



## Enterprise Information Management

KSU's Fall Enrollment on Track to Surpass  
30,000 Students by Fall 2016

An Enrollment Projection Update  
for KSU's Fifth Decade

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## Executive Summary

This enrollment projection is a 2010 update of the author's previous 2007 ten-year projection for KSU's fifth decade of operation (Fall 2006 to Fall 2016). That earlier projection called for enrollment to rise to a record level between 27,000 to 29,000 students by Fall 2016. This update reveals that trends in new and total student enrollment growth have emerged over the last three years which indicate that KSU is now on track to do somewhat better than that, reaching and surpassing the 30,000 student milestone by the end of the university's fifth decade of operation in Fall 2016, or possibly a year earlier in Fall 2015. **Highlights gleaned from this update and its 50-year perspective on enrollment are as follows:**

- **KSU's fall enrollment has grown annually over its previous fall's record enrollment in 41 of its 44 years of operation. Fall enrollment dropped only once in the last 30 years. Enrollment growth compounds annually for the returning student population. Consequently, continued enrollment growth is virtually assured or "built-in" for the near term. That is particularly true at KSU because of the strength of upward trends in new beginning freshmen and new undergraduate transfers over the past decade and in recent years in particular.**
- **Annual percentage increases in total fall semester headcount have increased steadily from 3.8% to 4.7%, averaging 4.3%, over the first four years of the current fifth decade of KSU's operation. If those annual increases continue at the current average increase of 4.3% per year over the next six years, KSU's projected fall enrollment of 30,000 students will be realized in Fall 2016.**
- **Notable increases in the annual (12-month) intakes of new undergraduate transfer students and beginning freshmen and their cumulative effects on growth in returning student cohorts are principally responsible for fueling KSU's current enrollment growth trends. From Academic Year 2001-02, the year before on-campus student housing first became available, to the most recently completed academic year in 2009-10, annual cohorts of new transfer intakes have grown from over 2,400 to over 3,700 (up 55%). Over that same period, 12-month cohorts of new beginning freshmen grew from over 2,000 to over 3,200 (up 58%). The total number of unduplicated returning students each academic year rose from nearly 10,300 to nearly 16,600 students (up 61%) during that period.**
- **Other key feeders of new student enrollment have not grown. New graduate intakes were relatively unchanged from AY 2001-02 to AY 2009-10 and are now in notable decline. Readmissions were down over 200 (down 13%). However, those comparatively small losses were offset by large increases in new undergraduate transfers, new beginning freshmen and returning students, enabling KSU's total unduplicated headcount for the**

- **Over 86% of KSU's annual unduplicated student headcount is composed of new undergraduate transfers, new beginning freshmen, and returning students from previous academic years. Sustained patterns of substantial growth in all three of those major components of student enrollment over the past ten years add confidence to the projection model used here which forecasts continued enrollment increases to over 30,000 students by Fall 2016.**
- **Over the first three completed academic years of KSU's fifth decade (AY 2006-07 to AY 2009-10), annual new transfer cohorts grew by over 700 students (up 24%), and annual beginning freshman cohorts grew by over 200 students (up 8%). Annual cohorts of unduplicated returning students rose by over 1,700 (up 12%). Meanwhile the annual cohorts of readmitted students were largely unchanged, and new graduate student cohorts dropped almost 200 students (down 13%) to its lowest level in six years. The net change in annual total unduplicated student headcount for those three years yielded an overall increase of 11%.**
- **When 12-month academic year intakes of new students are accounted for at KSU, new undergraduate transfer students have routinely outnumbered beginning freshmen every year, and that gap has widened in recent years during the economic recession. However, efforts to recruit and retain transfer students, one of the largest components of KSU's enrollment, have not been as strong and aggressive as the pursuit and retention of new beginning freshmen. Recruitment and accommodation potentials in the prospective transfer student population are not being pursued vigorously.**
- **The 10,000 student milestones are being reached more quickly at KSU as annual headcount gains and their cumulative effect on returning student enrollments compound over time. It took 24 years of operation before the institution surpassed its first 10,000 student fall enrollment milestone. An additional 17 years passed before the 20,000 student mark was exceeded. The current projection calls for only nine more years before the 30,000 student milestone is reached in Fall 2016.**
- **Existing exponential growth in student headcount puts great pressure on KSU to accelerate its expansion of human, fiscal and physical resources in order to accommodate and sustain rapidly rising enrollment during its fifth decade of service in higher education. Current enrollment growth trends that will require substantially more resources to serve an extra 1,000 students each fall semester over the next six years have important implications for strategic planning and enrollment management.**

