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# University of West Georgia

## 2004-2005 Annual Report of Institutional Progress

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# Part A: Summary of Major Institutional Accomplishments in the Preceding Year

**T**he University of West Georgia celebrated the 2004-2005 academic year with a record enrollment. This is the second year in a row that the University's enrollment exceeded the 10,000 mark. Both headcount and FTE enrollments represented records, at 10,216 and 8,898 respectively.

The following are demonstrative of the University's continued pledge to *Educational Excellence in a Personal Environment*.

### ***Educational Excellence in a Personal Environment***

- In January 2005, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia voted to approve a name change for the State University of West Georgia. The institution will now be known as the University of West Georgia. As UWG approaches the centennial celebration of its founding in 1906, its name change reflects the historical maturation of the institution.



Costs for implementing the name change will be primarily limited to signage. Estimates total approximately \$5,000 for new entrance signs to the campus. Departments have been requested to deplete current stocks of stationary, business cards, etc. prior to printing new supplies.

- For the second consecutive year, UWG was identified as one of the best 100 colleges and universities in the Southeastern region in *The Best Southeastern Colleges*, a regional guidebook published by The Princeton Review.



This regional guide features a two-page school profile with information and data on admissions, financial aid, student body demographics and academics. It also showcases the top schools in 10 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

- The University System of Georgia Board of Regents recognized UWG with the best practices award for jointly developing with Kennesaw State University a new electronic distribution system that provides all students with a debit card that offers various options for receiving funds.

UWG and KSU both had processes that did not support electronic fund distribution. With the help of Higher One, an Internet financial services provider that focuses on higher education, UWG and KSU reduced the time that students had to wait for their financial aid checks. Before electronic distribution, students would typically wait in long lines to get a check, said UWG Vice President of Business and Finance, William Gauthier, who accepted the award at the BOR meeting. The two schools split a \$15,000 award to use for organizational efficiency.



After implementation, registered students now receive a MasterCard debit card that is co-branded by the University. Students may receive funds as a direct deposit to a bank account associated with the debit card, electronic funds transferred to the student's own bank account or a paper check. Service enhancements include more rapid availability of student funds, the elimination of long lines for processing of financial aid, and more efficient processing of financial transactions.

### ***Accomplishments by Academic and Administrative Departments***

- The *Graduate School Office*, in collaboration with Information Technology Services (ITS), University TV, Learning Resources, and Undergraduate Admissions produced and distributed a CD-ROM to aid with student recruitment. The CD was completed in September 2004.
- The *Department of Mass Communications/Theatre Arts* opened a new speech lab in October 2005 to serve students in public speaking classes as well as self-staging classes.

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## Institutional Accomplishments

Media technology is prominent in the new lab. The students will be able to make use of two televisions, four televisions with DVR/VHS players and recorders, an overhead projector and PowerPoint capabilities.

- The *Department of Nursing* began offering the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) degree at the UWG Newnan Center in Newnan, GA, and the Coweta County Board of Commissioners has pledged its support for the program. The degree leads to initial licensure as a registered nurse.

The new program offers local students who have completed required core curriculum courses the opportunity to complete the professional sequence of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree on the Newnan campus. Classes of approximately 30 nursing students will begin study in June of each year, with projected completion in two and a half years. The first course of study began June 2005.

- The *Department of Political Science and Planning* added a graduate certificate program in Public Administration. Individuals who wish to upgrade their skills without completing the requirements for a Master's Degree can receive the certificate after completing twelve hours in Public Administration courses.
- UWG completed a university-wide telephone conversion, during fall 2004, that should equalize service and feature options across campus. The new phone system is a part of the University's Information Technology (IT) strategic plan. When examining threats to the institution during a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) Analysis the aging phone system was identified as an unbudgeted item which had potential financial risks. In addition, escalating costs for traditional phone services were further burdening decreasing budgets. With the new phone system, the University should realize a significant cost savings since payment is based on connectivity, rather than per line. All departments currently have the options of voice mail, automated call attendant, call forwarding, conference calling, call back and digital display of caller I.D.
- The *Department of Publications and Printing (P&P)* received four awards for printing excellence from the Printing Industry Association of Georgia. P&P earned the Best Category award for the Academic Calendar, produced in conjunction with the Office of University Communications and Marketing; the Braves Basketball Media Guide; a project for Carrollton High School, the Trojan Basketball Program; a small marketing piece, Just

the Facts, produced with the Offices of University Communications and Marketing and Institutional Research and Planning.

- The *Department of Internal Audit* successfully coordinated the State Auditor's review of the UWG annual financial report and other various reporting requirements. The University System of Georgia (USG) awarded UWG the audit rating of "1," the highest rating awarded by USG.

### *Accomplishments by students, faculty, and staff*

The University of West Georgia continues to garner national attention for its work in undergraduate research.

- In fall 2004, Thomas Carrington Vaden, a senior from the Department of Music, received the 2004 Maestro Joel Levi Scholarship Award given by the Atlanta Steinway Society. The award is named in honor of a former conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.
- For the fifth time in the last seven years, a student from the UWG Honors College has been selected to receive a Goldwater Scholarship. Logan Leslie, a sophomore majoring in chemistry, is one of 320 students selected nationwide to receive a Goldwater. Jason Hay, physics major, was selected in 1999; Yong Suh, chemistry major, was selected in 2000; Brian Bockelman, mathematics major, was selected in 2003, and Toma Omonuwa, chemistry major, was selected in 2004.

The Goldwater Scholars for 2005 were selected on the basis of academic merit from a field of 1,113 mathematics, science, and engineering students who were nominated by colleges and universities nationwide.

The Goldwater Foundation is a federally endowed agency established in 1986. It is designed to foster and encourage outstanding students to pursue careers in the fields of mathematics, the natural sciences, and engineering. The Goldwater Scholarship is the premier undergraduate award of its type in these fields.

- For the 16th time in the past 33 years, a UWG Debate Team was recognized as one of the top 16 teams in the nation by earning the honor of participating in the invitation-only National Debate Tournament. The nation's top 16 teams, as voted on by regional representatives, receive a first round bid to the tournament. UWG has qualified for the championship tournament for 33 consecutive years, the fifth-longest streak in the country.
- The Director of the *EXCEL Center*, Cheryl Rice, received the Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate Award by the National Resource Center for the First-

Year Experience and Students in Transition. The award program, in partnership with Houghton Mifflin Publishing Company, honors faculty and staff members for their efforts in easing the transition for first-year students. Nominations for the award were made by presidents of post-secondary institutions and a national panel of educators reviewed 140 nominees before selecting ten recipients.

- Dr. Ann McCleary, associate professor of history, received a 2005 Governor's Award in the Humanities from the Georgia Humanities Council. The annual award, presented by Governor Sonny Perdue, recognizes exemplary achievements that have fostered an understanding of the cultural traditions and values of Georgia and have thus strengthened community, character and citizenship in the state.

