

**Action Plan 2006 development**  
**Approved by Planning & Development committee - December 12, 2005**

## **1. Executive Summary – 2006**

Significant progress continues to be made in improving quality aspects of the university notwithstanding continuing budgetary challenges. Ongoing long-term assessment efforts are leading to gradual changes in our mix of programs and are increasing efficiency of our support activities. The Action Plan 2006 derives from the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan and should be understood as its annual iteration.

We give the 2005 progress report (Sections 2. – 2.6) under six major groupings:

- Recruitment & Retention of Students
- Undergraduate Experience
- Graduate Experience and Research
- Academic Programs & Faculty
- Connection to the Greater Community
- Infrastructure/ support

Next, we give a section (Sections 3. – 3.2.6) that identifies the priorities for 2006. Advancement in these areas will assist the University in achieving the broad overarching vision of becoming one of the nation's premiere research universities located in an urban setting.

In order to accomplish the University's visions, goals and priorities, we need to link disciplinary interests to the (unranked) interconnected aims of:

- Liberal arts education in all undergraduate programs;
- Provision of a learning-centered environment;
- Scholarly activity for all faculty;
- Advanced research programs;
- Accomplished professional programs;
- Intercultural and international perspectives;
- Interdisciplinary programs across disciplines and content areas;
- Connections among graduate, professional, and undergraduate studies;
- Opportunities for collaborative research and scholarly interaction among faculty and between faculty and students;
- Exploration and use of new learning methods and technologies, when appropriate;
- Assessment of courses, programs and services for the purpose of their improvement;
- Information literacy and lifelong learning;
- Collaboration across institutions and between the campus and the community;
- Use of our location in an urban area, a center of international commerce and a center of governance, to offer a distinctive education to our students;
- Participation in partnerships that have a positive impact on community.

Achievement of these interconnected aims will contribute significantly to student learning and an engaged university. A dynamic balance is sought among teaching and learning, research and scholarship, university and community service, and undergraduate and graduate & professional programs.

## **2. 2005 Progress report**

While the university remains in Tier 4 in the *US News & World Report* rankings, our peer assessment score (2.6) places us as one of seven institutions in Tier 4 at or above the median of Tier 3 institutions.

The median score for fifty-nine institutions in Tier 4 is 2.3 and for sixty-four institutions in Tier 3 it is 2.6. Overall quality and diversity of entering freshmen and transfer students is being maintained.

### 2.1 Recruitment & Retention of Students

Our overall enrollment target for fall 2005 new undergraduate students was almost met, with freshman by admission-standing category undershooting the target of 2,400 and transfer students exceeding the target of 1,800. The number of new graduate students was about the same as last year but significantly below the target of 2,500. Overall, student headcount was 25,945, 1,300 students fewer than fall 2004, but probably 1,800 decrease since Hurricane Katrina students are included in the official total. The decrease was primarily in business and education graduate students and in part-time students. **Tables 1 and 2** provide enrollment trends. Note that reference to a 'table' is to the number of the row on the attached Dashboard Trends. In the final web version of this Action Plan 2006, double-clicking on the table number will take the reader to the appropriate table and/or the graph.

Diversity of the new students continues to be a distinctive feature of the university. Not only do we continue to recruit a highly ethnically diverse student body while significantly increasing our admission requirements, we also are in the top ten universities nationally for numbers of black students who graduate with baccalaureate degrees [*Black Issues in Higher Education*, June 2005, lists Georgia State as 3rd nationally and 1<sup>st</sup> in non-HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges & Universities)]. In addition, we are in the top twenty universities nationally in graduating black students with master's and doctoral degrees. **Tables 6 and 7** provide data on student diversity.

Quality of the new freshman class continues to be near our highest on record with an average SAT score of 1090, a slight decrease of 4 points from last fall. More targeted use of presidential assistantships to students with a minimum FI of 2700 increased the number of students with high FI scores. The average GPA for transfer students remains over 3.00. **Tables 12-15** indicate increase in quality of admitted students. Our acceptance rate continues to climb and is similar to that of peer universities.

Credit hour targets were not met. Summer enrollment decreased by 2.2% from the previous summer, but over 303,000 credit hours generated in fall 2005 fell just short of last fall's total. However, the average number of credit hours per student increased significantly to 11.7 from 11.1 from fall 2004 to fall 2005.

Undergraduate student retention rates were fairly stable but trending in the wrong direction. The first-to-second year rate decreased from 83.1% to 80.4%. The second-to-third year rate held steady at 65.4%. The third-to-fourth year rate declined from 63.4% to 56.6%. **Table 4** shows changes in freshman to sophomore retention rates and targets for years through 2006. The six-year graduation rate for the 1999 cohort is 39.4%, a slight decrease from 40.1% for the 1998 cohort, but significantly above prior years (**Table 5**). One of the major reasons that Georgia State remains in Tier 4 of *US News & World Report* rankings (**Table 31**) is the gap between predicted and actual six-year graduation rates.

The Student Life and Leadership programs continue to increase the variety of opportunities for students to become involved in co-curricular activities. In conjunction with a variety of academic strategies, we anticipate undergraduate student retention rates to return to their upward trend of previous years.

