

## Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Agency Name University of South Carolina Aiken

Date of Submission September 13, 2006

Agency Director Dr. Thomas L. Hallman

Agency Contact Person Dr. Braden J. Hosch

Agency Contact's Telephone Number (803) 641-3338



## Section I – Executive Summary

### 1. Organization's stated purpose, mission, and values

#### Mission

Founded in 1961, the University of South Carolina Aiken (USC Aiken) is a comprehensive liberal arts institution committed to active learning through excellence in teaching, faculty and student scholarship, research, creative activities and service. In this stimulating academic community, USC Aiken challenges students to acquire and develop the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for success in a dynamic global environment.

The university offers degrees in the arts and sciences and in the professional disciplines of business, education, and nursing. All courses of study are grounded in a liberal arts and sciences core curriculum. USC Aiken also encourages interdisciplinary studies and collaborative endeavors.

Emphasizing small classes and individual attention, USC Aiken provides students with opportunities to maximize individual achievement in both academic and co-curricular settings. The institution challenges students to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, to learn independently, and to acquire depth of knowledge in chosen fields. The university values honesty, integrity, initiative, hard work, accomplishments, responsible citizenship, respect for diversity, and cross-cultural understanding.

USC Aiken attracts students of varying ages and diverse cultural backgrounds who have demonstrated the potential to succeed in a challenging academic environment. In addition to serving the Savannah River area, USC Aiken actively seeks student enrollment from all parts of South Carolina as well as from other states and countries.

As a senior public institution of the University of South Carolina, USC Aiken combines the advantages of a smaller institution with the resources of a major university system. Located in beautiful, historic Aiken, South Carolina, USC Aiken is an institution of moderate size (2,500-5,000 students) that offers baccalaureate degrees in a number of disciplines, completion baccalaureate degrees at University of South Carolina regional campuses, and master's degrees in selected programs.

#### **Statement of University Values**

WE AT USC Aiken EMBRACE THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

##### **A High Quality Learning Environment**

- We seek to impart a broad range of skills, knowledge, and wisdom
- We aim to maximize each student's potential
- We expect and value high quality teaching and individualized attention from faculty and staff
- We expect and value high quality scholarship and creative endeavors by faculty
- We encourage
  - Critical thinking
  - Independent learning
  - An understanding of the connections between the liberal arts and discipline-specific courses
  - Curiosity and a love of continual learning

##### **Collegiality**

- We aspire to be a nurturing community where people support one another in their efforts to learn and excel
- We encourage cooperation, collaboration and collegiality

##### **Character**

- We expect integrity, honesty and taking responsibility for our actions
- We embrace diversity and encourage respectfulness
- We encourage initiative, effort, and pride in hard work and accomplishments

##### **Citizenship**

- We strive to foster in students an understanding of the rights and responsibilities associated with membership in a community
- We seek to develop responsible citizenship and working for the common good
- We advocate involvement and partnerships with our external constituents to promote meaningful engagement and applied learning

## 2. Major achievements from past year

A renewed and focused strategic planning process supported the accomplishment of multiple objectives in the strategic plan. Gains were made in fundraising, with Family Fund and alumni participation rising to historic levels (7.2-7, 7.4-1). Construction was begun on the Convocation Center to house athletics and provide space for large-scale events in the Aiken community; completion is scheduled for March 2007. A new degree program in music education was launched, with enrollments exceeding projections, and the Honors Program was revitalized, with growing enrollments. Additionally, academic success and support services were significantly expanded. Many of these initiatives were accomplished through focus on “cross-functional” issues, coupled with better systems to provide timely information to decision makers.

USC Aiken also sustained its excellence in the University’s wide range of programs, offerings, and accomplishments of faculty and students. In 2005-06, 483 students received undergraduate degrees and 31 students received master’s degrees, while admission requirements were increased for new students and academic standards were tightened for current students. USC Aiken continued to receive recognition at the state, regional, and national levels. Among just a few of these accomplishments, the university was again ranked as the #1 public comprehensive college in the South and #3 in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*. The men’s golf team won the NCAA Division II national golf championship for the third year in a row, and the theater program was recognized by the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival.

