



# Fort Valley State University

A State and Land-Grant University  
University System of Georgia

Office of the President

1005 State University Drive · Fort Valley, Georgia 31030-4313

September 09, 2013

Dr. Houston D. Davis  
Executive Vice Chancellor  
Chief Academic Officer  
Academic Affairs  
Board of Regents  
University System of Georgia  
270 Washington Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Dr. Davis:

Please find Fort Valley State University's College Completion Plan that has been realigned and expanded to ensure measurability and greater student success. The leadership team decided to reengineer the plan instead of revising as a result of the feedback from the USG College Completion Team on our FY 2013 update.

This adjustment will be monitored and a report on FVSU's progress will be submitted in six months. This plan includes strategies devised in response to meetings with Dr. Linda Noble and other consultants from the USG Office of Academic Affairs.

If there are any questions pertaining to this document, please address them to our College Completion Plan Contact, Dr. B. Donta Truss at 478.822.7594 or by email at [trussd@fvsu.edu](mailto:trussd@fvsu.edu).

Warmest regards,

Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith Ph.D.  
President



## Fort Valley State University

CV Troup Building, Suite 319 1005 State University Drive  
Fort Valley, GA 31030

Phone: 478.822.1070 Fax: 478.822.7595

E-Mail: [trussd@fvsu.edu](mailto:trussd@fvsu.edu) Web: [www.fvsu.edu](http://www.fvsu.edu)

# College Completion Plan

Fort Valley State University

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## MISSION

The mission of Fort Valley State University is to advance the cause of education with emphasis upon fulfilling commitments that our community members have undertaken collectively. As an institution of the University System of Georgia, Fort Valley State University naturally embraces the principles articulated by the Core Mission Statement for State Universities as approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The university's primary commitments include, among others, enhancement of teacher training programs grounded upon a liberal arts foundation, as reflective of over 110 years of experience and tradition. Additionally, the university recognizes with great pride and desires to further its responsibilities as Georgia's only 1890 Land Grant institution by offering programming excellence in agriculture, agribusiness, family and consumer sciences, extension, technology and military science and leadership, as well as to further its traditions of excellence in programs in the liberal arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural and physical sciences.

Our plan for Complete College Georgia uses a major tenet from our Mission at FVSU, which is to advance the cause of education with emphasis upon fulfilling commitments that our community members have undertaken collectively. The overall implementation of the plan will be managed by the new Leadership Council at FVSU, which consists of a diverse team of stakeholders to include Dr. Linda Noble, Dr. B. Donta Truss, Dr. Anna Holloway, Dr. Ian Toppin, and Ms. Rosie Petties. The overarching goal is consistent with the University System of Georgia's Goal to increase the number of graduates in the state of Georgia. The specific goals of FVSU's plan are as follows:

- Goal 1: Improve and increase access and graduation for all students to include part-time and working students, adults, the military, low-income students, students with disabilities, and students of racial and ethnic diversity.
- Goal 2: Improve collection and analysis of data to facilitate an introspective process to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and the needs of all FVSU students.
- Goal 3: To align and partner with K-12 for college readiness including, Common Core, dual enrollment, Early College, STEM partnerships, educator preparation and other FVSU pre-college programs.

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- Goal 4: Increase collaborative engagement with campus and community stakeholders
- Goal 5: To reengineer instruction and learning including effective teaching and learning practices, a focus on gateway courses, online and hybrid learning, new business models, and learning analytics.
- Goal 6: To transform remediation to include cutting edge and research based initiatives.

## **2012 FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE COMPLETION PLAN**

### **How data informed your strategy development?**

In Fall 2011, the Retention Committee responded to President Larry E. Rivers' challenge to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates at Fort Valley State University. Figure 1-3 outline the low retention and graduation rates at Fort Valley State University.