### 2.2 Undergraduate Experience

**Learning Communities:** Freshmen Learning Communities (FLC) continued to attract an increasing number of students. FLCs were expanded for fall 2005 to serve approximately 1,050 students in 45 communities. For each of the first five years of FLCs, there is an increase of six to seven percentage points in one-year retention rates over students who are not in FLCs. **Table 11** indicates that participation in FLCs is increasing. For the third year in a row, *US News & World Report* listed the Freshman Learning Community program at Georgia State University among the "outstanding examples of academic programs

believed to lead to student success." The Board of Regents gave a first place "Best Practices" award to the Freshman Learning Communities program in the category of Academic Affairs.

**Redesigned Courses:** Mathematics and Statistics offered redesigned sections of College Algebra, Pre-calculus, Mathematical Modeling, and Developmental Mathematics in spring 2005. Data collected from both traditional and pilot sections showed a drop in the rates of grades of "D", "F" and "W" in the redesigned sections below that for the traditional sections. Students surveyed stated a preference for the redesigned version, and full implementation was slated for fall 2005. Biology offered a pilot of its redesigned Introductory Biology course for non-majors in spring 2005 with many more students being successful – the DFW rate decreased from 26% to 15%.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** There continues to be development of student learning outcomes for both General Education and majors. All departments are developing measurable outcomes for their majors and appropriate assessments. Academic Program Review includes examination of student learning outcomes for programs to which a department contributes. Detailed information is available at <http://education.gsu.edu/ctl/outcomes/outcomes.htm>. Annual department submission of learning outcomes for their majors and utilization of the learning outcomes to improve their programs were analyzed. Three departments were recognized and rewarded as exemplars in the categories of departments without and with accredited programs, respectively. The psychology department won in the first category and the Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing and the Department of Kinesiology & Health were joint winners in the second category. The Student Services division is in its third year of using learning outcomes to drive improvement of its units.

**Honors Program:** The Arts & Sciences undergraduate Honors Program was revamped to serve the changing undergraduate student population at Georgia State. For the first time a fulltime lecturer was hired to teach Honors courses and to recruit and advise Honors students, and additionally four faculty members were appointed for two-year terms as Honors faculty affiliates to teach Honors seminars and to advise Honors students. The program grew to 151 freshmen in 2004-05 with an average SAT score of 1340, including several National Merit Scholars.

**Athletics:** Georgia State joined the Colonial Athletic Association and the Colonial Academic Alliance in July 2005. The Colonial will bring competition and collaboration with universities similar in teaching and research goals and located in 5 of the 9 largest media markets in the United States. The other Colonial member institutions are: College of William and Mary, Drexel University, George Mason University, Hofstra University, James Madison University, Northeastern University, Old Dominion University, University of Delaware, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Towson University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

**International students and Study Abroad:** The number of international students hosted by Georgia State declined slightly from fall 2004 to fall 2005, but the percentage of international (non-resident alien) students remained constant at 5.5%. While the decrease was consistent with nationally trends, remaining constant was better than national trends. Study Abroad participation in 2004-05 attained a new high, 448 students, which was an increase of nearly 9% over the previous year. This increase was accomplished with the awarding of over \$200,000 in scholarships through the Student International Fee, and the development of eight new faculty-led Study Abroad programs in Brazil, China, England, France, Ghana, Russia, South Africa, and Spain.

**Undergraduate Indicators:** Undergraduate process indicator related to student/faculty ratios is given in **Table 17**.

### 2.3 Graduate Experience & Research

Georgia State faculty continue to seek and be awarded increased extramural support. Georgia State is one of 151 universities with a Carnegie classification of Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive institution. Similar to 2004, Georgia State is on the list of the top 200 universities compiled by the Center at the University of Florida <http://thecenter.ufl.edu>. Our science and engineering research expenditures were \$24.9M for federal and \$50.5M total for FY'04, and \$24.7M and \$50.1M, respectively, for FY'05 (**Tables 28-29**). We are on the list of the top 100 public universities in two indicators: doctoral degrees awarded and postdoctoral appointees. We are on the list of the top 200 public and private universities in four of the ten indicators.

We continued our strong commitment to preparing graduate students as teachers as well as researchers. We have 25 or more programs to prepare graduate students to teach in higher education. Setting standards for graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and offering appropriate programs in discipline-specific pedagogy and the related mentoring and supervision continues within the various colleges and schools. In addition, the Center for Teaching and Learning proposed development of a recognition program of Excellence in Teaching in Higher Education. The proposal would establish a common framework through which graduate teaching assistants might move beyond basic competence and document their excellent work in teaching and promoting student learning.

Faculty and staff submitted 753 proposals (**Table 30**) to a wide variety of funding agencies. With over 60% success rate, Georgia State grantees received \$58.3 million in sponsored program awards in FY'05. These awards included \$41.0 million for research, \$10.4 million for instruction and \$6.9 million for public service. All of the colleges contributed to this success. The College of Arts and Sciences led the way with \$29.2 million overall and \$28.1 million for research. The College of Education and the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies tallied \$9.7 million and \$9.2 million, respectively.

**Research Computing:** Research computing support for faculty and graduate students advanced with the installation of BIOCLUSTER, a powerful computing cluster, serving Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Physics and Astronomy, and Biology. In addition, the Office of Research, the Division of Information Systems and Technology and various academic departments worked together to install new technology allowing the harvesting of unused computing time on designated PCs across the campus for heavy-duty research computations.