Dr. McCleary was honored for her work as the director of the UWG Center for Public History. The Center for Public History researches, documents, preserves and promotes public discussion of the history and cultural, architectural and folklife resources of the west Georgia region. The center has archived over 700 oral histories since its inception in 1999.

The center was nationally recognized in 2003 by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) for its compact disc and publication "Everybody's Tuned to the Radio: Rural Music Traditions in West Georgia, 1947-1979," which documents the local music of post-World War II Carroll County. The AASLH Awards Program is one of the most prestigious recognition programs for achievement in the presentation and interpretation of local, state and regional history.

In addition to preserving the region's history, the Center for Public History also offers hands-on experience to students studying public history. Undergraduate and graduate history majors assist historical organizations throughout the region with a wide range of projects, specifically in planning and developing exhibits and interpretive materials. The public history projects become traveling exhibits to public libraries, schools and cultural arts centers throughout the west Georgia area.

- The Center for Public History started work on the Veterans History Project a national initiative sponsored by the Library of Congress to record and preserve the memories of veterans of foreign wars and their families. The Center for Public History is now administering the project and has added numerous interviews this year to the collection of over 200.

The students of the Center for Public History also researched and wrote a history of the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce from its inception in 1954 to the present. Begun in fall 2004, the booklet was completed in time for the chamber's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

### *External Relations*

#### *Regional collaboration for economic and community development*

- The Richards College of Business' Department of Accounting and Finance operates the West Georgia Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, which opened fall 2004 and received a second federal grant to operate during 2005. The clinic represents low-income taxpayers in controversies involving the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), with a primary focus on audit, appeals and collection issues. Although it receives matching grant funds from the federal government, its employees and volunteers are not government-associated. The program helps train undergraduate and graduate students interested in pursuing careers in tax accounting.
- The Richards College of Business' Department of Economics, together with the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, sponsored the Eighth Annual Economic Forecast Breakfast with more than 300 representatives attending from business and industry. The program featured a widely published Economic Strategist, Milton Ezrati, who presented the economic forecast for the United States, and Dr. Michael Raper released the economic forecast for the local area, region and state. Dr. David Boldt assisted in preparation of the West Georgia Regional Outlook. This program was supported by 12 business sponsors and co-sponsors.

### *Information Technology*

The Educational Technology Training Centers (ETTC) at UWG has a staff of educational technology professionals working together with school districts in this region to improve and promote research-based methods of instruction with teachers. The ETTC at UWG is one of 13 centers across the state charged with this mission.

The positive impact that technology funding is having on instruction in Georgia's public schools was the focus of the first Capitol Tech event. Capitol Tech is a collaborative effort between Georgia's schools and the state's Educational Technology Training Centers (ETTC). Students from over 13 schools in Georgia presented their educational projects—student-designed websites that help other students resolve curricular issues, multimedia projects that demonstrate an understanding of curricular areas, and projects in which students collaborate with teachers to

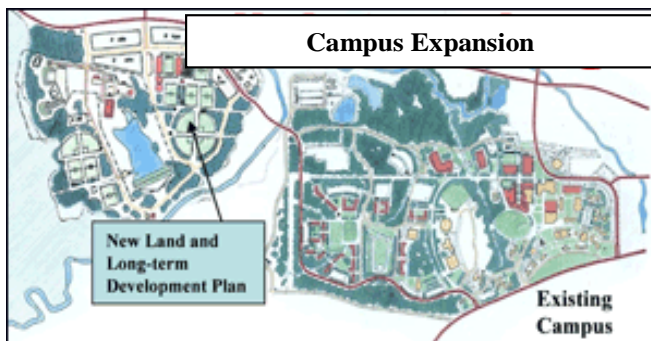
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## Institutional Accomplishments

produce lessons that effectively infuse technology into the teaching and learning process. Students and teachers wanted legislators to see firsthand how these tools are helping to increase student achievement and build community partnerships.

### *Campus Infrastructure*

- UWG completed its second five-year Facilities Master Plan. The Master Planning Process identified a need for land that would meet the needs of campus growth for the next 10-15 years. The City of Carrollton, under the leadership of Mayor Wayne Garner, former Mayor Gerald Pilgrim, and both City Councils, gave the University a grant of 246 acres of land northwest of the current campus. That part of the campus will house the athletic fields and commuter parking facilities in the future.



- Reconstruction of the historically significant Adamson Hall, one of the University's earliest buildings which had been demolished in 2001, was completed. The new building houses classrooms, labs and offices for the Richards College of Business, as well as offices for Continuing Education and other outreach services.
- The new 612-bed University Suite complex opened in fall 2004. The privatized student housing complex consists of three four-story residence units plus a community building.

With the completion of the University Suites Community Center, PHASE I of the UWG Housing Plan is complete. The Center houses a game room, recreation room, aerobics room, a fully equipped kitchen, a commons area, and offices for the Resident Advisors of each Suite.



- In fall 2004, UWG received approval from the Board of Regents to proceed with PHASE II of the housing plan for the construction of three apartment style units.

The newest complex, scheduled to open in fall 2005, will provide 602 beds. The apartments will offer two- or four-bedroom units at a cost competitive with local apartment complexes.

- The Campus Center, currently under construction, will be located on the site of the existing HPE Building and will incorporate this building as part of the new facility. The project consists of 129,500 square feet of new construction and renovation. The existing pool will be demolished; the existing gym will be renovated in conjunction with the existing locker rooms, offices and other existing facilities. The Campus Center will include a fitness center, two additional gyms, a climbing wall, administrative and student organization offices, some conference rooms and a ballroom with a seating capacity of 600-banquet style.

### *University Advancement*

The Office of Development and Alumni Services, within the Division of University Advancement, is undergoing a period of rapid reorganization and goals evaluation. With new leadership, the unit is redefining how fundraising and relationship building at the University of West Georgia will take place.

With a theme of "Aspire, Accomplish, Astonish," the spirit of volunteerism soared during the annual A DAY campaign for fiscal year 2004. The annual fund drive raised a total of \$1,496,642, up from the 2003 total of \$1,494,064. The new annual fund total was due, in part, to two valued constituencies. There were increased contributions from alumni and the faculty and staff contributions increased by 29.8 percent. More than \$82,999 was given through faculty/staff donations.

The faculty/staff drive was sponsored by AirTran Airways, which now has a Contact Center in Carrollton. Two-thirds of the center's 160 employees are UWG students and its general manager is a UWG alumnus.

Contributions raised through the A DAY campaign and its various drives help fund scholarships, advanced technology, faculty enrichment, and other academic endeavors.

The university's scholarship program continues to grow and provide assistance to many deserving students. For fiscal year 2005, 482 students were recipients of scholarship and awards disbursements, totaling \$536,290.

The Alumni Association launched a new student alumni association, Recruiting Emerging Alumni Leaders (R.E.A.L.). The purpose of this organization is to enhance connections between currently enrolled students with alumni through welcome, leadership, and graduation activities.