# An Enrollment Projection Update for KSU's Fifth Decade

After being chartered three years earlier, undergraduate courses were first offered by Kennesaw Junior College in Fall 1966 to 1,014 students. In Fall 2010, Kennesaw State University completed its 44<sup>th</sup> year of operation as an institution of higher education with 23,452 students enrolled and is nearly at the halfway mark of its fifth decade of service from Fall 2006 to Fall 2016. This report contains a 2010 update of a previous 10-year enrollment projection made by the author in Fall 2007 for KSU's fifth decade.

Presently, KSU's prospects appear very strong for continued enrollment growth and for surpassing the fall headcount milestone of 30,000 students by the end of its fifth decade of operation in Fall 2016. This 2010 updated projection benefits from having four more years of actual enrollment data containing positive upward trends in three key student enrollment categories. Consequently, this update forecasts somewhat greater enrollment growth by 2016 than did the previous 2007 projection.

## **A Consistent Pattern of Annual Growth and Record Fall Enrollments at KSU Portends More Growth to 30,000 Students by Fall 2016**

**In 41 of its 44 years of operation, KSU consistently enrolled more students in the fall than its previous fall's total headcount. Only once in the last 30 years did KSU not set a new fall enrollment record.** That single "recent" annual decline of a modest 2% occurred in Fall 1998, during a particularly challenging time for the institution involving change from the quarter to the semester calendar and conversion to the Banner student information system. (See Enrollment Archives—Historical Headcount on KSU's Virtual Information Center (VIC) Web site.)

**The compounding effect of such consistent annual fall enrollment increases on the growth of subsequent returning student populations virtually assures continued annual growth in total headcount enrollment well into the future, as graduating classes from smaller cohorts of new and returning students who matriculated in earlier years are replaced in KSU's student body with larger cohorts of recently matriculated cohorts of new and returning students. That "built-in" growth appears more certain when 12-month academic year enrollment trends are analyzed.**

Over the first four years of KSU's fifth decade of operation, fall enrollment increased an average of 4.3% per year, growing modestly but steadily from 3.8% in Fall 2007 to 4.1% in Fall 2008 to 4.4% in Fall 2009 and 4.7% in Fall 2010. **If the 4.3% average annual increase for the last four years were used to forecast fall enrollment for the remaining six years of the fifth decade, KSU would exceed 30,000 students in Fall 2016. If the modest upward trend of annual enrollment increases that is present in the data for the past four years were to continue, KSU could surpass the 30,000 student milestone a year earlier in Fall 2015.**

**Annual forecasts of fall enrollment increases based upon the more conservative and likely of those two growth models for the next six years during the remainder of KSU’s fifth decade of operation are as follows:**

Actual Fall Enrollment Growth to Date in KSU’s Fifth Decade

Fall 2006	19,854	Total Headcount	(baseline for KSU’s fifth decade of operation)		
Fall 2007	20,607	Total Headcount	3.8%	Annual Increase	753 More Students
Fall 2008	21,449	Total Headcount	4.1%	Annual Increase	842 More Students
Fall 2009	22,389	Total Headcount	4.4%	Annual Increase	940 More Students
Fall 2010	23,452	Total Headcount	4.7%	Annual Increase	1,063 More Students

Forecasted Fall Enrollment Based Upon a Stable Average Annual Increase Through Fall 2016

Please contact the Executive Director and Chief Data Officer of EIM for updated estimates.