**Graduate Indicators:** There were over 5,880 graduate students enrolled in fall 2005, a decrease of 450 below the previous fall. Table 3 gives the percentage of combined graduate, non-degree graduate and professional students. Over 1,260 graduate students were new to the university. In addition, there were 675 law students and 375 students enrolled in graduate non-degree programs. The number of doctoral degrees awarded has started to increase again with a nine percent increase over last year (**Table 9**).

### 2.4 Academic Programs & Faculty

Rankings of programs reflected progress in attaining national and international reputations, not only for those programs, but for Georgia State at large. *US News & World Report* ranked the part-time MBA program in the J. Mack Robinson College of Business 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation overall for part-time programs and 2<sup>nd</sup> among public universities. The same survey ranked the Risk Management and Insurance program 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation, and the Management Information Systems program 11<sup>th</sup>. The London-based *Financial Times* ranked the Executive MBA program 44<sup>th</sup> in the world and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Southeast. Computer Information Systems was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the world for research productivity by the Association of Information Systems. *US News & World Report* also ranked the College of Law 85<sup>th</sup> in the nation, the youngest college of law in the Top 100. A survey by National Science Foundation showed Economics as 10<sup>th</sup> ranked nationally in research funding. Several graduate programs in the Andrew Young School of

Policy Studies received high rankings from *US New & World Report*, including Public Finance and Budgeting at 5<sup>th</sup> nationally and City Management and Urban Policy at 12<sup>th</sup>. The doctoral program in Communication Studies was ranked 16<sup>th</sup> nationwide by the National Communication Association's Doctoral Reputational Survey in the area of rhetorical studies. In the most recent Philosophical Gourmet Report: A Ranking of Graduate Programs in Philosophy in the English-Speaking World, our M.A. program is ranked 6th. This same report also comments that "Georgia State offers the strongest JD/MA program in the country after Boston University".

Through internal reallocations from administrative to academic areas of \$4.5 million over multiple years, three Areas of Focus were initiated in 2004-05 for aggressive development as interdisciplinary centers of national and international reputation and excellence: (1) Urban Health; (2) Molecular Basis of Disease; and (3) Brains and Behaviors. The bulk of the reallocated funds will go toward new tenure track faculty positions and graduate student support. The Urban Health area, which is anchored by the Institute of Public Health, concentrated on faculty recruitment not only in the College of Health and Human Sciences, but also in related departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Law. The Molecular Basis of Disease area assembled more than 70 current faculty members in six departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and the J. Mack Robinson College of Business for collaborations pertaining to cancer, infectious diseases, biocomputing/bioinformatics, and structural biology. The Brains and Behaviors area brought together computer scientists and neuroscientists interested in creating a database of identified neurons and connections and inaugurated a Brains and Behaviors Philosophy colloquium.

After a decade of planning and development, the Center for High Angular Resolution Astronomy (CHARA) with its unique telescope array on Mt. Wilson in California settled down to routine operation as a world-class astronomical observatory. *The Astrophysical Journal* published the first scientific papers from the array, which were on the rapidly spinning star *Regulus*, as well as a detailed technical description of the CHARA observatory. The remote operations center, located on campus in Atlanta, permits faculty and students to participate directly in observing activities and to control all instrumentation on Mt. Wilson from across the country.

The campus welcomed 69 new tenure-track faculty at the New Faculty Orientation in August 2005. A total of 55 tenure-track faculty left the university during 2004-05, including 27 through retirement. Thus, we continued to make progress in increasing the number of tenure track faculty (**Tables 19**). In addition, we continue to increase the number of full-time faculty (**Table 18**) primarily through conversion of part-time instructor positions to full-time ones.

Modern and Classical Languages added introductory courses in Turkish and Korean and upper-division courses in Arabic for the first time, and enrolled the largest number of student majors in Georgia in the three primary foreign languages: French, German and Spanish. Physics and Astronomy established a joint PhD program with the Institute for Fundamental Studies in Sri Lanka with funding from the National Science Foundation. The Institute of Public Health in the College of Health and Human Sciences and the College of Law partnered to offer a Maymester course on law and the environment in Rio de Janeiro. The Center for Comparative Study of Metropolitan Growth in the College of Law launched a foreign enrichment course in comparative environmental and land use law with a series of legal scholars from Germany, Canada and Denmark teaching 3-week segments.

The second cycle of Academic Program Review began in 2004-05 with eight academic departments undergoing reviews: African-American Studies, Counseling and Psychological Services, English, the Gerontology Institute, Mathematics and Statistics, the School of Music, Public Administration and Urban Studies, and Sociology. Two research, teaching and service centers affiliated with these departments also

underwent reviews as well as the free-standing centers: Economic Forecasting Center, Fiscal Research, and the Neighborhood Collaborative.

In addition eleven academic departments completed the Academic Program Review process through approval of their Action Plans by the provost: Anthropology and Geography, School of Art and Design, Communication, Computer Information Systems, Educational Policy Studies, Managerial Sciences, Modern and Classical Languages, Risk Management and Insurance, Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology, Real Estate, and the Women's Studies Institute. As a result of these reviews, three programs were discontinued: the specialization in Aviation and Transportation of the BS in Urban Policy Studies, the BA in Theater, and the concentration in Higher Education of the PhD in Educational Policy Studies.