The University of West Georgia Foundation, Inc. entered into an agreement to purchase the Brookwood apartment complex from the Carrollton Housing Authority (CHA) for \$5.7 million. The complex will add about 23 acres to the university's property at the north entrance to the campus. Since UWG did not own the property when recent updates were being made to the Facilities Master Plan, plans for use are still in process. The land will be designated as mixed use, leaving open possibilities for student housing, parking, academic facilities or other functions.

The phonathon, which is organized through the Office of Development and Alumni Services, received \$105,989 for fiscal year 2005. The phonathon, which operates from September through April, contacted over 24,000 UWG alumni donors. The phonathon also assists Development and Alumni Services by contacting alumni to remind them of important events such as Homecoming, reunions, and receptions, and assists with alumni database maintenance by providing up-to-date addresses/business information and locating lost alumni. The yearly phonathon program continues to prove a successful fundraising tool for the University of West Georgia.

### *The University Experience*

- The athletics program has grown from eight sports two years ago to 11 teams that will be competing in fall 2005. The department will sponsor five men's and six women's teams, including women's golf, which will begin competition in fall 2005.
- The university's Co-ed Cheerleading squad was recognized recently by the University System of Georgia's Board of Regents for its fourth consecutive win at the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA) national championship. In addition, UWG's All-Girl squad and All-Girl partner stunt team nabbed second in their competitions.
- Students participated in the 4th Annual Miracle Marathon and raised \$34,220 for the Children's Miracle Network and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. This year's grand total is the highest to date; the largest amount previously was \$23,000.
- A Stop Sexual Violence poster series produced by UWG Health Services and their student peer educators was awarded the 2004 Winter H. Griffith Award for Excellence in Patient Education Materials by the

Society of Teachers of Family Medicine. The Winter H. Griffith Award recognizes excellence in written patient education materials produced by an individual or an organization.



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# Part B: Annual Progress in Institutional Strategic Planning

**D**uring 2004-2005, the University of West Georgia continued to move forward with strategic planning processes and to implement programs and policies in accordance with the University System of Georgia and University goals.

## *Planning Structure and Process*

During 2000-2001, the ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee undertook the first stage of UWG's strategic planning process, which globally defined the areas on which the institution wanted to concentrate, referred to as the "*Bread and Butter and Visionary Goals: The Three Fives.*"

## *Supporting "Bread and Butter" Goals*

The University's "bread and butter" goals are those that UWG (faculty, staff, and students) must reach if UWG is to be an excellent comprehensive state university. The following is a brief description of how UWG (faculty, staff, and students) are supporting the Strategic Goals of Academic Programs:

- Use periodic program reviews to ensure that departments and programs are mission-driven.
- Allocate resources for the improvement of existing programs and the development of new programs only in accordance with UWG's mission as a comprehensive state university.
- Give high priority to obtaining and maintaining accreditation for every program for which a national accreditation agency exists.
- Include faculty-directed student experiential learning, research, creative, or professional activities in academic programs whenever possible.
- Ensure that the general education program offered in the core is coherent and rigorous, with learning outcomes that can be clearly and consistently communicated.

## *College of Arts and Sciences*

- The *Department of Chemistry* instituted a process where students must have completed a pre-requisite course in chemistry and/or mathematics with a minimum grade of "C" in order to enroll in the next sequential chemistry course. This new process will help to screen students from taking a chemistry course before they are adequately prepared.

In addition, the department has instituted a policy for screening incoming freshman students who need to take the freshman chemistry series for science majors. The method instituted generates a number for each of these students based on the same method used by the University for generating the freshman index number (equation that takes into account high-school GPA, SAT score etc). Using this method, the department has set a minimum value that is required for a student to enroll in the course which will help to ensure whether a student has adequate skills to successfully complete the course. The threshold value was determined from a study carried out on the performance record of freshman students taking the chemistry series for the past several years.

- The *Department of Computer Science*, in response to undergraduate student retention in the Computer Science introductory course sequence (CS1301 & 1302), developed a new course, CS1300. This course will address several concerns that were observed by the faculty through the assessment of students in the introductory sequence as well as upper-level students' progress later in the program.

The introductory sequence in computer science, CS 1301/1302, has two major problems: many students are poorly prepared for a rigorous introduction to computation and well-prepared students become bored when the pace slows to help the less well-prepared. Both of these problems contribute to low retention rates in 1301 and 1302, which negatively affect both computer science students and students from other departments who are required to take the core courses. Moreover, the effects last even into 3000-level courses for computer science majors.

Other schools have found that the primary predictor of success in introductory computer science courses is previous programming experience. By adding CS 1300, the Department of Computer Science will:

- offer students who lack a background in programming the chance to master the fundamentals of program development at a slower pace and with less theoretical overhead than in 1301; and
- give those with prior experience a more engaging and challenging experience in 1301 and 1302.
- provide a better foundation for upper-level courses, particularly the Data Structures and Discrete Mathematics sequence, CS 3151/3152.

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## Strategic Planning

- The *Department of Political Science* added a graduate certificate program in Public Administration for individuals who wish to upgrade their skills without completing the requirements for a Masters' Degree. Students may receive the certificate after completing twelve hours in Public Administration courses.

The addition of the certificate program will assist the department in meeting the goal of increased recruitment of students for graduate courses. Planning courses have been cross-listed as Political Science courses to enhance enrollment and to provide additional course offerings for Political Science majors without adding additional faculty positions.

- The *Department of Psychology*, each semester, has the senior psychology majors evaluate their experience in the following areas: advising, significant learning, significant gaps in learning, and overall educational experience, with suggestions for improvements. Through this continuous feedback, the department has established better coordination for advising with the EXCEL Center and created a new course in Neuroscience, which the students requested. At the graduate level, improvements were made to provide more "quality time" with faculty in community building.

### ***Richards College of Business***

The Richards College of Business (RCOB) is achieving continuous improvement toward UWG's Strategic Goal: *Giving high priority to obtaining and maintaining accreditation for every program for which a national accreditation agency exists (Academic programs, Section C)* and departmental goals that provides the impetus for meeting the RCOB mission, which is essential to maintaining Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB-International) accreditation. The RCOB Strategic Plan is re-assessed annually, with updates available on the RCOB web site [http://www.westga.edu/~busn/AACSB\\_A\\_M.htm](http://www.westga.edu/~busn/AACSB_A_M.htm).

Faculty and staff training at AACSB-I seminars and conferences is supported by funds from the dean's office (13 funded throughout fiscal year 2005), ensuring over 25 percent of tenure-track faculty in the RCOB has AACSB-I training on at least one topic each year.

### ***College of Education***

- Within the *Department of Media and Instructional Technology*, data generated from systematic program evaluation was analyzed and changes were made. These changes included the following:
  - Formative assessments were added and sent to the department chair for review. This provided timely

course feedback to instructors and what changes needed to be made to make course improvements.