**Over 86% of KSU’s annual unduplicated student headcount is composed of new undergraduate transfers, new beginning freshmen, and returning students from previous academic years. Sustained patterns of substantial growth in all three of those major components of student enrollment over the past ten years add confidence to the projection model used here which forecasts continued enrollment increases to over 30,000 students by Fall 2016.**

It is highly likely that current upward trends in new undergraduate transfer and beginning freshman enrollment which are fueling KSU’s continued growth have been boosted in the early years of KSU’s fifth decade by high unemployment rates, a major economic recession, the expansion of new on-campus student housing, and improvements in campus dining and recreational facilities. Periods of high unemployment tend to boost a metropolitan university’s enrollment like KSU’s more than periods of low unemployment as time spent at work competes less with college attendance for the attention of metropolitan university students, especially nontraditional students. Economic recessions cause more families to seek options for reducing the costs of higher education, making KSU an attractive option.

Increases in beginning freshmen tend to be correlated with expansion of new student housing for freshmen. The addition of an impressive University Commons dining facility and recreational complex could also have made KSU more attractive and contributed to new student enrollment growth. Even though the positive effects of recessionary high unemployment on university enrollment are expected to wane in the second half of KSU's fifth decade, other potential enrollment boosts remain such as further expansion of on-campus student housing, prospects for initiating intercollegiate football by 2014, and most importantly, improvements in enrollment management, targeted new student recruitment, and increased retention, progression and graduation rates.

### **Percentage Growth in Enrollment Each Decade is Falling, But Gains in Headcount Every Ten Years are Rising Rapidly at KSU**

By the end of Kennesaw's first decade of operation in Fall 1976, enrollment had increased by 2,197 students or 217% from Fall 1966. Another ten years later in Fall 1986, headcount enrollment was up another 4,085 students or 127% from Fall 1976. By the end of KSU's third decade of operation in Fall 1996, an additional 5,241 students had been added for a 72% increase over Fall 1986. Ten years later at the end of KSU's fourth decade in Fall 2006, headcount enrollment had risen by another 7,317 students for a 53% increase over Fall 1996. After the first four years of KSU's fifth decade of operation, headcount enrollment is up another 3,598 students and is on track for a ten-year gain by Fall 2016 of over 10,300 students (52%).

**It is important to note that percentage increases in enrollment for past decades have been falling at KSU, but not as sharply in recent periods. That is to be expected since the effort to continue to grow by a single percentage point each year as the student body expands requires substantially more new and returning students and support than it did in earlier years.** For example, in Fall 1967, it took only 10 more students to enroll at KJC than in Fall 1966 to achieve a 1% enrollment increase. Back then, only 50 more students were needed to score a 5% increase in enrollment. Forty years later in Fall 2007 it took nearly twenty times as many additional students (199) for a 1% enrollment increase over the previous year's total. Consequently, an additional 1,000 students were needed to achieve a 5% enrollment gain over the record set in Fall 2006. **There is a huge difference in the additional human, fiscal and physical resources needed to recruit and accommodate 5 % annual enrollment increases of 1,000 students compared to 50 students, and those realities create a natural braking force or capacity restriction on percentage growth in institutional enrollment at large universities like KSU.**

**Even though percentage increases in enrollment have been in decline, the absolute numbers of new students added every ten years at KSU have been rising steadily and substantially.** The cumulative impact of those headcount gains is particularly impressive when interpreted in the context of the institution's history of reaching its 10,000 student milestones which are being surpassed more quickly as KSU has grown. **It took 24 years of operation before the institution surpassed its first**

**10,000 student fall enrollment milestone. An additional 17 years passed before the 20,000 student mark was exceeded. The current projection calls for only nine more years before the 30,000 student milestone is reached in Fall 2016.**

**Such exponential headcount growth puts great pressure on KSU to accelerate its expansion of human, fiscal and physical resources in order to accommodate and sustain rapidly rising enrollment.**

### **The Importance of Accounting for Year-Round Intakes of New Students in Enrollment Trends at KSU**

Unlike many other universities that cater to traditional students and have the bulk of their new students matriculating in the fall term, **KSU's metropolitan university mission and its attractiveness to nontraditional as well as traditional students yield large numbers of new student intakes in the fall, spring and summer terms. When new student intakes are analyzed for a 12-month academic year (i.e., fall, spring and summer), typically only 60% of the new students who matriculate at KSU each year enter in the fall semester.** The remaining 40% who start in the spring and summer have a big impact on enrollment each term and present a very different picture of new student characteristics when 12-month totals rather than fall-only intakes are examined. (See Fact Book—Student Information—Enrollment Trends—New Students by Term on KSU's VIC site.)