This prospectus represents a culmination of efforts to develop strategies, initiatives, best practices and policies to help students overcome the apparent barriers to academic success, persistence, and graduation. In this vein, the committee reviewed data and compiled surveys of four cohorts of non-returning/stop-out students in order to identify factors that contribute to attrition. These factors will be addressed in the overall plan. The following section provides the goals, objectives, and strategies of FVSU's Complete College Plan:



Figure 1:

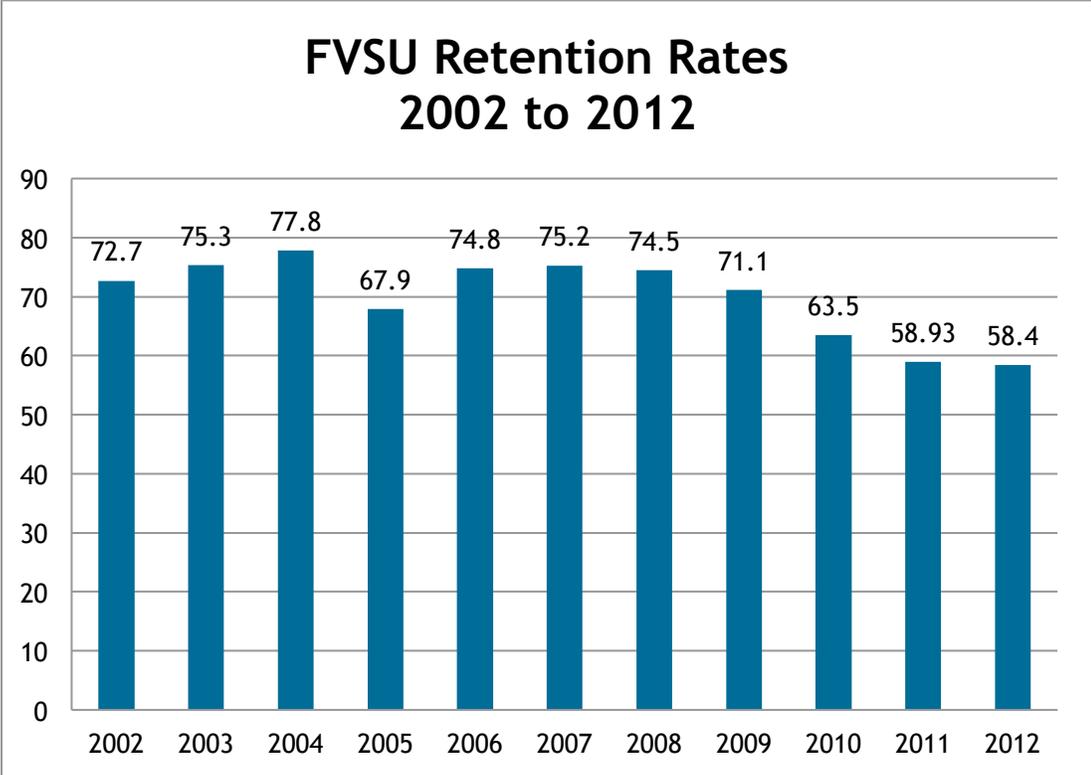


Figure 2:

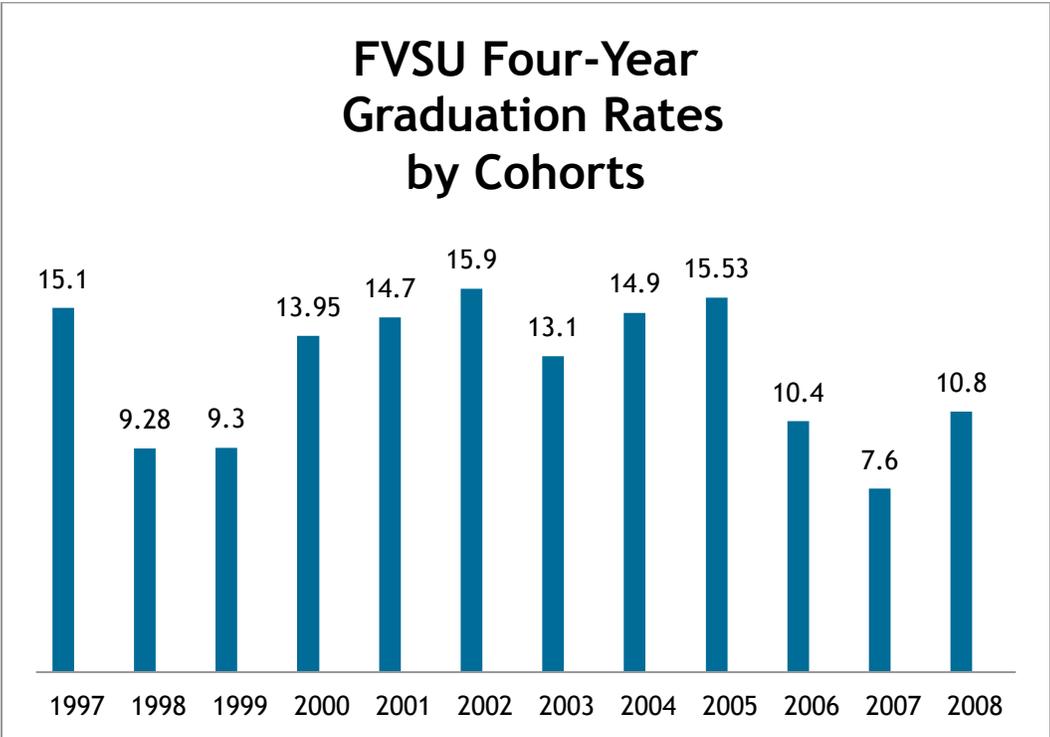
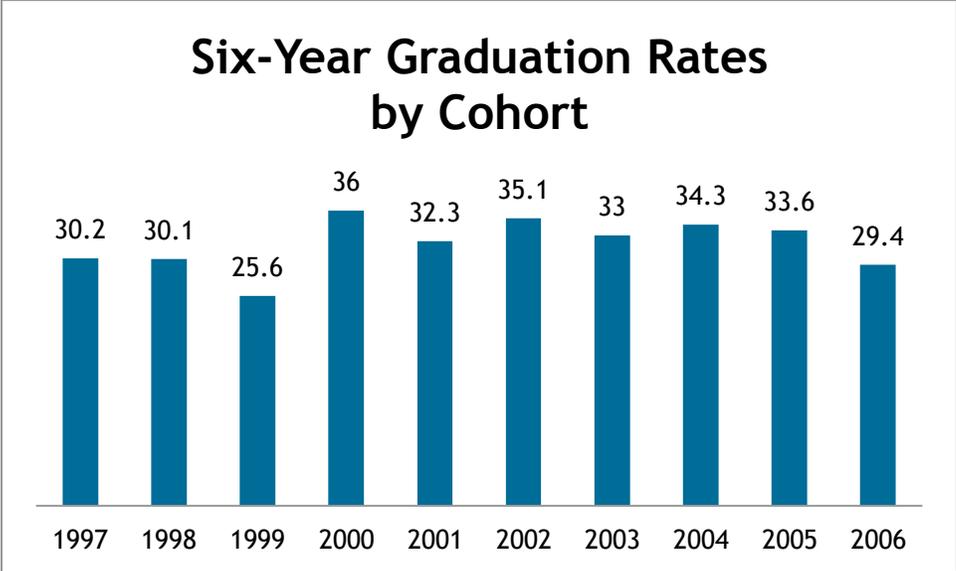




Figure 3:



Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Improve and increase access and graduation for all students to include part-time and working students, adults, the military, low-income students, students with disabilities, and students of racial and ethnic diversity.

**Objective 1:** Increase the graduation rates at FVSU from 29% to 45% (16% increase) and reduce the number of courses students take that are not needed for graduation by 75% (Associate VP of Institutional Research/Center for Retention Services).

- **Strategy:** Examine data in FVSU’s Banner system for students who are within 20 to 30 credit hours from completion and notify department chairs, advisors and students of courses needed for completion and actions to be completed for graduation.
- **Strategy:** Identify and implement means to address students’ financial needs and prevent interruption or delay of instruction.

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- Employ the Enrollment Management Working Group to develop a flow chart of the FVSU Financial Aid Process. The flow chart should identify and solve the issue of students not being “cashed out” one month into the semester.
  - **Strategy:** Seek outside funding sources to increase the number of Scholarships and provide external funds for book grants, including e-book fees.
  - **Strategy:** Reengineer the Advising process at FVSU to include professional advisors as well as faculty advisors.
  - **Strategy:** Provide advisement tailored to specific student types and specific mediation points such as initial advisement, advisement when students are identified as at-risk, pre-registration advisement, and pre-graduation advisement.
    - Hire Professional Advisors to strengthen the advising process at FVSU.
    - Train faculty advisors.
  - **Strategy:** Develop and implement precise career path to offer students in each academic program, with feedback and buy in from local businesses, non-profit organizations, and other entities through Councils consisting of local members as evidenced by qualitative data to include historical documents, contact sheets, and student notes.
  - **Strategy:** Redesign course balance sheets to make progression through program of study and degree requirements clearer for students.
  - **Strategy:** Develop, post and adhere to rotation schedule for courses, especially those not offered each semester to assist students in taking courses at the appropriate time.
  - **Strategy:** Completely implement Degree Works, which will keep students on track and will better clarify which courses are required for each major.