- Information distributed at the new student program orientation was put on the web page as a PowerPoint with audio and then emphasized to serve as a review for students on program policies and procedures and other important information on the program.
  - More courses were put online to meet the needs of commuter students.
  - More multimedia was added to courses to increase their interactivity
- *The Department of Curriculum and Instruction* has implemented graduate programs (ECED, MGED, READ, and initial certification) which deliver degree programs at off-campus sites to meet the needs of students in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area and the counties of northwest Georgia. A middle grades initial certification program was launched in spring 2002 as part of *Georgia Responds*, an initiative of the state's Colleges of Education, and currently serves approximately 275 students. An early childhood education baccalaureate degree program is offered on the campus of Georgia Highlands College, formerly Floyd College. Currently, there are 43 students enrolled in the program. The first group of 19 students graduated in May 2004.

Formal assessment questionnaires were distributed to graduate students by the department upon the completion of their program. The responses were collected, evaluated, and appropriate modifications are being made to strengthen the program. At the undergraduate level, a survey is conducted of recent graduates each semester and discussions are held in response to the information gathered. Modifications and improvements are implemented as a result.

For the Reading Endorsement courses, work is being done to tie the course objectives and assessments to assignments that align with the six dimensions of reading as identified by the Reading Excellence Act grants. A goal of the Reading Endorsement courses is to focus on the National Reading Panel's scientifically based research recommendations, with attention to phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, reading comprehension, and vocabulary.

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# Part C: Annual Progress in Assessing Institutional Effectiveness

**T**he University of West Georgia has made significant advances in the way institutional effectiveness is evaluated and is constantly striving for improvement.

## *The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*

The University of West Georgia participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) per a state-wide initiative by the Board of Regents. The NSSE is designed to obtain, on an annual basis, information from scores of colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items represent empirically confirmed “good practices” in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college.

UWG will use the data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience inside and outside the classroom that can be improved through changes in policies and practices more consistent with good practices in undergraduate education. This information is also intended for use by prospective college students, their parents, college counselors, academic advisers, institutional research officers, and researchers in learning more about how students spend their time at different colleges and universities and what is gained from their experiences.

NSSE results fall into five key clusters of activities that research studies show are linked to desired outcomes in college.

- **Level of Academic Challenge**  
Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.
- **Active and Collaborative Learning**  
Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and are asked to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students to deal with the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter in college and after.
- **Student-Faculty Interaction**  
Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, lifelong learning.
- **Enriching Educational Experiences**  
Complementary learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom augment academic programs. Experiencing diversity teaches students valuable lessons about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.
- **Supportive Campus Environment**  
Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

At the end of fiscal year 2005, UWG received the NSSE survey results and university officials are currently reviewing the data.

## *Annual Report Process*

Since 1961 the University of West Georgia has completed an *Annual Report of Institutional Progress*. For many years, the institution-wide report has been an abridged compilation of individual departmental reports that outline accomplishments over the past academic year and has been used as an institution-wide assessment tool, as well as, an instrument to report institutional accomplishments to the Board of Regents.

Recognizing a need to make the template more user friendly and to provide greater flexibility in tying department goals and/or learning outcomes to the institution’s mission, and Core and Visionary Goals, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning is currently working with the Office of Information Technology Services to re-design the Annual Report template.

The new template will not only allow individual departments to tie their goals and/or learning outcomes to specific institutional goals and objectives, but it will also enable the institution to gauge the extent to which its “*Bread and Butter*” Goals and “*Vision Statements*” are supported by the summative departmental assessments. This latest assessment will provide significant information when the institution’s goals and objectives are reviewed again in 2006.

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## Institutional Effectiveness

### *Assessing Learning Outcomes and Student Engagement*

All departments in the three colleges have identified learning outcomes for all programs. Most departments have identified three to four undergraduate outcomes that include written communication, oral communication, computer skills, and knowledge related to the major. Graduate learning outcomes typically address research skills, advanced knowledge in the discipline, and application abilities within the field, including professional licensure where applicable.

For fiscal year 2005, programs made progress in establishing goals, objectives, and learning outcomes and in developing procedures to evaluate student learning. In addition, many programs now incorporate undergraduate student research into their curricula and UWG students are producing award-winning work. The following are some examples:

- Counseling and Educational Psychology students' excellent performance on the National Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE), which is the department's comprehensive /exit exam. In fall 2004, students scored above the mean on every subtest and the overall mean (96) was considerably above the national mean (91).
- As a requirement of Georgia School Leadership certification, the Department of Educational Leadership and Professional Studies (ELPS) students must pass PRAXIS II. PRAXIS II scores in reading, writing, mathematics, and content indicate a 98 percent pass rate for fiscal year 2005.
- A team of four UWG Honors students was chosen by NASA to perform a physics experiment on acoustic fire control while floating aboard the agency's "Weightless Wonder" aircraft. The group is the only University System of Georgia team selected as one of 50 teams from around the country to participate in NASA's Reduced Gravity Student Flight Opportunities Program. Other participants include teams from such research powerhouses as Cal Tech, MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Dartmouth, Johns Hopkins and Purdue.
- For the fifth time in the past seven years, UWG had more Honors students' research proposals accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council than any other U.S. college or university.
- The Beta Gamma Sigma chapter in the Richards College of Business was recognized as a 2004 Premier Chapter by the national business honor society. UWG was one of only 63 schools in the U.S. to receive this honor.
- Two computer science students won prestigious national scholarships from Upsilon Pi Epsilon, an honor society for computing. UPE awards only 10 of the scholarships annually, and it is rare for one school to have two recipients. The Department of Computer Science is one of only five such programs in Georgia that is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.
- Ten students were chosen to present research at the 2004 National Conference on Undergraduate Research, and four geology students presented research with faculty at the joint meeting of the Northeastern and Southeastern Sections of the Geological Society of America.

### *Administrative and Educational Support Services*

The University's organizational structure includes three administrative and educational support divisions: Student Services, Business and Finance, and University Advancement. During fiscal year 2002, each department within these divisions posted its specific mission statement, which supports the overall purpose and goals of the University. The mission statements for each department are maintained on their departmental web sites.

Each administrative and educational support department participates in an annual reporting process designed to evaluate the achievement of its goals. Such assessment is a primary component of the required *Annual Report of Institutional Progress* that is sent to the Board of Regents. The process identifies specific objectives derived from the University's mission, specific parameters measuring achievement of departmental goals, and the assessment instruments used for analysis. Each unit's self-study is sent to the Department of Institutional Research and Planning for compilation in the institution's *Annual Report of Institutional Progress*.

A departmental analysis also identifies problems encountered in implementing the assessment process as well as plans to facilitate achievement of outcomes that did not meet the established parameters. The process of self-study is integral in determining the extent to which departmental goals have been achieved. All administrative and academic units utilize the self-assessment plan in making improvements in their structure, function, and services. The assessment plans for each department are maintained on their departmental web sites.