The Regents approved the following new degree programs:

MA in Religious Studies; New Minor in Ethics; Addition of a Legal Track to the BS in Criminal Justice; Additional tracks in Criminal Justice and in Public Health in the MPA Program; Additional track in Public Administration in the MS Program in Criminal Justice; and Post-Master's Certificate in Enterprise Risk Management.

**Faculty Support & Development:** Recommendations of two task forces on advancement of women and on recruitment and retention of under-represented faculty are being implemented with strategies including pilot mentoring programs. Efforts continue to be spearheaded by Senior Faculty Associates dedicated to each area and working on behalf of the Provost office. **Tables 20-21** indicate faculty diversity. For fall 2005, the number of tenure-track Asian and African-American faculty is 73 and 64, respectively, compared with 65 and 65 the previous fall. The number of tenure-track female faculty increased slightly to 306 with the percentage unchanged at 40.4%.

## 2.5 Connection to the Greater Community

**International:** International initiatives spanned the globe and engaged all of the colleges of the university. Georgia State worked with five other universities in Canada, Mexico and the United States to develop a student exchange program funded by the North American Mobility Grant Program. The Asian Studies Center in the College of Arts and Sciences established faculty and student exchange programs with three universities in Japan and Korea.

The J. Mack Robinson College of Business developed follow-up initiatives to its successful project with the Alexandria Institute of Technology in Egypt to strengthen business schools in Tunisia and other countries in North Africa and the Middle East. The College of Education extended Study Abroad opportunities to the Educational Leadership/Principals' Center program with 30 faculty and graduate students studying in England in 2004-2005. The Criminal Justice Department hosted the first delegation of top police officials from China to visit Georgia. The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, which secured international grants of nearly \$2 million, conducted an assessment of the intergovernmental fiscal system for the Ministry of Finance of India.

**State and Local:** Community and state outreach and partnership accomplishments intersected virtually all academic departments. For example, Communication piloted the Computer Assisted Debate Project with the Atlanta Housing Authority and other agencies to bring benefits of debate participation to middle school students in low-income housing communities. This program was subsequently featured at a White House conference in October 2005. Psychology offered domestic violence and child development programs for the burgeoning Atlanta Latino community. Music reached over 1,000 community students through the Neighborhood Music Schools program and established a new affiliation with the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra. The College of Education targeted students in urban schools through an array of programs, including After-School All-Stars Atlanta, Advanced Academy for Future

Teachers, Jumpstart and the Good Neighbor Training Program. Nursing and Physical Therapy provided back-to-school physicals for homeless children in Atlanta and health care classes and services for migrant workers in South Georgia.

The College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences received a \$5.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop PDS<sup>2</sup> (Professional Development School Partnerships Deliver Success). PDS<sup>2</sup> will link Georgia State with four metropolitan Atlanta school systems to improve the quality of pre-service and in-service teachers in pursuit of higher student achievement in urban schools. The project will provide endorsement programs in mathematics and reading, mentor training, and graduate programs with College of Education and College of Arts and Sciences faculty offering workshops and courses on site at schools in the Atlanta, DeKalb County, Fulton County and Gwinnett County school systems.

Other initiatives targeting urban education included: PULSE (Preparing Urban Leaders in Special Education), the Urban Graduate Research Collaborative, Preparing Urban Mathematics Teachers, and the Urban Teacher Leader Master's Program. On a statewide level, the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences participated in PRISM (Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics), a National Science Foundation funded program developing a best practices approach to teaching and learning science and mathematics through collaborations between classroom teachers and college professors of science and mathematics.

The Bio-Bus program made 194 trips to 112 schools in 18 counties during 2004-05 providing more than 16,000 students with biology laboratory experiences not readily available in their own schools. The Center for Behavioral Neuroscience sponsored the fifth annual "Atlanta Brains Rule!" neuroscience exposition at Zoo Atlanta, which attracted more than 4,600 participants to 35 interactive booths operated by Georgia State faculty and students.

The Tax Clinic in the College of Law, while serving as an important laboratory for training law students and graduate tax students from the J. Mack Robinson College of Business, served over 200 low-income individuals involved in disputes with the Internal Revenue Service. The College of Law legislation clinic and practicum course provided law student interns, who performed legal research for committees of the Georgia General Assembly. The Fiscal Research Center in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, working with the new state fiscal economist, developed revenue estimates for proposed legislation and published the weekly "Fiscal Impact" for General Assembly members and staff. The Georgia Health Policy Center initiated a seven-month business planning and sustainability course for rural health networks, which resulted in 12 action plans with the potential savings of \$18 million through free care clinics, prescription assistance and care management for the critically ill. The Office of Community Service engaged over 3,600 students, faculty and staff in service projects such as the "Into the Streets" initiative with more than 10,000 hours of service in the Atlanta community and the "Panther Break Away", an alternative Spring Break program.