## 3. Key strategic goals for the present and future years

### ***Strategic Goals for 2006-07 and Beyond***

*The university’s strategic goals are placed in the context of the university’s overarching mission to graduate engaged learners and principled citizens.*

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</b> | <b>4. Strong Community Relations</b>  |
| <b>2. Dynamic Student Centered Environment</b>          | <b>5. Enhanced Campus Environment</b> |
| <b>3. Superior Faculty and Staff</b>                    |                                       |

## 4. Opportunities and barriers that may affect the organization’s success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its strategic goals

### **Opportunities:**

**Community Growth** – Population growth will allow for enrollment growth and a reshaping of the student body. Increasing concentrations of industry in the area, including the development of the Savannah River National Laboratory and the proposed MOX facility, provide opportunities for partnerships and curriculum development.

**Facilities** – New facilities present opportunities for recruitment, advancement, and public service. These include new student housing facilities (one completed in 2004 and one planned for 2008), the Convocation Center for athletics and events (completion in 2007) and the renovation of the Student Activities Center (completion in late 2007)

**Renewal Activities** – (1) a large number of faculty retirements will introduce new faculty with new approaches; (2) the implementation of the OneCarolina ERP system will revolutionize administrative processes; and (3) a review of general education beginning in 2006 will create new chances to think through “what” and “how” we teach.

**Student Engagement** – USC Aiken aims to increase levels of student engagement through a complete first year experience program, a comprehensive academic success center, and additional student life opportunities. An ongoing emphasis on quality and a wider recruiting net will attract students from other regions in the state who will thrive in this environment.

### **Barriers:**

**Increased Competition for Qualified Students** – The environment for recruiting and retaining qualified students continues to become more competitive. Pressures to recruit and retain students who will be successful will mount as admission criteria are refined and probation and suspension policies are tightened to promote academic success.

**Funding** – Sharp decreases in state funding and projected decreases in lottery revenues have significantly shifted costs to students, whose ability to pay for increased tuition is limited. Deferred maintenance and aging equipment will place additional financial pressure on the institution. Downsizing at the Savannah River National Lab and the closing of Avondale Mills in nearby Graniteville will also impact the University.

**Resource Management** – An impending wave of faculty and staff retirements can result in the loss of institutional memory. Limited space for new students to live and to go to class will restrict enrollment if not addressed. Also, ongoing developments in technology, such as implementation of a new ERP system, pose challenges for implementation and training.

**Creating a Focus on Action** – Identifying a few priorities which can make a “real” difference poses a challenge in instances where institutional culture may make it difficult to “think outside the box.”

### **5. How the accountability report is used to improve organizational performance.**

Senior administrators participated significantly in the preparation of this first state agency accountability report for USC Aiken. Each section of the report was assigned to a senior administrator who drafted an initial response, which was discussed with the rest of the senior administration through a series of retreats and meetings. Indicators for an institutional dashboard were collectively agreed upon and aligned with the report, and the senior administration reviewed each section of the report as it was drafted. The report will likely provide additional focus to the strategic planning process in the remainder of the year.

## Section II – Organizational Profile

### 1. Main educational programs, offerings, and services and the primary methods by which these are delivered

USC Aiken offers 21 bachelor’s degree programs in the areas of Business, Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Nursing, and Sciences. In addition, three master’s degree programs are offered in elementary education, educational technology, and clinical psychology; a two-year nursing degree program was phased out at the end of Fall 2005. USC Aiken provides campus housing for almost 700 students, fields eleven men’s and women’s NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletics teams, and offers a full complement of co-curricular and student life activities, including over sixty-five student clubs and groups.

### 2. Key student segments, stakeholder groups, and market segments, as appropriate, and their key requirements/ expectations

#### II.2-1 Key Student Segments and Requirements

Geographic Market Segments		Educational Goals		Requirements / Expectations
Local Counties	67%	Undergraduate Degree (Off-Campus Students)	64.1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outstanding programs that develop skills, knowledge, and values necessary for success in a dynamic global environment.</li> <li>Exemplary instruction and individualized contact with student-centered faculty and staff</li> <li>High quality academic, social, and living facilities, equipped with cutting-edge technology</li> <li>Employment or further education in field of study</li> <li>Student services that include advising, academic support, counseling, career services, health care, housing, dining, and safety</li> </ul>
Aiken	45%			
Lexington	9%	Undergraduate Degree (Residential Students)	22.4%	
Edgefield	4%			
Barnwell	4%			
Orangeburg	3%	Undergraduate Non-Degree (HS students, senior citizens)	8.8%	
Saluda	2%			
Other SC Counties	20%			
Out-of-State	6%	Graduate Degree	2.3%	
GA Tuition Remit.	5%			
International	2%	Graduate Non-Degree (Teacher certification)	2.3%	