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# Part D: Improving Student Retention and Graduation

**T**he faculty and staff at the University of West Georgia are focused on efforts to improve retention and graduation rates. Several specific programs have been designed to improve student retention and to increase the likelihood for successful program completion. The following is a brief summary of the accomplishments of these programs:

## *Enrollment Management*

In 2001, an Enrollment Manager position was created to serve as an advisor to the Vice President for Student Services on Enrollment Management issues. The position was a half time, dual faculty appointment

In fiscal year 2005, the Advisor for Enrollment Management position, which reported to the Vice President for Student Services, became a full-time position and was renamed the Associate Vice President of Student Services for Enrollment Management. Unlike the former advisor to the Vice President, the Associate Vice President has line authority for many of the units affecting enrollment including Orientation and Special Programs, Admission, Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, the EXCEL Center (first year advising, mentoring, and tutoring), and Student Information Systems. This position also sits on many university-wide committees including the Faculty Senate Academic Policies and Procedures committee.

The Enrollment Management Committee (EMC), which was previously transformed from the Steering Committee on Retention, was further developed into the Strategic Enrollment Committee (SEC). In an effort to fully integrate both Student Services and Academic Affairs in the enrollment management processes, the SEC is Co-chaired by the Associate Vice President for Student Services and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Strategic Enrollment Committee did not relinquish any former responsibilities, but rather expanded its membership and mission. The mission statement of the EM Committee states that it is dedicated to achieving successful enrollment management, where enrollment management is defined as follows:

*Enrollment Management is a comprehensive process designed to achieve and maintain the optimum*

*recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students where "optimum" is defined within the academic context of the institution.*

A new sub-committee structure was developed within the SEC to facilitate specific goals relative to campus enrollment management. The sub-committees are: Marketing and Recruitment; First Year Experience; Retention, Transfer and Continuing Student Success; Academic Advising; Communication; Research and Information; and Core Seat Demand. Additional ad-hoc working groups have been created as the need arises. These committees comprise campus-wide representation, and the overall SEC membership including sub-committees exceeds 50 faculty and staff.

The goal of the SEC is to update the campus Strategic Enrollment Management Plan while completing the implementation of the previous plan. The new structure, along with wider campus representation and the additional attention of a full-time enrollment management professional, is sure to produce better coordination of campus practices that will result in greater recruitment, retention, and graduation.

## *Graduation Task Force*

The Vice President for Student Services, Dr. Melanie McClellan, was one of six USG employees selected to serve on the Graduation Rate Outcomes Study Project conducted by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). As a member of a study team, she visited Montclair State University, New Jersey, one of 12 institutions identified as having unusual success in improving graduation rates.

Following the visit, the study team compiled and shared their observations, which were presented at the annual summer meeting of chief academic officers and chief student affairs officers on St. Simons Island, Georgia, and later to the Board of Regents and the Presidents' Meeting. The presentation will again be presented at the USG Retention, Progression, and Graduation (RPG) Meeting in October 2005 in Athens, Georgia. The final AASCU report is available at <http://www.aascu.org>.

A Graduation Task Force, co-chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Services, was created in summer 2005 to focus on recommendations for how UWG can improve graduation rates. Twenty-eight faculty members volunteered to serve on the Task Force, which is expected to conclude its work in spring 2006.

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## Retention and Graduation Rates

### *UWG and the Foundations of Excellence*

At the end of fiscal year 2005, the University of West Georgia began a partnership with the National Policy Center on the first year of College and will participate in a national higher education project known as “Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year.” This initiative is a comprehensive, guided self-study and improvement process for the first year that enhances an institution’s ability to realize its goals for student learning, success, and persistence.

The project will utilize a model of excellence for the first college year based on research and previous work done by the Policy Center. This model will be used by UWG to develop and refine the overall approach to educating first-year students. Partial support for this project is being provided by the Lumina Foundation for Education, a national philanthropic foundation.

The centerpiece of “Foundations of Excellence” is a model for excellence in the first-year experience comprised of a set of principles that are termed “Foundational Dimensions.” These Dimensions guide measurement of institutional efforts and provide an aspirational model for the entirety of the beginning college experience from initial contact with potential students through admissions, orientation, and all first-year curricular and co-curricular experiences.

Foundational Dimensions statements constitute a model that provides institutions with a means to evaluate and improve the first year of college. As an evaluation tool, the model enables institutions both to confirm their strengths and to recognize areas where there is a need for improvement. The Dimensions rest on four assumptions:

- The academic mission of an institution is preeminent;
- The first college year is central to the achievement of an institution’s mission and lays the foundation on which undergraduate education is built;
- Systematic evidence provides validation of the Dimensions;
- Collectively, the Dimensions constitute an ideal for improving not only the first college year, but also the entire undergraduate experience.

### *The Foundations of Excellence Self-Study and Improvement Process*

The self-study and improvement process is being conducted by UWG’s **Strategic Enrollment Committee and guided by the First Year Experience sub-committee**. The committee is led by the Associate Vice President of Student Services for Enrollment Management and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs who will provide periodic

reports to the Policy Center. The committee will conduct the self study using the tools and resources provided by the Policy Center.

There are four key components in the Foundations of Excellence model that UWG’s self study will follow. The following are brief descriptions of each component:

- **Foundational Dimensions** are defining characteristics of institutional effectiveness in promoting learning and success for all new students. “Learning and success” include content mastery and academic skill building, higher order cognitive skill development, psychosocial development, persistence, and degree completion.
- **Current Practices Inventory** is a structured process for reviewing current practices, policies, and assessment efforts that most impact new students. This campus audit is a broad initial overview of a campus’s first year.
- **Performance Indicators** define specific ways for UWG to measure its level of achievement on each of the Dimensions. The performance indicators will focus the self study on elements of greatest importance in achieving institutional excellence in the first year.
- **Action Plan** The self-study will intentionally focus on the development of a university action plan, which includes acknowledgement of the strengths that need to be protected and nurtured as well as specific recommendations for changes that will address any weaknesses. The action plan is scheduled to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2006.

By conducting a systematic first-year self study, UWG will take a candid look at its strengths and weaknesses and, based upon its findings, develop an action plan that will lead to enhanced student learning and persistence.

The campus environment—how an institution structures the new student experience—plays an important role in determining how students spend their time, how they engage in learning, and whether they decide to return for the second year. By focusing on what the university can control, UWG can take immediate steps to build on strengths and improve weaknesses. Research has long indicated that new students who are successfully integrated into college are much more likely to succeed. Many colleges, therefore, work especially hard to create a first-rate experience for new students. Attention to the first year will benefit students by helping them to meet their educational goals and will benefit the institution by helping UWG retain students through graduation.