## **2.6 Infrastructure/Support**

**Improved Performance of Administrative Units:** Administrative and Support Unit Review is progressing steadily through efforts spearheaded by the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness. Administrative and Support Unit Reviews in 2004-05 included eight units: Building Services, Office of the Dean of Students, Facilities Planning, University Auditing and Advisory Services, Management and Staff Development Services, Research Awards Administration, five College Grants and Project Management offices, the Student Advisement Center, five College Academic Assistance offices, and University Computing and Communications.

Twenty-one units completed the Administrative and Support Unit Review process by having their Action Plans approved by the provost: the Center for Teaching and Learning, Freshman Studies, six College Graduate Admission offices, the University Library, Library Support and Technology, New Student Programs, Institutional Research, five College Public Relations offices, Student Accounts, Student Financial Aid, the University (Student) Center, University Educational Technology Services, University Information Services and University Relations. Commitments for funding Action Plans are \$580,000 for future years.

**Technology:** The Student Technology Fee funded many upgrades of technology-based learning environments and supported student-centered technology infrastructure improvements. For example, Biology completely computerized 13 instructional laboratories with a laptop at each student lab station and wireless networking serving 2,500 students per semester. Communication renovated a television production studio to allow undergraduate students to train on state-of-the-art digital equipment instead of the previous analog set-up and to make use of live digital feeds from CNN. Nursing acquired PDAs and interactive patient model software for nurse practitioner and clinical-specialist students to expand clinical application experiences. The College of Law upgraded its Moot Courtroom with state-of-the-art evidence presentation technology for litigation training and scenario-based simulations. The IS&T Help Center added a help desk specializing in providing assistance to students in connecting to the campus wireless network and protecting their laptops from viruses and other unwelcome malware. The Alpharetta Center added a 39-seat student workstation classroom for courses requiring student-computer interaction during scheduled class time. Installation of vClass software provided a powerful and easy-to-use virtual classroom setting over the Internet, which allowed faculty to add live, real-time interaction with off-campus students with excellent results in participation and performance.

Administrative accomplishments included the implementation of the PeopleSoft Human Resources software system. This implementation required a very complex conversion process to load data from the legacy system. The installed modules included payroll, benefits, manage faculty events, and workforce administration. Auxiliary and Support Services instituted an on-line “one stop shop” whereby students could register for classes and at the same time purchase textbooks and other course supplies. This innovation was nominated for a 2005 Board of Regents Best Practices Award and placed second.

Georgia State deployed a new core website ([www.gsu.edu](http://www.gsu.edu)) with a design emphasis on providing prospective students with on-line information, which is useful, usable and desirable. The new website concept positioned Georgia State as “Campus Atlanta” with strong messages about its academic, research and service missions and an emphasis on its international focus. Feedback from external and internal constituents was very positive and complimentary of the structure and ease of finding information. Maintenance of information on the website was facilitated with implementation of the Red Dot Web Content Management System.

**Comprehensive Campaign:** External fundraising was highlighted by the eighth consecutive year of total gifts exceeding \$10 million and a 76 percent participation rate of faculty and staff participating in the employee campaign. Various assets of the GSU Foundation are listed in **Tables 25-27**.

**Facilities:** Progress toward attaining facilities essential to meeting the teaching and research goals of the Strategic Plan included the addition of the 199,000-square foot Humanities Building to the Major Capital Projects List. The Humanities Building will provide 53 new classrooms and labs in the heart of the campus and proximity of faculty and administrative offices for all the humanities departments, which are currently scattered across the campus. A major accomplishment toward realization of the Science Teaching Laboratory Building, which was already on the Major Capital Projects List at priority #7, was a \$5 million naming gift from Parker H. “Pete” Petit. The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies moved to its new location at Five Points on Marietta Street. The April 2005 celebration of this accomplishment

featured a host of dignitaries including Ambassador Young and former President Jimmy Carter. Another facilities milestone was groundbreaking for the Piedmont-Ellis student housing complex, which will provide downtown accommodations for 2,000 students. This \$168 million project entails the largest bond issue ever in the United States for a privately funded student housing project. Significant improvements of some critical infrastructures were accomplished through a \$5 million Minor Capital Project. In addition, another completed Minor Capital Project for the Arts & Humanities building provided users with a safer, cleaner, and more comfortable environment.

### 3. Priorities for 2006

#### 3.1 Context for Budget Discussion and Initiatives

**External Mandates:** The first key feature is a decline in credit hours (SCHs) for both FY'05 and FY '06. While the Regents will probably consider a tuition increase, the amount will not be known until late spring 2006. A second key feature is that the University System of Georgia (USG) has reformulated its strategic plan (<http://www.usg.edu/regents/strategic/>) that might influence our priorities. In particular, there is an increased focus on improvement of retention, progression, and graduation rates. While state appropriations are increasing each year (**Table 22**), the percentage contribution of state appropriations to the total general education budget has now declined to 61.2%. Both tuition and fees per FTE and state and local appropriations per FTE are approximately 85% of our IPEDS peer group for FY 2004. We are continuing to operate at significantly

**Internal Commitments:** The primary commitment is to support instructional and strategic research programs that are aligned with Strategic Plan 2005-2010. We will continue our progress in the development of systematic planning and evaluation mechanisms and processes within the institution. This Action Plan is to inform and guide our decisions.