#### II.2-2 Additional Stakeholder Groups

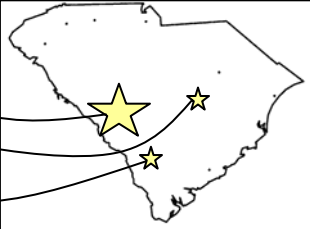
Stakeholder	Requirements
Private sector industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Astute, motivated employees and interns with a high level of skills</li> </ul>
Graduate schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants thoroughly grounded in disciplinary subject matter and broad general education</li> </ul>
Local, State, and Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible stewardship of resources and sound fiscal management of taxpayer dollars</li> <li>Economic development in the region and state by providing well-educated, high-skill workers</li> <li>Conscientious and responsible citizens who will become future civic leaders</li> </ul>
Alumni and Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous improvement of institutional quality to increase the value of their degrees</li> <li>Engaging relationship with the university through communications and networking</li> </ul>

### 3. Operating locations

**Main campus: Aiken, SC (Fall 2005 Headcount: 3,228)**

**Cooperative program in business: USC Sumter campus (Fall 2005 Program Headcount: 60)**

**Cooperative program in education: USC Salkehatchie campus (Fall 2005 Program Headcount: 16)**



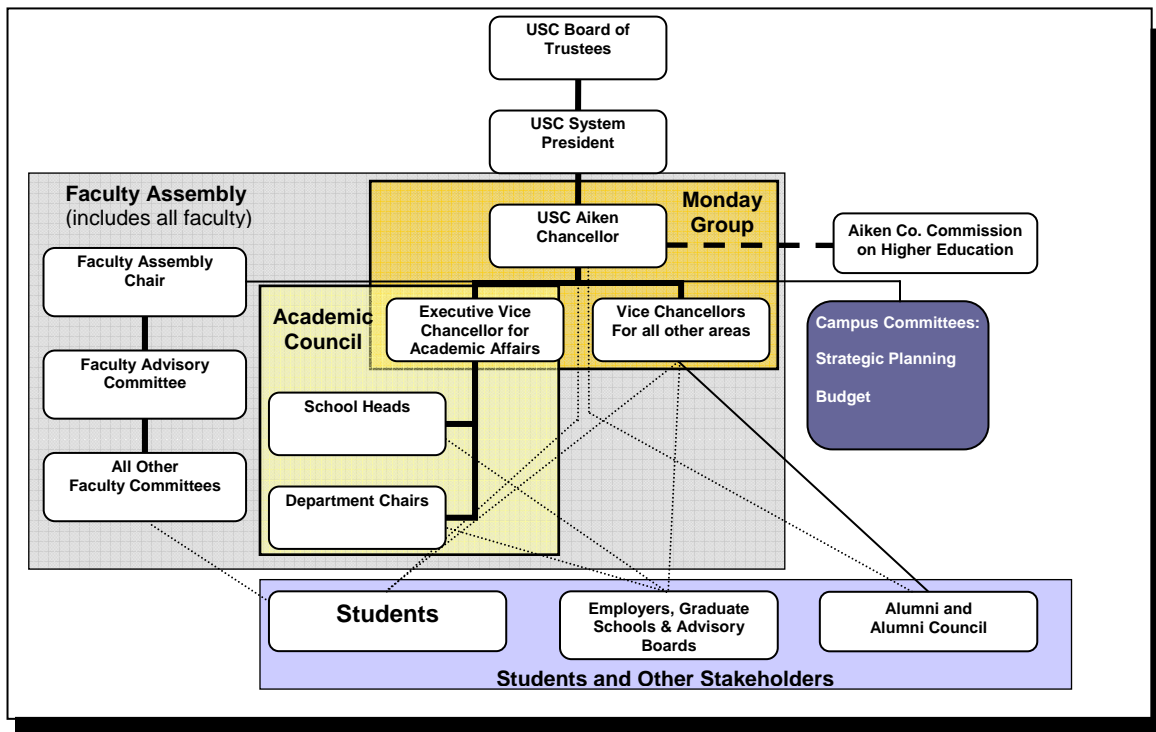
**4. Regulatory environment under which the organization operates**

USC Aiken complies with all chapters of Title 59 of the South Carolina Code of Laws providing the primary legislative mandate for education in the state, as well as with all other applicable statutes. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education is the primary state regulatory agency, and USC Aiken is in compliance with all rules and guidelines issued by this and other state agencies. Federal regulations affecting the University include, but are not limited to, all sections of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Family Rights and Privacy Act, Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, and Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act. The university complies in full with all regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Department of Labor, State Department, and other federal agencies.