### *GoalQuest*

In fiscal year 2005, the University of West Georgia began a relationship with GoalQuest, a technology company

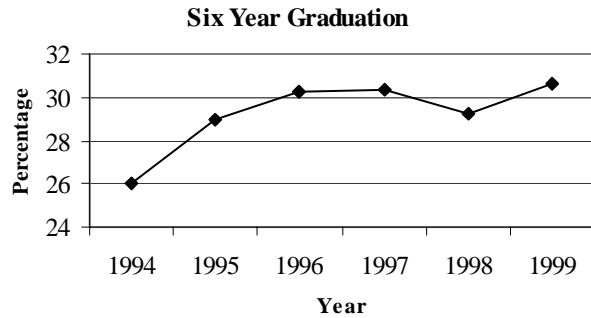
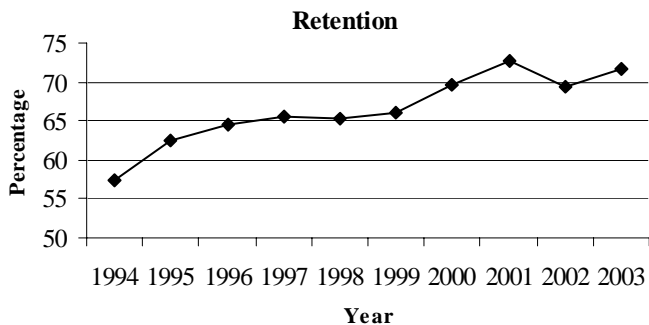
specializing in innovative solutions for higher education. GoalQuest's suite of Web-based tools will include highly customized programs for prospective students (recruitment), accepted students (yield), first-year students (retention), and sophomore students (retention). The suite of software tools is designed to allow UWG to meet the needs of and gauge interest from the students within an electronic environment that can be customized to their developmental needs as well as provide messages that are timely and rich with content. The goal is to provide more personalized, intrusive communications with current and prospective students.

GoalQuest's proprietary programs have been demonstrated to achieve up to a ten-fold increase in audience engagement over traditional print, Web and e-mail communication tools. Colleges and universities currently using this dynamic knowledge-base have realized significant gains in acceptance and enrollment yield, dramatically improved student retention rates and increased alumni development, among other key enrollment and development metrics. The programs also build on the overwhelming research showing that effective school-to-parent communication significantly reduces student attrition.

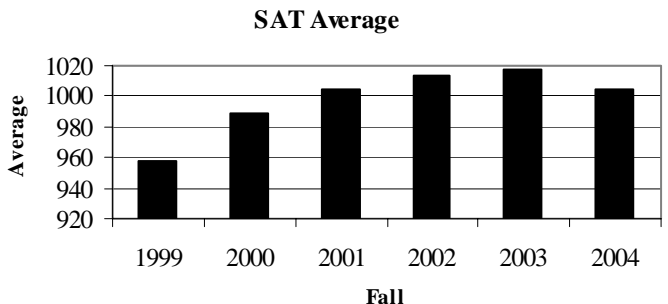
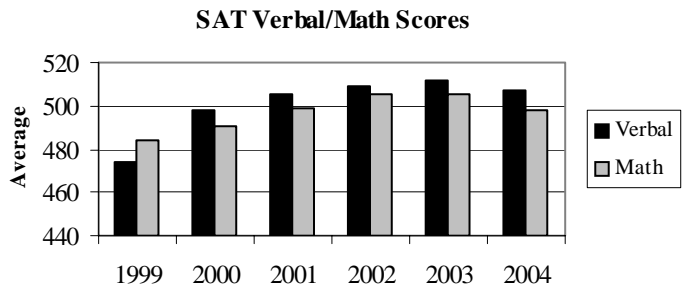
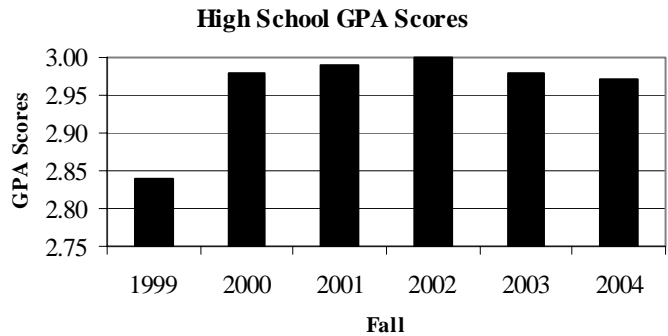
Fully outsourced solutions for clients, GoalQuest's programs do not require schools to deploy new content, IT or marketing personnel. Each of the company's private-label programs is developed — researched, written, designed, and launched — to meet strategic client objectives quickly and cost-effectively. All four products will be launched in fall 2005.

**Graduation and Retention rates**

The University of West Georgia attributes its retention rates in part to its higher admissions standards. The following graphs shows retention rates for first-time full-time students who have entered since 1993. Through the work of the Strategic Enrollment Committee we will be putting into place many new initiatives to affect retention and graduation rates. Of particular concern are our graduation rates which will be studied extensively this year through the work of the Graduation Task Force.



Each entering class includes all entering freshmen enrolled full time whose first term is the fall indicated or the previous summer. Since 1999, UWG has experienced an increase of four percent or more in the following categories: High School Grade Point Average, SAT Verbal and Math Scores, and Average SAT scores. Old admission standards were used prior to May 2004; UWG is expecting an increase in all of the following categories.



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# Part E: Management of Campus Conflict and Change

**T**he University of West Georgia recognizes the value of constructive dispute resolution. Faculty, staff, and students at UWG are encouraged to seek resolution of any conflict through informal discussion with those persons involved. If such informal efforts do not resolve the dispute, the parties may choose to utilize the services of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program and/or pursue resolution of disputes through established Grievance Procedures.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program is administered by the University Co-Liaisons for Alternative Dispute Resolution in cooperation and consultation with the Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution.

The ADR co-liaisons are appointed by the university president. One co-liaison is a member of the staff; the second co-liaison is a member of the faculty. The co-liaisons serve as co-chairs of the Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution and oversee all committee tasks. In addition, the co-liaisons serve as the first point of contact for any member of the university community who wishes to utilize mediation to pursue resolution of a conflict; screen requests for mediation to determine the appropriateness of mediation (including the willingness of parties to participate in mediation); secure the consent of all parties involved and arrange for an approved neutral or neutrals to mediate the dispute; and maintain all necessary records, forms of consent, and evaluations required during the mediation process.

The ADR committee consists of persons recommended by the co-liaisons and appointed by the President. Every major constituency in the university is represented on the committee.

The Committee meets regularly and participates in a variety of tasks associated with mediation, including but not limited to: overseeing the general operations of the ADR program; distributing and updating information about the program's policies and procedures; coordinating mediation training for faculty, staff, and students; and overseeing all ADR-related tasks requested by the Board of Regents.

The ADR committee recruits mediators from the faculty, staff, and students at the university. Persons wishing to mediate within the institution should submit a written request to the committee. Each person wishing to mediate must have successfully completed an appropriate course designed to train mediators. In those cases where it may be deemed appropriate to obtain the services of a mediator from off-campus, the co-liaisons will contact the office of the Consortium on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution (CNCR).