**Internal strategy:** For many years, we have informed allocation of net new revenues through the strategic plan. We have ongoing vigilance to ensure that all activities and programs are aligned with the strategic plan. Given the potential for an adjustment downwards in unit allocations, decisions will be guided by the following principles:

1. For academic units, enrollment trends, program quality, external support, and research productivity should be considered. There should be a balance between protecting credit hour production and maintaining higher priority programs as given in section II.C.2 of the Strategic Plan 2005-2010  
[http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwact/pdf\\_plan\\_archive/2005\\_strategicplan.pdf](http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwact/pdf_plan_archive/2005_strategicplan.pdf)
2. For non-academic cost centers in support areas, reduced support should be given to those areas with higher costs than comparable institutions and to those less effective/efficient or central to the strategic plan. Such areas should develop plans to increase efficiency so that services will not be reduced.
3. For auxiliary units where revenues exceed projections, state funds may be shifted away from their support, dependent on auxiliary fund balances.

#### 3.2 Initiatives and strategies for 2006

The University is committed to pursuing initiatives that will implement our vision as described in the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan. By continuing to follow these initiatives, this focus on quality should lead to quality graduates, economic development, and serving the public interest. We aspire to be ranked in the second tier of national universities listed by *US News* and to be listed in the top 100 universities by the University of Florida's *The Center*. To achieve these aspirations requires us to balance our efforts for greater student success with strategic enhancement of research and doctoral programs and targeted investment in interdisciplinary programs.

We have a considerable backlog of commitments to academic programs and some administrative support units through the various department Action Plans. We have even larger potential investments that could be made in various proposals and pre-proposals that were developed spring 2004 in response to requests for Areas of Focus. We continue to sharpen the focus of where we invest in the university by targeting focused, multi-disciplinary programs rather than departments for investment. Thus, future allocations should address both department and multi-disciplinary program priorities that are in support of effective instructional and strategic research programs. In addition, the following areas should be given attention in 2006:

### **3.2.1 Recruitment & Retention of Students**

Various initiatives to enhance enrollment, including transfer student recruitment and retention and graduation initiatives, will be continued and their effectiveness assessed. There will be a balanced commitment to recruit and retain all full-time students - freshmen, transfer, non-traditional, international, and graduate students – and to increase quality and maintain diversity of the student body.

**Recruitment:** A ‘best of class’ strategy will be used to recruit freshman and transfer students. Recruitment goals by admission-standing category are 2,500 freshmen, 500 non-degree students, 1,800 transfer students, and 2500 graduate and professional students for fall 2006. In addition, another 4,000 students will be recruited during the year. Credit hours should increase from FY ‘05 and average hours per student per semester should stabilize at 11.7. We will continue to attract a diverse group of students who have higher SAT and GPA qualifications than previous classes. For regularly admitted students, guidelines are a minimum Freshman Index of 2500 for new freshmen, with the addition of a minimum SAT score of 900 and a minimum high school GPA of 2.8. The guideline for transfer students continues to be a minimum GPA of 2.5. We will continue to expand the community of scholars program housed in the Lofts. We will initiate a scholarship program to attract National Merit Scholars. In order to attract more part-time students, we will pro-rate mandatory fees for students who take less than six credit hours. Colleges need to become more aggressive in recruiting graduate students, the numbers of which have declined markedly in the past few years.

**Retention:** Low six-year graduation rates are probably the single most important reason that Georgia State is still a 4<sup>th</sup> Tier institution in *US News* rankings. For the fall 1998 first-time full-time cohort, the six-year retention rate was 40.1% - 10% below the predicted rate, and the rate for the fall 1999 cohort was 39.3%. We will redouble our efforts to increase retention for our diverse group of students. A one-percent increase in our six-year graduation rate is equivalent to recruiting 200 new students or 5,000 credit hours per year. Our first-year retention rates are at or above national norms, but there are significant retention losses in years two and three. An analysis is being made by undergraduate major to determine effective strategies. Institutions with similar characteristics to Georgia State but better retention and graduation rates are being studied. Increased emphasis is being placed on departmental responsibility for retention of their majors, within available resources. Departments will be provided with retention data for their majors and will be required to develop a retention plan as part of their annual report. Listservs are being set up for each major, so that departments can be in regular contact with their students. A goal is to increase first-year and second-year retention rates to 84% and 75% for the entering fall 2005 class.

The Student Life and Leadership programs provide a variety of opportunities for students to become involved in co-curricular activities. They will continue to establish and implement specific retention initiatives including programs which build tradition and school spirit and intercultural programs to provide exposure and encourage interaction among diverse individuals.

Preliminary analysis of first-year retention of transfer junior students reveals significant variation by major. There appears to be an overall issue with orientation of transfer students to Georgia State. We will

implement an online orientation and provide transfer orientation sessions in the evening and during the weekends. We are analyzing success rates of transfer students from various institutions and plan to increase our interaction with faculty and programs of those institutions that provide us with the majority of our transfer students.

### 3.2.2 Undergraduate Experience

**Learning Communities:** Freshmen Learning Communities will continue to be expanded to serve at least 40% of entering students for fall 2006. Analysis of retention data from fall 1999 – 2004 indicates that student in FLCs have seven percentage point higher first-year retention rates than non-FLC students. Also, this enhanced persistence extends through subsequent semesters.