- **Strategy:** Provide early career preference counseling.
- **Strategy:** Create a seamless approach to changing majors that allows for communication with all stakeholders to include Department Chairs, Retention Specialists, and advisors.
- **Strategy:** Fully implement use of GATRACS and JST/ACE military transcripts in the advisement process.

**Objective 2:** Increase first year to second year rates from 59% to 85% (16% increase) (Associate VP of Institutional Research/Center for Retention Services).

- **Strategy:** Make full use of the D2L course management system to identify at-risk students early in the term. After faculty identify these students, Center for Retention Services staff will contact students, answer questions, and make appropriate referrals designed to help the students persist to second year.
- **Strategy:** Provide Supplemental Instruction (SI) and expand peer tutoring for traditionally difficult courses with high D, F, W rates.
- **Strategy:** Develop an aggressive campaign by the Center for Retention Services for providing needed intrusive services to all incoming freshmen students to include increased participation in retention sessions and participation in tutoring and supplemental instruction.
- **Strategy:** Provide customized academic support services to students on academic probation and academic warning, as well as those on warning for violating Standard Academic Performance (SAP) requirements. FVSU will develop proactive and intrusive intervention strategies.



**Objective 3:** Increase access to non-traditional students at FVSU, which will be evidenced by a 10% increase in attendance by part time students, adult students (students 25 and older) military personnel, students with disabilities, and international students (Dean of Graduate Studies and Extended Education).

- **Strategy:** Expand efforts to identify needs and increase access to FVSU programs and degree completion for active military and current student veterans to include creating additional assessment, planning, and intentional programs and services as needed.
  - Create a virtual one-stop-shop for military students, including online students, to include admissions, registration, advisement, graduation applications, and financial aid counseling.
- **Strategy:** Identify and implement initiatives to address financial needs of students from these populations in a timely fashion.
  - Proposed efforts will include seeking outside funds, changing policies on campus, and providing financial literacy education.
- **Strategy:** Identify and address barriers that prevent traditionally underserved students from progression and completion. Assess additional support service needs of these students.
- **Strategy:** Expand student engagement and involvement opportunities, and identify the most important nonacademic factors that contribute to degree completion among the aforementioned student groups.
  - Support the initiation of ANTSHE (Adult and Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education Organization) and Student Veterans of American organization.

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- **Strategy:** Develop respite centers for these populations through the Center for Retention Services to include areas to study and to engage with similar populations.
    - Provide computers, monitors, furniture and convenience items for the Veterans Lounge; open an equipped Adult Students Lounge; improve access and convenience for students with disabilities.

**Objective 4:** Increase the percentage of graduates at FVSU, at the four -year point, from 10% to 26 % (16% increase) (Provost and VPPA).

- **Strategy:** Increase usage of prior learning assessments with non-traditional students by mandating that all non-traditional students are assessed for possible PLA credits. Pursue this strategy as a way to recruit non-traditional students.
- **Strategy:** Increase the official transfer and articulation agreements with two year colleges and market aggressively the seamless approach to degree completion for these transfers, including 2+2 programs.
- **Strategy:** Identify all active duty military and veterans, and apply credit based on ACE transfer recommendations when possible.
- **Strategy:** Decrease changes of majors by students at FVSU by providing pre-admissions career and interest assessments. These services will be provided online and assist the student with identifying a major based on interest prior to being enrolled.
- **Strategy:** Pursue the possibility of offering Associate Degrees to further support work force development and provide additional opportunities for degree completion.
- **Strategy:** Develop Bachelor's to Master's programs, e.g. in Animal Science, Plant Science/Biotechnology, Psychology/ Counseling and History as a way to incentivize



students in these majors to complete and move forward, thus increasing the number of graduates and the number of students interested in receiving college degrees.

**Goal 2:** Improve collection and analysis of data to facilitate an introspective process to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and the needs of all FVSU students.

**Objective 1:** A learning analytics plan will be developed through collaboration between the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, the Office of Information Systems and the Georgia Board of Regents. 85% of FVSU administrators will state on the Data Analysis Survey that this learning analytic system has improved decision making at FVSU. 75% of classes will make use of early interventions made possible by some form of learning analytics (Associate Director of Institutional Research Planning and Effectiveness).