Every effort is made to provide appropriate training to faculty who are interested in becoming mediators within the University System of Georgia.

### *Requests for Mediation*

Any employee of the university may request mediation to resolve disputes with other faculty, staff, or students. Seeking a solution through mediation does not take away an individual's rights to pursue claims through the grievance process or litigation.

Under ordinary circumstances, parties involved in a dispute would ideally attempt mediation before pursuing claims through the grievance process or litigation. However, there may be cases in which parties involved in a dispute may wish to request suspension or delay of a grievance process in order to pursue possibilities for a mediated resolution of their dispute. If a grievance process is interrupted in this way and a solution is not reached in mediation within ten (10) working days from the initial request for mediation, aggrieved parties may return to the grievance process.

### *The Mediation Process*

If the co-liaisons have determined that mediation is appropriate, a mediator or co-mediators will be appointed to assist parties in resolution of their dispute(s). It is the responsibility of the mediator(s) to arrange an appropriate time and place to conduct the mediation, and to conduct the mediation according to all applicable policies and procedures.

Procedures that govern the mediation process include the following:

- A. Mediation is a form of dispute resolution in which a neutral party, a trained mediator, attempts to assist parties in conflict to negotiate a mutually satisfactory resolution to their dispute. A mediator does not decide who wins or loses the dispute. A mediator does not act as judge or jury, does not take sides in disputes, and does not guarantee the

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## Conflict and Change

results of mediation. Instead, a mediator is in the role of a neutral third-party who establishes a fair and structured process which facilitates communication and mutual decision-making between and among parties to a dispute.

- B. At the beginning of the mediation session, the mediator(s) will inform the parties involved of the policies and procedures that will be followed and will ensure that participation in mediation is purely voluntary. No mediation will occur without the consent of all parties involved.
- C. If the mediator(s) allow the parties to have an advisor present, the mediator(s) will decide to what degree the advisor may participate in the process.
- D. All parties will be given the opportunity to present their side of the matters at issue in their own words. Because mediation is essentially a communication process and not a legal proceeding, the customary rules of evidence do not apply. Parties are free to discuss any matters related to the issue(s) they believe will support resolution of their dispute(s).
- E. Confidentiality. The discussions held during mediation are strictly confidential with the following exceptions: confidentiality does not extend to a situation in which conduct by either party is criminal in nature or statements are made during the process of mediation that involve threats of imminent violence to self or others and lead the mediator(s) to reasonably believe that someone's safety is at risk.  
  
In light of this commitment to confidentiality, the mediator(s) will not retain any notes taken during the mediation, no tape recording will be permitted during the mediation process by any parties involved, and it is understood that mediators cannot testify for nor against any party should the dispute be subsequently pursued through grievance and/or legal proceedings.
- F. A successful mediation is one in which the parties involved in the dispute reach an agreement described as "win/win." In mediation, parties agree only to things that are acceptable to them, to resolutions which each believes will actually resolve the dispute(s) between/among them. Because parties jointly work to resolve the dispute, the resolutions are frequently more creative and have the potential to enhance, or at least preserve, relationships better than other forms of dispute resolution.
- G. If an agreement is reached, the agreement will be written by the mediator(s) and signed by all parties. A copy of the agreement will be given to the parties but not retained by the mediator(s).
- H. The mediator(s) will inform the co-liaisons only that an agreement was or was not reached.
- I. Each participant in mediation will be given the opportunity to evaluate the mediation process at the conclusion of the mediation.
- J. It is important to understand that: time spent in mediation will be considered part of the working day and will not require any person to take leave to participate. All supervisors will make reasonable efforts to enable employees to be available for participation in mediation.
- K. The acceptance or refusal of either party to submit a dispute to a mediator will not influence the outcome of any subsequent grievance proceeding.

### *Limitations to Mediation*

It is important to understand that not all disputes are appropriate for mediation. Some examples of disputes that are not appropriate for mediation include those that have been the subject of a final ruling or decision in accordance with University policies and procedures; disputes involving purely academic decisions (i.e., faculty assessment of students' work); disputes that do not rise to the level of mediation; allegations of sexual harassment; complaints of discrimination based on protected class; and disputes that have no relation to the University. It is also important to understand that mediation will not result in resolution for every dispute.

### *Conflict Management Activities during 2005*

The following is a timeline of conflict management activities for fiscal year 2005

#### *October 2004*

The faculty co-liaison that has served on the ADR committee since 1998 resigned to assume a full-time administrative appointment.

#### *February 2005*

The President appointed a new faculty co-liaison to the ADR Committee.

Mediation was requested by an Administrative Office for two professional staff members.

The staff co-liaison mediated the dispute between the two staff members who reached an agreement and signed a mediation agreement form.

*March 2005*

The co-liaisons met to discuss responsibilities of the ADR Committee and outline the steps needed to reactivate the ADR Committee. Discussions were held about appointments to the ADR Committee, maintaining a pool of trained mediators, and the need for diversity.

*April 2005*

A meeting was held between the ADR co-liaisons and the Conflict Resolution Education and Training (CNCR) director.

*May 2005*

Discussions regarding membership on the ADR Committee and training the committee were held between the co-liaisons and the administration. A request was made to the director of Conflict Resolution Education and Training (CNCR) to provide two workshops on conflict resolution in fall 2005 for faculty and staff.



# Part F: Overall Institutional Health

The University of West Georgia has steadily progressed toward the accomplishment of its goals and priorities through the exceptional work of UWG’s faculty, staff, and students.

