

University's graduation, retention rates better than most USG state universities

10/31/2010 9:09:57 PM

by University Relations

(Nov. 1, 2010) While the University System of Georgia Board of Regents has charged its colleges and universities with increasing lagging graduation rates, North Georgia College & State University's graduation rate ranks highly among the system's other state universities.

Among the USG state universities, North Georgia ranks second only to Georgia College in Milledgeville both in six-year graduation rates and retention rates.

6-year graduation rates, Fall 2003 cohort

Institution	Rate
Georgia College	48.5%
North Georgia	44.6%
USG state university average	35.8%

Source: University System of Georgia

Retention rate, Fall 2008 cohort

Institution	Rate
Georgia College	84.1%
North Georgia	77%
USG state university average	73.5%

Source: University System of Georgia

Earlier this month, the USG's Graduation Task Force told the Board of Regents that the key factors to improving graduation rates are leadership, student engagement and the appropriate use of existing resources. The purpose of the task force was to identify issues surrounding the system's lower than desired retention and graduation rates for its 35 institutions and to ensure each college had plans and metrics to achieve improvement in these two important areas.

The task force, led by Board Chair Regent Willis Potts and made up of several regents, senior USG staff members, USG presidents and others, met individually with all 35 System institutional presidents over the past nine months.

"We challenged each president to bring data to show where they've been, where they are and to present plans to show how they will move to improve retention and graduation rates," he said. "As a governing board, the regents have a responsibility to the state's citizens and the University System's students to ensure its public colleges are achieving the highest possible graduation rates in the shortest period of time with no degradation in the quality of education."

As a result of the task force report, the Board of Regents will step up its ongoing oversight and assessment of institutional plans and results related to retention and graduation rates. Both issues are areas North Georgia already has been addressing.

"North Georgia has a reputation for providing students with both an academically rigorous curriculum and with the support necessary for success," Dr. Pat Donat, acting vice president of Academic Affairs, said. "It is our commitment to creating a learning environment that balances challenge and support that has led to our consistently high retention rates."

Since 2005, North Georgia has taken several actions to address retention and graduation rates, including progress report grades, a student success program, required academic advising for students with fewer than 45 earned hours, residency policy, Corps of Cadets participation policy, assessment systems, recognition systems and other methods.