Various accreditation agencies require ongoing assessments with periodic reviews to monitor compliance with standards for accreditation. These include the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council (MPAC), and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).

**5. Governance system (the reporting relationships between your governance board/policy making body and your senior leaders, as appropriate)**

**II.5-1 Shared Governance System**



**6. Key suppliers and partners**

Key suppliers are South Carolina high schools, especially those in the Aiken County School District, local two-year colleges, and other four-year institutions, especially other institutions in the USC system. Through the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, USC Aiken maintains significant partnerships with local school districts providing educational experiences for their students and teachers. Partnerships with other USC institutions as well as Aiken Technical College are also in place to share information and align programs and resources.

**II.6-1 Key Suppliers of Students**

Students Originating from High Schools (N=1,548)			Students Originating from Other Colleges (N =1,299)					
			Technical Colleges			Four-Year Colleges		
HS Name	N	Percent	Tech College Name	N	Percent	Univ. Name	N	Percent
South Aiken HS	156	10.1%	Aiken Tech	282	21.7%	USC System	188	14.5%
Aiken HS	108	7.0%	Midlands Tech	87	6.7%	Augusta State U	50	3.8%
N. Augusta HS	125	8.1%	Piedmont Tech	83	6.4%	C of Charleston	18	1.4%
Midland Valley HS	103	6.7%	Georgia Military C	53	4.1%	Clemson U	17	1.3%
Silver Bluff HS	71	4.6%	Orangeburg-C Tech	40	3.1%			

Percentages are calculated as a proportion students coming from HS or students coming from other higher education institution.  
 Source: USC Aiken Fall 2005 Enrollment File

**7. Key competitors (other educational systems that directly compete for the same type of studies, research grants, etc.)**

Key competitors are other higher education institutions and the job market. Roughly half of all undergraduates who depart USC Aiken without earning a degree do not pursue their education elsewhere within the next twelve months; about 30% pursue a degree at a four-year institution, and another 20% pursue a degree at a technical college. In general, these key competitors in higher education are also USC Aiken’s key suppliers (II.6.1).

**8. Principal factors that determine your competitive success. The key changes that are taking place that significantly impact your competitive situation**

The quality of learning and achievement of current students and graduates represents the principal factor that determines competitive success. Other factors include preparation of incoming students, the level of state funding, pricing, recruitment of quality faculty and staff, success in attracting students who can succeed at USC Aiken, and availability of job placements for graduates.

**9. Your key strategic challenges (could include operational, human resource, financial, and community-related strategic challenges)**

USC Aiken has identified three key strategic challenges for 2006-07 and beyond: (1) attract and retain a qualified and diverse student body when student preparation to perform college-level work is declining; (2) continue to improve educational outcomes while maintaining affordable programs; and (3) manage impending faculty retirements (40% are over age 55) to advance the institution.



**10. Your performance improvement systems**

USC Aiken is committed to developing a culture of continuous improvement. The performance of all organizational units, academic programs, and personnel is reviewed annually to determine effectiveness and to identify how to continue to advance the University’s mission in new and innovative ways.

**II-10-1 Key Performance Improvement Systems**

<b>Performance Area</b>	<b>Performance Improvement System</b>
Academic Programs, Departments, Schools	Academic Program Review
Administrative Departments and Offices	Administrative Program Review
Strategic Plan	Strategic Planning Committee Review (ongoing)
Faculty	Tenure and Promotion Review Post-Tenure Review Annual Review Peer Review of Teaching
Classified Employees	Employee Performance Management System (EPMS)
Senior Administrators	Annual Review Annual Evaluation of Chancellor Annual Evaluation of Executive Vice Chancellor 360 Degree Evaluations