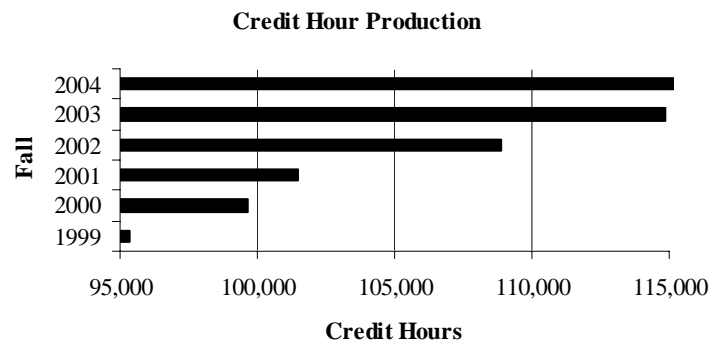
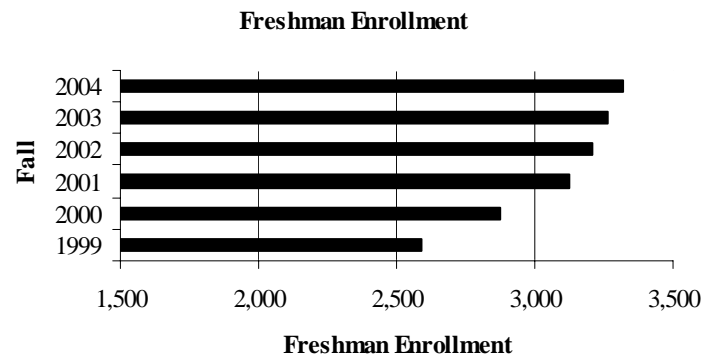
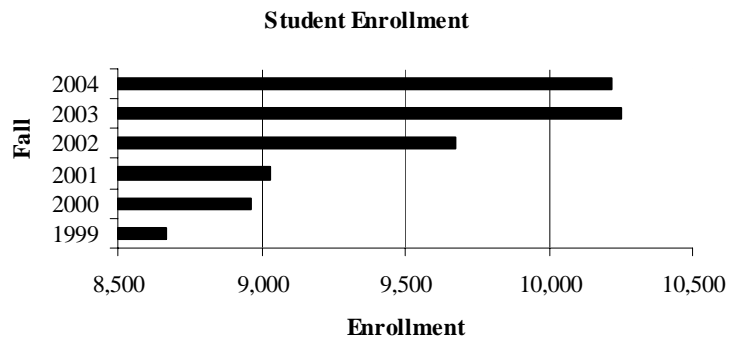
Fall 2004 undergraduate enrollment at the UWG increased three percent from 2003. Freshman enrollment increased by 53 students, juniors by 106 and seniors by 33. The sophomore class did not change. Overall, there are 191 more undergraduate students, an increase that was expected by University officials. While more than 96 percent of students enrolled are from Georgia, UWG boasts students who are from more than 60 international countries.

Fall 2004 students who enrolled had to meet increased admissions requirements, through a combination of increased high school grade point average (GPA) and higher scores on admissions tests such as the SAT. The increased standards were supported by UWG President Dr. Beheruz N. Sethna and were approved by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents in spring 2004.

The Freshman Index was raised from 1,940 to 2,050. Under the old admission formula, for example, a student who had a GPA of 2.2, a SAT Math score of 400 and a SAT Verbal score of 430 (for a total of 830) would have just made the cut at UWG. Under the new standards, a student with the same GPA of 2.2 would need to raise his or her SAT score by 110 points.

“In spite of this very significant increase in admission standards, our undergraduate enrollment increased by 234 students or almost 3 percent,” Dr. Sethna pointed out. “That is outstanding”. This increase was due to a combination of increased admissions and increased retention — both of which demonstrate excellent performance by UWG.”

Although UWG’s total enrollment of 10,216 was slightly down by less than .04 percent in fall 2004, credit hours increased relative to fall 2003, setting a new record in credit hours generated.



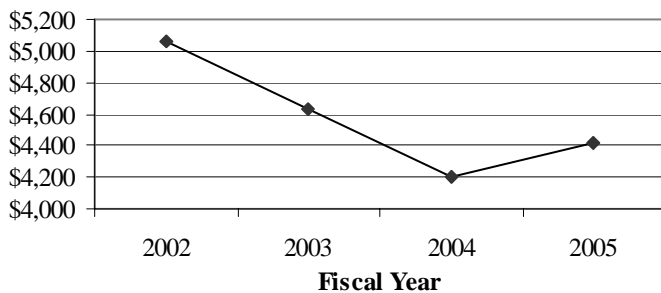
## Institutional Health

Even though the University of West Georgia had a banner year for credit hour production, UWG has continued to succeed while facing the challenge of limited funding. State appropriations yield just above fifty percent of the university's current revenues. The following is the summary of actual UWG Revenues and Expenditures for fiscal year 2005 and State Appropriations per FTE Student over the last four years.

| Revenues                   |                     |             |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| State Appropriations       | \$39,270,796        | 53.24%      |
| Student Tuition and Fees   | \$24,472,835        | 33.18%      |
| Special Initiative         | \$89,561            | 0.12%       |
| Sales & Services           |                     |             |
| of Educational Departments | \$165,444           | 0.23%       |
| Sponsored Operations       | \$8,918,615         | 12.09%      |
| Other Sources              | \$840,766           | 1.14%       |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>\$73,758,017</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Auxiliary Services         | \$19,383,572        |             |

| Expenditures                 |                     |             |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Instruction                  | \$35,723,244        | 48.14%      |
| Academic Support             | \$11,752,092        | 15.84%      |
| Student Services             | \$4,209,143         | 5.67%       |
| Institutional Support        | \$8,002,492         | 10.78%      |
| Operation & Maintenance      |                     |             |
| Plant                        | \$6,769,747         | 9.12%       |
| Scholarships and Fellowships | \$6,680,354         | 9.00%       |
| Research                     | \$912,113           | 1.23%       |
| Public Service               | \$164,229           | 0.22%       |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>\$74,213,414</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Auxiliary Services           | \$20,287,409        |             |

State Appropriations per FTE Student



Certainly one of UWG's top priorities over the next few years is to increase external and private support. External grants and funding are continuing to help maintain and expand programs and services of the university, as well as ensure professional development of personnel. The following are the number of proposals and amounts awarded over the past three years.

| Fiscal Year | Number of Proposals Funded | Amount Awarded |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| 2002        | 50                         | \$2,922,659    |
| 2003        | 43                         | \$1,932,727    |
| 2004        | 44                         | \$2,255,747    |

- \$50,000 was awarded to the Richards College of Business by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for development and operation of the West Georgia Low Income Taxpayer Clinic.
- The Department of Biology was awarded a three year grant in the amount of \$219,376 by the National Science Foundation to acquire liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry to foster research-intensive learning at the UWG.
- The Department of Geosciences received \$89,499 from AmericaView, Inc. for developing, expanding, and sustaining a National Remote Sensing Consortium under the United States Geological Survey (USGS) America View Program.

The University of West Georgia continues to face the challenge of limited funding, and certainly one of its top priorities over the next few years is to increase private support. With new personnel within the Division of University Advancement, several new programs and initiatives have been launched to enhance the university's resource acquisition efforts:

- A strategic marketing study was started with the goal of conducting research to determine the best strategies to enhance the visibility and reputation of UWG. Surveys of prospective students, current students, alumni, and business and opinion leaders are being used to inform decisions in this area and in the development of UWG's marketing identity.
- The Alumni Association Board of Directors reorganized its committee structure to include legislative advocacy as part of set of responsibilities in order to help the institution in securing state support for capital projects and other initiatives.
- New affinity programs, including a student loan consolidation program for new graduates, were launched in order to generate greater support for alumni relations and outreach initiatives

Because of the recent economic downturn, State appropriated funding to the University of West Georgia has been adversely impacted over the last few years. Nevertheless, the university—in partnership with an exceptionally supportive community and through the innovative ideas of its faculty and staff—struggles to find the necessary resources to continue offering “Educational Excellence in a Personal Environment” for UWG students.