advising errors via prescriptive scheduling.

Students may arrive with Learning Support requirements, CPC deficiencies and a variety of other situations that can impede their retention and progression. These, coupled with the fact that many students change majors, increases the potential for advising errors. So, ABAC undertook a process by which students who were likely to experience advising challenges early in their career were provided prescriptive schedules.

ABAC doubled the number of first-time freshmen students who received prescriptive schedules. All incoming students with either Learning Support requirements or CPC deficiencies were given prescriptive schedules for their first semester. Additionally, some students were prescribed certain critical, first-semester freshman courses.

This has simplified new student orientation, allowing more time for topics that focus on helping the student transition from high school to college. It has also reduced the number of advising errors and insured that students do, in fact, clear their Learning Support requirements and CPC deficiencies during their early semesters.

Theme 2 Success, Goal 11 – Improve progression and increase graduation by simplifying and condensing the college curriculum.

While ABAC adopted a new core curriculum in 2011, further condensation of the curriculum is required to assist students in being able to complete core without losing credit. An example was two Biology tracks, one for majors and one for non-majors. Deleting one sequence allowed for less confusion for students during the registration process and less problems when students changed majors or took the wrong class.

More work needs to be done, however, in order to make the matriculation process as smooth as possible and to condense the curriculum.

Theme 2 Success, Goal 12 – Increase enrollment and graduation by re-enrolling students who attended but departed before completing a degree.

Frequently, the College receives requests from students who want to know how they can obtain an ABAC degree even though they transferred and finished their requirements elsewhere; they value their time and experience with the College and we include them among our alumni. ABAC allows them to send transcripts back for evaluation and if requirements are met, issue them degrees.

We hope that the USG will implement a reverse transfer policy/system that will enable even more students to transfer back, so they may retroactively be awarded a degree.



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In addition, ABAC has attempted to identify students who met all graduation requirements, except the Regents Exam and award them degrees, since the Regents Exam is no longer a graduation requirement. Further, ABAC attempts to recruit recent graduates to stay and complete newly installed bachelor degrees.