- **Strategy:** Purchase or develop a learning analytic system.
- **Strategy:** Coordinate meetings with the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness and the Office of Technology at FVSU in order to strengthen data analysis processes and data security.
- **Strategy:** The Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness will also conduct more detailed data analysis and data mining in order to identify institutional benefits that may not be immediately identifiable by units and committees. The new learning analytic system and the FVSU Compliance Assist software will be utilized to support this process.
- **Strategy:** Use the intelligent agent function in D2L to track engagement and performance of students in online, hybrid and a gradually increasing number of face-to-face classes.

**Objective 2:** 85% of students at FVSU will complete the Student Satisfaction Survey, so that FVSU administrators can gauge areas of improvement at FVSU. Processes and/or communication strategies will be adjusted in 90% of areas (units or departments) indicated as in



need of improvement according to survey results (Associate Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness).

- **Strategy:** Disseminate the Student Satisfaction Survey to all students electronically and encourage them to complete survey in order to strengthen areas at FVSU.
- **Strategy:** Offer incentives in order to increase completion rate on this survey.
- **Strategy:** Utilize targeted task forces to adjust processes and/or communication strategies in all areas (units or departments) indicated as in need of improvement according to survey results.

**Objective 3:** At least five data sharing forums will be provided to the FVSU community. During these meetings, 90% of attendees will state that the data provided was beneficial in making decisions in their respective areas. 85% of units and departments on campus will implement changes based on use of data, and these changes will enhance recruitment, retention and/or graduation according to exit polls (Associate Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness and Center for Retention Services).

- **Strategy:** The Center for Retention Services will conduct data sharing forums at specific dates throughout the academic year in order to share data in reference to retention, graduation, and or persistence.
- **Strategy:** Feedback from student dropout surveys will be presented in order to immediately address concerns of students.
- **Strategy:** Units and departments will modify procedures and or communication strategies based on analysis of feedback.



Goal 3: To align and partner with K-12 for college readiness utilizing Common Core, dual enrollment classes, Early College, STEM partnerships, educator preparation and FVSU pre college programs.

**Objective 1:** Develop and implement at least five supplemental instruction volunteer tutorial services to K-12 students in Peach County and/or region in order to assist them master the Common Core and be better prepared for college entry. This effort will increase the number of high school graduates in the county by 10% (Director of Tutoring and Dean of College of Education).

- **Strategy:** Expand and enhance the relationship with local high school and middle school counselors and early-grades principles who will assist with developing tutoring program.
- **Strategy:** Tutors and leaders will conduct enrichment programs with these schools to increase academic and social preparation.
- **Strategy:** Deploy a marketing plan to highlight to children and parents how this program can increase college readiness.

**Objective 2:** Increase by 25% the number of local K-12 students who participate in dual enrollment at FVSU and go on to enter college (Director of Public Service Center).

- **Strategy:** Recruit Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search students to participate in dual enrollment.
- **Strategy:** Provide intentional support for dual enrolled students.
- **Strategy:** FVSU, through our College of Education, will work with the Georgia Department of Education and school systems to determine if any college mathematics courses could count as both high school and college level courses in order to make this program more appealing.

- **Strategy:** Provide well-trained advisor for dual-enrolled students.
- **Strategy:** Survey parents and students to determine the best locations and times for dual enrollment classes; pilot dual enrollment class offerings based on the results.

**Objective 3:** Through a partnership with Fort Valley State University and the local school system, pre-college internships will be developed with local businesses with a focus on companies that require STEM backgrounds. The number of Peach County graduates who enter STEM majors at FVSU will increase by 20% (Director of Career Services and Director of Public Service Center).

- **Strategy:** Bring together Middle Georgia Regional Economic Development, local Chambers of Commerce, FVSU representatives and representatives of Peach County School System to discuss feasibility of and of supervision of pre-college students with internships.
- **Strategy:** Partner or collaborate with internship programs already in existence, including those sponsored by Central Georgia Technical College.

Goal 4: Increase collaborative engagement with campus and community stakeholders.

**Objective 1:** FVSU will increase relationships by 10% with businesses and/or organizations who are willing to partner to create career paths. 45% of majors will be able to identify the career paths they intend to follow (Director of Career Services and Academic Department Heads).

- **Strategy 1:** Expand and develop new partnerships by implementing at least five community based programs with the focus of further engaging the five county region in discussions and planning to increase educational attainment and identifying needed career paths.