**Residence Halls:** Students who live in the University Village have higher retention and graduation rates than those who have no residence hall experience. New freshmen for fall 2006 will be strongly encouraged to live in the Residence Halls and a policy will be developed to require new freshmen to live in residence halls in fall 2007 when the Piedmont-Ellis facility is expected to open.

**W Policy Change:** Students who receive a large number of W grades generally do not graduate. Institutions that have a limit on the number of W grades have actual six-year graduation rates higher than predicted rates. For fall 2006, we will probably implement a policy to limit the number of W grades a student can take.

**Area A Policy Change:** Many students reach upper division before they complete Area A requirements. For fall 2006, we will probably implement a policy to require students to complete Area A in their first two semesters of enrollment at Georgia State. If students have not satisfied the requirement, they will have to enroll continuously in appropriate courses until they have satisfied the Area A requirement.

**Retention in Gateway Courses:** Some courses that serve large numbers of students are being redesigned. Courses include two introductory mathematics courses, introductory two-semester biology courses for non-majors, and two junior-level psychology courses. Examination of large-enrollment courses in which students historically have earned a high number of D, F, or W grades continues. Various learning enhancement strategies are being piloted in some of the gatekeeper courses in order to transform them into gateway courses and hence increase retention rates. For example, supplemental instruction is being used in some introductory mathematics and biology courses. If this strategy is successful, it will be expanded to other gatekeeper courses.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** We will continue development of assessment of student learning outcomes for both General Education and majors, co-led by the associate provost for institutional effectiveness and the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Academic Program Review includes examination of assessment of student learning outcomes for programs to which a department contributes. A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that focuses on some aspects of General Education learning outcomes will be developed as part of our SACS reaffirmation requirement.

**Communication across the curriculum:** One of the General Education outcomes involves written communication. Increasing the number of courses with writing intensive components will continue subject to availability of resources. We will explore the possibility of linking introductory English courses with disciplinary courses for all incoming freshmen.

**Campus Atlanta:** Students have a continuum of engagement opportunities to learn about Atlanta settings, to learn from Atlanta systems, and to learn through Atlanta community service and Atlanta service learning. We are analyzing the effectiveness of the Campus Atlanta program.

**Undergraduate Research:** Increased faculty and student interaction is one of the hallmarks of increased student retention. We will encourage departmental undergraduate research through an annual Undergraduate Research Symposium and by sending students to the Colonial Academic Alliance undergraduate research conference that is held each spring.

### 3.2.3 Graduate Experience & Research

Support for the Office of Research is in three broad categories: grants and contracts management and sponsored programs (pre- and post-award processes); support for research and creative activities of faculty; and research integrity and compliance activities. In order to reflect the growth in external funding and keep pace with such growth, FACP linked changes in the university share of indirect cost dollars and the budget for the Office of Research.

**Research Integrity:** Continuing support for researchers to learn about and practice procedures that are in compliance with federal and state policies will continue to be provided, especially for IRB and IACUC activities.

**Internal Grants Program:** Analyses of internal grants programs indicate that these programs provide a significant stimulus to research growth in the university. Attention should also be given to develop programs for underserved groups, especially those groups that do not traditionally attract significant external funds.

**Graduate Programs:** Analyses of graduate tuition waivers, graduate assistantships, and mechanisms supporting grants (pre- and post-awards) have been made. Programs that have received GRA support for nine or more years from the Research Program Enhancement program will have the dollars added permanently to their graduate assistant budgets.

**Graduate Student Support:** At least partial health insurance is available for graduate students at many competing research universities. In August 2006, the University System of Georgia will probably implement mandatory health insurance for any graduate assistant who receives a full tuition waiver. Graduate student stipends are being analyzed and a strategy developed for improvement of stipend amounts.

**Georgia Research Alliance (GRA):** Georgia State will continue to work with the GRA and other economic development partners to construct additional buildings in the Science Park. By creating a critical mass of expertise, with self-sufficient and advanced facilities and environments that enhance the interchange of expertise and ideas, and allow for an integrated collaboration with biotechnology companies, an Economic Development building would provide a synergistic focus for both cutting-edge research and for translating that research into real world products that would boost public health and Georgia's economic development.

### 3.2.4 Academic Programs & Faculty

**Tenure-track appointments:** We will continue to convert PTI and/or NTT positions to tenure-track positions, consistent with the current budget constraints. Replacement of vacant tenure-track positions will be made strategically with a balance between protecting credit hour production and maintaining higher priority programs.

**Faculty Support & Development:** The Teaching and Learning with Technology Center within the Center for Teaching and Learning will continue to develop strategies to facilitate faculty acquisition of the skills they need to take advantage of the opportunities that information technology offers for improving student learning. Efforts on advancement of women and on recruitment and retention of under-

represented faculty will continue to be spearheaded by Senior Faculty Associates dedicated to each area and working on behalf of the Provost office. They work closely with colleges and senate committees.

Many faculty are involved with learner-centered initiatives such as Freshman Learning Communities, Writing-across-the-curriculum, standards-based teaching, service learning, and teaching with technology. These various initiatives have been brought together as an interrelated series of Communities of Practice under the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide greater synergy to the individual efforts.