Looking only at fall semester statistics, for example, one might conclude that new beginning freshmen are KSU's primary source of new undergraduate student intakes, since beginning freshmen are about 40% greater in number than the fall intakes of new transfer students. That conclusion is not correct, however. **When year-round intakes of new students are accounted for in 12-month academic year periods, new undergraduate transfer students have routinely outnumbered beginning freshmen, and that gap has widened in recent years during the economic recession. Whereas roughly 80% of the 12-month intakes of beginning freshmen occur in the fall at KSU, only half of the new transfer student intakes over the academic year matriculate in that term.** In the spring semester, more than three times as many new transfer students register than beginning freshmen at KSU. In the summer term, five times as many new transfers register than beginning freshmen. Consequently, annual cohorts of new transfer students catch up with and surpass beginning freshmen as the academic year progresses. (See Fact Book—Student Information—Enrollment Trends--Information—Annual New Student Intakes on KSU's VIC site)

In addition, transfer intakes are exceptionally high at KSU. Among the 35 units in the University System of Georgia, KSU ranks third in the annual intake of new transfer students behind Georgia Perimeter College and Georgia State University, first and second respectively, and ahead of the University of Georgia. KSU's transfer intakes are exceptionally high within the USG as reflected in the fact that the University enrolled 2 ½ times as many new transfers as the fifth ranked institution, Clayton

State. (See Fact Book—Student Information—USG Comparisons—Largest Number of Transfers on KSU’s VIC site.)

### **The Four Key Sources of Annual New Student Enrollment at KSU**

**KSU has four principal sources of new degree-seeking students that comprise 10% or more of new student intakes annually. Of the nearly 10,700 new and readmitted students who enrolled at KSU in 2009-10, over 3,700 (35%) were undergraduate transfers, over 3,200 (31%) were beginning freshmen, over 1,700 (16%) were readmissions after an absence of 2 years or more (mostly undergraduates), and over 1,100 (10%) were graduate students.** In addition, nearly 700 (6%) were transient--mostly in the summer (mainly students enrolled elsewhere returning to their Metropolitan Atlanta homes and taking a summer course or two for transfer), 125 (2%) were joint enrollment honors students--all in the fall (typically high SAT seniors in high school earning college transfer course credits that satisfy high school graduation requirements, the majority of whom are headed to more selective universities than KSU after high school graduation), and 12 were auditors. (See Enrollment Archives—Enrollment Comparisons reports by term on KSU’s VIC site.)

Even though KSU’s peak enrollment in the 2009-10 academic year was nearly 22,400 students in the fall term, **KSU’s unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2009-10 fall, spring and summer terms combined was nearly 27,300 students. Consequently, the 10,700 new students who enrolled at KSU that year represented almost 40% of the collective annual student body. About 16,600 students that year were not new or readmitted, but returning students from previous academic years.** (See Enrollment Archives--Enrollment Comparisons reports for the academic year on KSU’s VIC site.)

### **Size of the Retained and Returning Student Body is a Key Source of Institutional Enrollment Growth**

It is a mistake to think that increased recruitment of new students is the only important source of annual institutional enrollment growth. **The returning student population is the largest component of the student body.** For the most recently completed academic year in 2009-10, almost 16,600 (61%) of the total unduplicated student headcount were returning students from a previous academic year. Of the remaining 10,700 new and readmitted students, new undergraduate transfers comprised over 3,700 (14%), over 3200 (12%) were new beginning freshmen, about 1,700 (6%) were readmitted after an absence of over two years, almost 1,200 (4%) were new graduate students, and 800 (3%) were new transients, joint enrollments or auditors. **Based on size alone, the growth or decline of the returning student population makes more of a contribution to KSU’s overall enrollment gains or losses each fall than any of the new student intake groups.**

Fortunately, the percentage growth of the returning student population has been as strong in recent years as the percentage growth of KSU's two principal feeder groups of new student intakes—undergraduate transfers and beginning freshmen. **From academic year 2001-02, the year before on-campus student housing first became available, to the most recently completed academic year of 2009-10, the total number of unduplicated returning students each academic year rose from nearly 10,300 to nearly 16,600 students (up 6,300 or 61%). During that same period, annual cohorts of new transfer intakes grew from over 2,400 to over 3,700 (up 1,300 or 55%). Over that same period, 12-month cohorts of new beginning freshmen grew from over 2,000 to over 3,200 (up 1,200 or 58%).** Although percentage increases for all three groups are comparable, the headcount enrollment gain for the returning student group was 2 ½ times larger in number than the increase for new transfers and new freshmen combined.