- **Strategy 2:** Peach County, as the county in which FVSU resides, will be the main focal point of at least five new initiatives designed to enhance community awareness of FVSU in order to increase the educational attainment level of the area. Currently, 17% of Peach County residents twenty-five and older have at least a Bachelor's degree, which is 10% lower than the state of Georgia where 27.5% of this population has at least a Bachelor's degree.
- **Strategy 3:** The new FVSU Office of Strategic Initiatives, assisted by the Director of Development, will collect points of contact with external groups and organizations and begin a systematic outreach effort via prospect management system to monitor educational partnerships and joint collaborations, increasing institutional recognition as a destination college.
- **Strategy 4:** Academic programs will develop and implement precise career paths with feedback and buy in from local businesses, non-profit organizations, and other entities through Councils consisting of local members as evidenced by qualitative data to include historical documents, contact sheets, and student notes.

Goal 5: To reengineer instruction and learning including effective teaching and learning practices, a focus on gateway courses, online and hybrid learning, and new business models (Director of Center for Teacher and Learning).

**Objective 1: At least 85% of faculty will be trained in course redesign models in their respective disciplines, and the passing rate in their classes will be increased by 20%.**

- **Strategy:** Faculty development workshops will be provided to all Faculty members in order to provide access to and maximize use of online resources that are proven to be effective, increase hands-on activities during class times, and monitor engagement and progress towards learning outcomes of the students.

- **Strategy:** Initiate an incentive-based approach to increase the number of faculty members utilizing online course content and technology and hybrid formats to provide greater access and flexibility.
- **Strategy:** Through a new initiative that has been spearheaded by the President, FVSU will build a four-year Undergraduate Research Experience for all students. This effort contributes to student success in all courses by reconfiguring traditional laboratory experiences into challenging, engaging research investigations. The experiences designed for courses will be appropriate for the learning outcomes of the course and will enable students not only to master course content but also to develop transferable and desirable skills in critical thinking and communication.

**Objective 2:** Develop alternative entry points and instructional sites for all students with an emphasis on ease of entrance for adult students and increase mini semesters enrollment by 25%. The number of adult students being retained to graduation will increase by 20% (Dean of Graduate Studies and Extended Education and Registrar)

- **Strategy:** Increased compressed sessions (6-8 week) and multiple start-stop dates for online and traditional programs.
  - Provide a sufficient number of weeks for enrollment, financial aid processes, and advisement for students who make use of compressed sessions, especially new students.
- **Strategy:** Increased use of eCore and development of majors and career paths to complement eCore; and increased use of Prior Learning Assessment.
- **Strategy:** Offer classes on site at businesses and organizations such as Blue Bird, Proctor and Gamble, Frito-Lay.

**Objective 3:** Identify courses for each major that are known to predict success in the major. The number of students who are retained in their first or second choice of major will increase by 25% (Director of Tutoring).

- **Strategy:** Study courses that predict success in specific majors at other institutions and analyze FVSU data to determine whether the pattern holds true here.
- **Strategy:** Move “predictor courses” closer to the beginning of programs of study, and advise students regarding their majors based on their success in these courses.

Goal 6: To transform remediation to include cutting edge and research based initiatives.

**Objective 1:** Modularize remediation in writing, reading and math and offer instruction in the modules students need. This modularization will increase persistence rate by 20% (Director of Learning Support, Provost and VPAA, and Academic Deans).

- **Strategy:** Offer instruction in writing, reading and math modules that assessments indicate are needed by prospective students, by means of summer bridge courses or continuing education.

**Objective 2:** Initiate co-requisite versions of Learning Support mathematics and English to allow students to enroll in a credit-level mathematics course concurrently with a Learning Support mathematics course (and the same for writing/reading and English). This will allow FVSU to address the issue of moving Learning Support Students in the Academic pipeline more quickly and increase their opportunities to graduate. Retention of remedial students will increase by 30% (Director of Learning Support and Director of Center for Teaching and Learning).

- **Strategy:** Pilot co-requisites for students who need varying levels of remediation to determine which students will benefit most from main-streaming.

- **Strategy:** Research methods of instruction and tutoring strategies for mainstreaming and apply these methods in pilot classes, along with the tutors, to determine the most effective approaches.

**Objective 3:** Determine and put in place course selections for remedial students and students exiting remediation that will increase their chances of success according to research in the field. Retention of remedial students will increase by 30% (Director of Learning Support and Center for Retention Services).

- **Strategy:** Avoid placing remedial students in both English and math in the same semester.
- **Strategy:** Allow remedial students and students exiting remedial requirements to take one class in their major each semester.