**Faculty and Staff Salaries:** Compression effects and/or gaps from comparable market rates exist for many faculty and staff. This issue will continue to be addressed to the extent permitted within legislation.

**Academic Program Review:** Action Plan commitments that result from Academic Program Review will be honored in the order entered into to the extent possible given the budget situation. However, Action Plan commitments to high priority programs will be moved ahead of lower priority programs. High priority programs are given in section II.C.2 of the Strategic Plan 2005-2010 [http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwact/pdf\\_plan\\_archive/2005\\_strategicplan.pdf](http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwact/pdf_plan_archive/2005_strategicplan.pdf).

**Libraries:** We have a goal to maintain the library book budget and periodical support in face of inflation so as to enable the library to apply successfully for membership in the Association of Research Libraries.

### 3.2.5 Connection to the Greater Community

**Technology Support:** The University will continue to work with the Board of Regents and other colleges and universities in the southeast to advance the information technology services of all these groups. Particular IT projects in this category include support for state-wide library initiatives such as GALILEO, GIL, and hosting the Georgia Public Library System. Georgia State will continue to provide IT support leadership for universities in the southeast through SURF with the Southern Crossroads GigaPop and Internet2 via the NSF Middleware Initiative.

### 3.2.6 Infrastructure/Support Improvements

**Improve Traffic Safety Measures:** A Traffic Safety subcommittee of the Senate Planning & Development committee will continue to investigate and report recommendations for long term solutions to pedestrian and vehicular safety issues at key pedestrian crossings adjacent to campus buildings. The Decatur Street improvement project that includes widening of side walks will be implemented.

**Student Technology Support:** We will continue to upgrade the number and quality of media-equipped and/or wireless classrooms and library and computer lab workstations. The University's wireless architecture will continue to evolve, with an emphasis on secure access, academic value and increasing bandwidth. Exploration will continue into the use of wireless and hand-held technology in instruction.

**Management Administrative Information Infrastructure:** A Data Warehouse project will continue to be developed to implement an institutional data model, hosted by Georgia State, with capability to feed data to OIIT for BOR model. Statware will be maintained in a functionally stable state while a new front end for Statware (iPort) is developed. Integrated data marts for student, college, financial, HR/faculty, and facilities will be phased into the data warehouse.

The University's research output will continue to be digitally stored and made accessible through Institutional Repositories managed through an IS&T/University Library partnership. Stored materials will expand beyond theses and dissertations to include faculty output in a DSpace Institutional Repository.

Staffing issues that relate to the management of administrative information infrastructure include workstation support, network support, and upgrading staff skills as more routine administration migrates to electronic systems. We will examine staffing plans across the university to obtain a balance between central and local support, recognizing that local support could be neighborhood rather than for an individual unit.

**Improved Performance of Administrative Units:** The ASUR process will continue and action plans will be implemented to the extent possible given the budget situation. In addition, managers will be trained and held accountable for staff performance and unit effectiveness. Use of the web as an information tool will be increased and updated policies and procedures will be made readily accessible via the web.

**Security Awareness:** Continued emphasis will be placed on improving and standardizing the university's networks and data management systems through policies and procedures designed to protect institutional assets and maintain individual privacy. Security of buildings will continue to be improved through increasing deployment of swipe-card access.

**Digital Community Development:** Enhancements to university's web pages will continue to improve communication to internal and external constituents through the Internet.

**Staff Support & Development:** The Staff Council will continue to work in concert with Human Resources to develop retention strategies which include work-life alternatives and skill acquisition opportunities for career advancement. Efforts on advancement of women staff and administrators will continue to be spearheaded by the Senior Faculty Associate working on behalf of the Provost office.

**Private Fund-raising:** With state support for institutions continuing to decline as a percentage of total budgets, private gifts and grants become increasingly important. We are currently laying the groundwork for the next comprehensive campaign. To be successful to at least a double the amount raised in the previous campaign, we need to ensure that Development has the necessary people and tools. Once they are in place, we can anticipate increased Georgia State University Foundation support for student scholarships and fellowships and for faculty and academic programs.

**Facilities:** Funding for the Science Teaching Laboratory (STL) building will continue to be a high priority. The building is #7 on the Regents' list for \$49 million state funding and design money has been allocated for FY '06. Planning is underway for development of a University Science Park that will include STL and Science Research Laboratory buildings, to be constructed on the former site of the Atlanta Police Department. A Humanities building to replace Sparks Hall is #23 on the Regents' list for \$57.5 million state funding. We will initiate planning for classroom space for the interim period between demolition of Sparks Hall and opening of the new Humanities Building.

The Library Transformation project, funded in part by a student fee, will take off dramatically with anticipated completion of the first two floors by summer 2007. New residential halls on the Piedmont/Ellis site are being constructed with an anticipated occupancy of the buildings in August 2007.

An updated campus Master Plan will be presented to the Regents in early 2006. This plan includes expanding the boundaries of Georgia State northward to Ellis Street and southward to Underground Atlanta. Also, the main street theme of the earlier Master Plan has been expanded to main streets – including Decatur, Piedmont, and Edgewood.

Quality of facilities in public areas impacts recruitment – a comprehensive plan will be established to upgrade selected high profile areas.