The returning students are those “in the educational pipeline” between matriculation at the front end and graduation at the back end. Depending on their level when they enter, students in each annual cohort typically remain the pipeline for two to six years—for some, less and for others, more. **When recent annual cohorts of new students are larger and their size is sustained at higher levels than earlier cohorts, annual growth of the number of retained students progressing through the educational pipeline grows and that growth gets compounded over time. Growth in the pipeline results when smaller cohorts that matriculated many years ago exit the pipeline through attrition and graduation and are replaced with larger cohorts that recently entered the pipeline. With each passing year, fewer smaller cohorts remain in the pipeline, causing the returning student population to grow in size. Because the pipeline includes students from many different annual cohorts, the overall returning student population is relatively unaffected if one year's new student cohort dips in size and is not larger than the previous or subsequent cohorts. However, if entering cohorts of major intake groups stop growing or trend downward over a number of consecutive years, the size of the returning student population in the pipeline will ultimately flatten or decline as well, and total enrollment at the institution will flatten or drop from year to year.**

The 2007 projection for enrollment in Fall 2016 was lower than this update in 2010 because in 2007, KSU's largest new student intake group, new undergraduate transfers, was in a flattened enrollment posture for six years running, and the annual beginning freshman intakes had not exhibited a stable growth trend during that period either. For example, in AY 2004-05, the number of new beginning freshmen dropped by 500 students from AY 2003-04 (down 18.4%) and then recovered the next year to its previous level, but did not show any notable growth for five years until AY 2006-07. Had those flattened enrollment trends continued over the last three years, the returning student population's growth would have slowed, and the 2007 projection would have been more on target. Fortunately, that did not happen, and the two largest sources of new students for KSU's educational pipeline have been trending upward during the early years of KSU's fifth year of operation, fueling returning student growth and total enrollment growth in the process.

## **Larger New Transfer and Beginning Freshman Cohorts are Fueling KSU's Current and Projected Growth in its Fifth Decade of Operation**

**KSU's enrollment growth in recent years has been fueled largely by increases in the annual intakes of new undergraduate transfers and beginning freshmen and their subsequent compounding effects on the growth of returning students. From academic year 2001-2002, the year before on-campus student housing first became available, to the most recently completed academic year of 2009-10, annual cohorts of new transfer intakes have grown from over 2,400 to over 3,700 per year (a 55% increase). Over that same period, 12-month cohorts of new beginning freshmen grew from over 2,000 to over 3,200 per year (a 58% increase).** In comparison, annual intakes of readmitted students and new graduate students remained relatively flat over much of that period, with notable declines emerging in recent years, especially for new graduate intakes. (See Fact Book--Student Information—Enrollment Trends—Annual New Student Intakes on KSU's VIC site.)

The current economic recession and high unemployment appear to have had particularly strong effects on increasing the size of the new transfer cohorts in the first three years of KSU's fifth decade of operation. **Over that period from AY 2006-07 to AY 2009-10, annual new transfer cohorts grew by over 700 students (up 24 %), and annual beginning freshman cohorts continued to grow by over 200 students (up 8%).** Meanwhile the annual cohorts of readmitted students were largely unchanged, and new graduate student cohorts had dropped almost 200 students (down 13%). As the graph referenced above in KSU's Fact Book indicates, the gap between the annual number of beginning freshmen and new transfers, which had been closing from AY 2004-05 to AY 2007-08, has widened again noticeably in the last couple of years, coinciding with the economic downturn. That gap probably would be much wider if the effort dedicated to recruiting new transfer students were on par with annual commitments to recruiting beginning freshmen.

