

**MINORITY STUDENT
ENROLLMENT, RETENTION, & GRADUATION
AT KSU**

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Center for Institutional Effectiveness
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

First-year undergraduate retention rates and sixth-year graduation rates were two of several measures of accountability published in 2002 by Georgia's Office of Educational Accountability for each institution in the University System of Georgia. Summary totals on these two measures were presented along with disaggregated summaries by racial subgroups for each institution. Although differences among first-year retention rates of KSU's racial groups from Fall 2001 to Fall 2002 were not great, differences among the sixth-year graduation rates of the 1996 First-Time Full-Time Fall Freshmen were pronounced and notable, ranging from a low of 18% for Black students (26% for White students, 29% for Hispanic students) to a high of 52% for Asian students. Similar patterns of difference existed for the University System as a whole.

These sixth-year graduation rates can easily lead to misleading conclusions, however. In fact, a more inclusive analysis of graduation statistics for the entire KSU student body revealed no notable differences among racial groups. Those data suggest that the progression to graduation for minority students is the same as the progression for majority students at KSU.

These opposing results reflect differences in the samples of KSU students that were analyzed. The sixth-year graduation rates are based only upon first-time/full-time freshmen who register initially in the fall and are checked for graduation six academic years later in the spring. These are largely "traditional freshmen" and are not particularly representative of the student body at KSU. Metropolitan universities like KSU attract large numbers of "nontraditional" undergraduates who are part-time or transfers and who matriculate in the spring as well as the fall. When KSU's entire student body of traditional and nontraditional students are considered, the percentage representations of the different racial subgroups in graduation totals are virtually identical to racial representations in KSU's student body as a whole.

Furthermore, KSU has been especially attractive to minority students over the past 15 years. Minority student enrollment has grown many times faster (up 715%) than majority student enrollment (up 64%) during that time. Consequently, minority students comprised only 5% of KSU's student body in 1987, but grew to 21% by 2002.

**GRADUATION STATISTICS FOR THE ENTIRE
KSU STUDENT BODY INDICATE THAT MINORITY STUDENTS ARE AS
LIKELY TO GRADUATE AS MAJORITY STUDENTS**

The representations (percentages) of different racial groups among KSU's recent graduates are virtually the same as the representations of different racial groups in KSU's student body as a whole. These data suggest that the progression to graduation for minority students is the same as the progression to graduation for majority students at KSU.

<u>Racial Group</u>	<u>% of 2001-2002 Graduates</u>	<u>% of Fall 2001 Student Body</u>
White	81%	80%
Black	11%	11%
Asian	4%	3%
Hispanic	2%	3%
Multiracial	2%	3%
Native American	<1%	<1%

The differences among KSU's racial groups in their 6-year graduation rates for first-time/full-time freshmen appear to be offset and disappear when part-time students, transfer students, graduate students, spring matriculants, and summer matriculants are included in the analysis of graduation statistics. In other words, the 6-year graduation rates for very small and select groups of minority students (i.e., first-time/full-time freshmen) do not appear to accurately reflect the graduation rates of KSU's minority student groups as a whole.

**CAUTION IS ADVISED WHEN INTERPRETING RETENTION & GRADUATION
RATES OF FIRST-TIME/FULL-TIME FRESHMAN COHORTS
AT NONTRADITIONAL METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITIES LIKE KSU**

Racial breakdowns of first year retention and sixth-year graduation rates at KSU are based on student cohorts (first-time/full-time freshmen in fall term) that are very small and may not be representative of the overall student body in each minority group. Such small and non-representative samples may result in misleading statistics and erroneous conclusions.

<u>Racial Group</u>	<u>Fall 2000 Cohort FT/FT Freshmen</u>	<u>Fall 2000 Total Students</u>	<u>Cohort as % of Total</u>
White	1,039	10,945	9%
Black	65	1,303	5%
Asian	45	458	10%
Hispanic	33	352	9%
Multiracial	46	280	16%
Native American	0	35	0

**BLACK, ASIAN AND HISPANIC STUDENT ENROLLMENTS AT KSU
ALL BOOMED AND GREW MANY TIMES FASTER THAN
MAJORITY STUDENT ENROLLMENT OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS**

Although the 15-year growth rates (percentages) for all minority student groups were substantially greater than the growth of majority students, the increases in the number of minority students and the proportion of the student body were most notable for Black students at KSU. The number of Black students grew by over 1,500 during this period, and their representation in the KSU student body increased from 3% to 11% over the last 15 years.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Fall Term Enrollment</u>				<u>15-Year % Growth</u>
	<u>1987</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2002</u>	
Black Students	231	635	1078	1772	667%
% of Total Students	3%	5%	8%	11%	
Asian Students	80	214	407	542	578%
% of Total Students	1%	2%	3%	3%	
Hispanic Students	71	157	257	464	554%
% of Total Students	1%	1%	2%	3%	
Multiracial Students	NA	NA	92	428	NA
% of Total Students	NA	NA	1%	3%	
Native American	16	31	35	37	131%
% of Total Students	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	

**MINORITY STUDENT ENROLLMENT CONTINUES TO BOOM
AT KSU, GROWING MANY TIMES FASTER THAN MAJORITY
STUDENT ENROLLMENT OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS**

Fifteen years ago in Fall 1987, minority students comprised only 5% of KSU's student body; by Fall 2002, minority student enrollment had risen rapidly to 21% of the student body (from 398 students to 3,243 students, a 715% increase over 15 years).

	Fall Term Enrollment				
<u>Group</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>15-Year % Growth</u>
Minority Students	398	1037	1869	3243	715%
Majority Students	7,549	10,633	11,225	12,411	64%
Minority as % of Total Student Body	5%	9%	14%	21%	