Undergraduate growth is more than offsetting graduate declines. **The intakes of new graduate students for Fall 2010 are at their lowest levels in six years.** (See Enrollment Archives—Enrollment Comparisons for Fall 2010 and Fall 2005 on KSU's VIC site). Recent changes involving graduate degrees for state certification and pay scale adjustments of school teachers and administrators have taken their toll on graduate enrollment. Advanced studies in the education and business fields comprise huge segments of KSU's graduate enrollment. Consequently losses of graduate students in education constitute a major setback in the university's evolution into an enrollment mix that typifies doctoral research universities.

## **KSU's Competitive Advantages for Continued Exceptional Enrollment Growth**

**KSU has been widely identified for many years as the fastest growing public institution in the University System of Georgia. Several enviable characteristics and strategic initiatives have**

**created an array of competitive advantages that have spawned exceptional enrollment growth throughout its history. Those include the following factors:**

- **Location in the exceptionally large and rapidly growing major metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia.** Few greater metropolitan areas in the U.S. are as large or fast growing as Atlanta's, which is presently estimated to be at 5.5 million people in an ever-expanding 28-county area of North Georgia. The northern suburbs of Atlanta where KSU is located have been especially fast growing. Cobb County alone grew from about 150,000 people when KJC first opened its doors in 1966 to over 700,000 people in 2010. Metropolitan comprehensive universities like KSU that are readily accessible to large nontraditional as well as traditional college student populations have a distinct competitive advantage for enrollment growth over comparable universities located in rural areas or small metropolitan areas.
- **Convenient commuter access.** KSU is conveniently located immediately off an exit of Interstate 75, about 25 miles northwest of downtown Atlanta. Ease of commuting access to the University has been a major competitive advantage for KSU's continued enrollment growth. Growing traffic congestion in the vicinity of the University gradually diminishes this advantage.
- **Relatively low cost tuition and fees, supplemented by HOPE scholarship opportunities.** Compared to many states, Georgia's costs for attending its public universities are low, and qualification opportunities for HOPE scholarships to cover tuition and some fees are substantial and attractive.
- **Large and respected degree programs for professional and pre-professional preparation and career advancement.** Contemporary nontraditional and traditional students, especially at metropolitan and largely commuter campuses like KSU, exhibit strong preferences for pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in the fields of business, education, nursing, information systems/computer science and other areas of professional and pre-professional preparation. KSU has established a competitive advantage over many other universities by having exceptionally large, respected and attractive undergraduate and graduate degree programs in popular professionally-oriented fields of study.
- **Large intakes of new students not only in the fall semester, but also in the spring and summer terms.** As a metropolitan university, KSU has a competitive advantage over many institutions of being able to recruit and enroll large numbers of new students, not only for the fall semester, but also for the spring semester and summer terms (40% of KSU's 12-month new student intake totals enter in these "off" terms).
- **Extensive campus-based evening and weekend degree program delivery that accommodates the educational needs of full-time employed nontraditional students.** KSU

has established a long-standing competitive advantage of capitalizing on its convenient proximity to a large nontraditional student population by providing first-rate evening and weekend undergraduate and graduate educational opportunities which cater to that underserved working adult market and experienced professionals in particular. KSU annually awards a little more than half of its bachelor's degrees to nontraditional-age graduates (25 or more years of age).

- **Nationally recognized First-Year Experience programming and student success initiatives.** Metropolitan, largely commuter, universities that serve large numbers of nontraditional undergraduates typically have lower undergraduate retention and graduation rates than universities that cater more to traditional residential college students. In its efforts to improve retention, progression and graduation rates, KSU has established a competitive advantage by focusing on facilitating student success and establishing a nationally recognized first-year experience program. KSU's relatively recent and substantial "market share" gains in traditional freshman enrollment have also helped improve the University's retention, progression and graduation rates for first-time full-time freshmen cohorts.
- **A new and growing residential campus community.** On-campus residential opportunities were strategically initiated at KSU in 2002 that immediately boosted new undergraduate enrollment notably. Those opportunities have been expanded since then to 3,000 beds with full occupancy. Part of what gives KSU a competitive advantage over other institutions in its residence life offerings is the relatively new and upscale construction of its student housing facilities with apartment-like features that include kitchens, living rooms and a bathroom for each single bedroom. A state of the art exercise and fitness complex and an upscale dining commons have strengthened the attractiveness and quality of residential student life at KSU in recent years as well.
- **An attractive and expanding campus with modern facilities and high tech support.** KSU has the competitive advantage of having a physically attractive campus with relatively new and well-maintained facilities along with extensive high-tech support and services. Exceptional expansion of KSU's acreage, buildings and parking facilities over the past decade, largely through the assistance of the KSU Foundation, have been key competitive advantages for stimulating and supporting the university's rapid enrollment growth.

### **Implications for Strategic Planning and Improved Enrollment Management**

There are several key implications from this enrollment analysis and projection for strategic planning and improved enrollment management at KSU including the following:

- **Given the fifty-year perspective provided in this analysis, the likelihood that KSU will continue to grow and grow substantially is very high. How fast KSU will grow and in what ways can be influenced if not determined by the effectiveness of KSU’s strategic planning and enrollment management initiatives in the future.**
- **The extent to which KSU’s competitive advantages for enrollment growth are sufficiently recognized, marketed and leveraged in new student recruitment strategies and marketing initiatives can have important implications for the direction and speed of KSU’s continued enrollment growth.**
- **Although a traditional focus on the recruitment of beginning freshmen for the fall semester is vitally important for KSU’s continuing growth and success, an equally important focus on undergraduate transfer recruitment should exist for all three terms in the fall, spring and summer each year. When new student recruitment strategies that focus primarily on attracting traditional beginning freshmen are not matched with an equally aggressive pursuit of the undergraduate transfer student market, KSU misses the opportunity to capitalize on its biggest potential source of new students (and graduates)—undergraduate transfers. Furthermore, whereas first-year experience courses and learning communities often close out before all new beginning freshmen are accommodated, opportunities are missed to fill available space throughout the rest of the undergraduate curriculum with additional transfer students who currently matriculate at KSU in large numbers at all four undergraduate classification levels.**
- **Greater attention should be given to the growth, progression and graduation of the entire returning student population and not just the retention, progression and graduation of its subset of first-time full-time fall freshmen and their graduation rates.**
- **The traditional fall semester enrollment analysis should be supplemented with comparable analysis for the spring and summer terms and the 12-month academic year as a whole to improve strategic planning and enrollment management at a large and nontraditional metropolitan university like KSU.**
- **Annual goals or matriculation targets for the four key intake groups of new degree-seeking students (i.e., undergraduate transfers, beginning freshmen, readmissions, and new graduate students) should be set for the purposes of guiding new student recruitment, planning accommodations for new student matriculation, budget planning, and managing the institution’s enrollment growth (as well as creating stable trends for projected and actual enrollments).**

- **Accommodating 1,000 or more additional students every fall semester requires the addition of about 40 additional full-time faculty members (beyond replacements) just to keep the student/faculty ratio at its current level. Reducing the student/faculty ratio for all 24,500 students next fall requires many more additional faculty. Will sufficient faculty office and classroom space be added over the next six years to accommodate such faculty and enrollment growth? Strategic planning should take these facts into account.**
- **At some point in the near future, resource restrictions affecting new student accommodation coupled with aspirations to increase the selectivity and quality of entering undergraduate cohorts may lead KSU to raise admission standards and limit the size of entering classes as UGA, Georgia Tech and a few others have done in the University System of Georgia. That will not only control, but also slow growth.**
- **Although unexpected and ongoing changes in the qualifications for advanced levels of state teacher and administrator certifications have eroded graduate enrollments substantially recently, KSU's lack of graduate enrollment growth over the past decade runs counter to enrollment patterns expected of aspiring doctoral research universities and may require special attention and corrective action in enrollment management.**
- **More institutional research should be conducted by SAS Intelligence Specialists within the Enrollment Management Division as well as in Enterprise Information Management to delve more deeply into the characteristics and enrollment patterns of KSU's new and returning students throughout the academic year. In addition, greater use should be made of the dynamic Fact Book and SAS reporting features of KSU's Virtual Information Center to retrieve decision-support information and analysis to aid and strengthen strategic planning and enrollment management.**

### **Exceeding 30,000 Students by Fall 2016 is not a Certainty**

Many factors influence enrollment growth, and some can change its direction unexpectedly. Periodic updates such as this one that take new developments and changes in trends into account are vital for sharpening enrollment projections and adjusting organizational plans.