**11. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart**

**II-11-1 Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations (\$)**

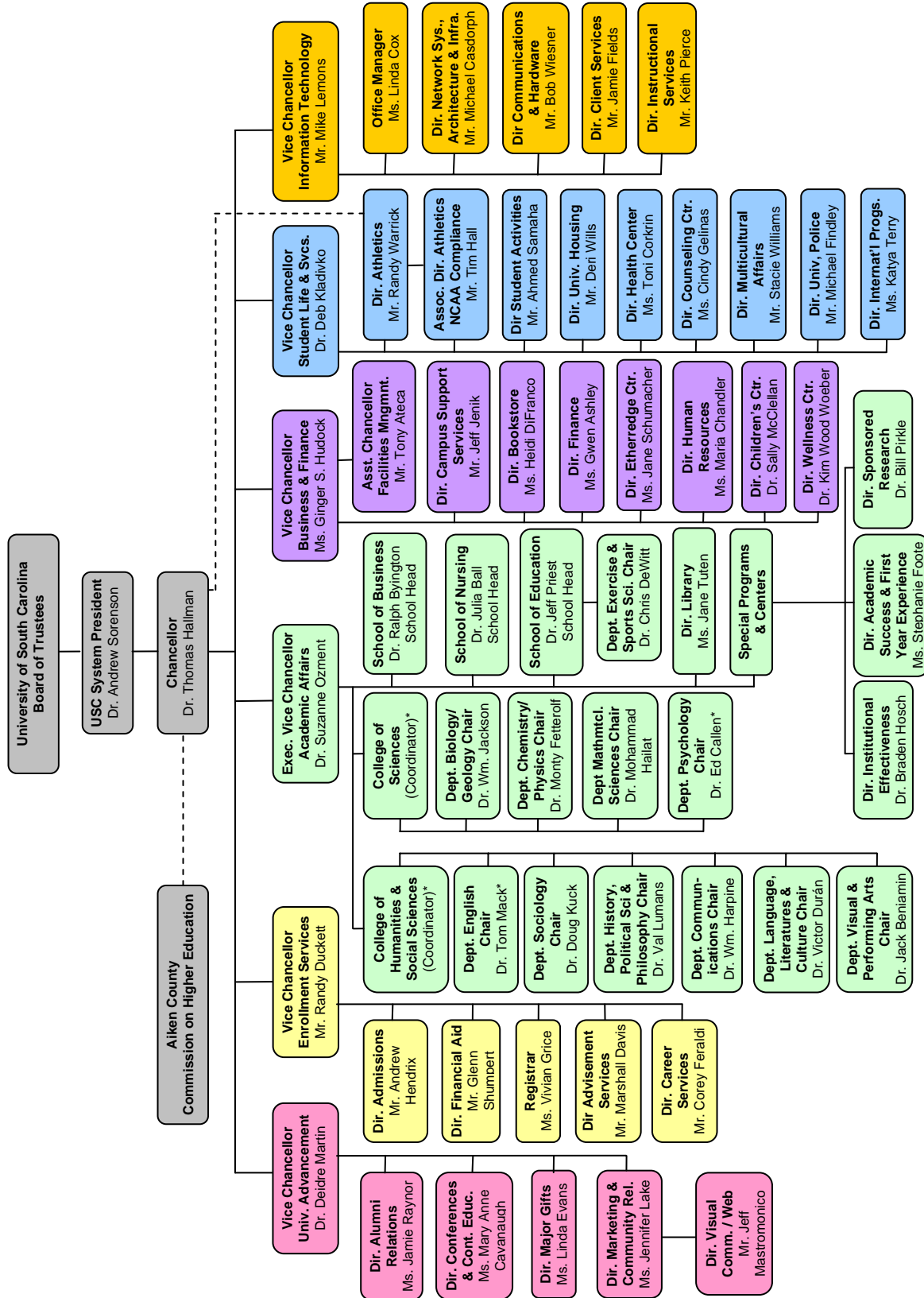
<b>Major Budget Categories</b>	<b>FY 04-05 Actual Expenditures</b>		<b>FY 05-06 Actual Expenditures</b>		<b>FY 06-07 Appropriations Act</b>	
	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>General Funds</b>
Personal Service	17,465,768	7,901,020	18,486,387	8,217,061	20,867,608	8,217,061
Other Operating	18,823,786	-	18,520,443	-	23,571,666	-
Special Items	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fringe Benefits	4,366,006	1,677,898	4,584,162	1,804,918	4,964,820	1,804,918
Non-recurring	-	-	-	250,000	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,655,560</b>	<b>9,578,918</b>	<b>41,590,992</b>	<b>10,271,979</b>	<b>49,404,094</b>	<b>10,021,979</b>

12. Major Program Areas Chart

II.12-1 Major Program Areas

Program Number	Major Program Area and Purpose (Brief)	FY 04-05 Budget Expenditures	FY 05-06 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
482	<b>Instruction</b>	State: 5,574,576	State: 5,977,911	7.3-5,14,15,20,25 7.4-8, 9, 10
483		Federal: 121,996	Federal: 26,982	
484		Other: 8,240,744	Other: 7,789,023	
485		Total: 13,937,316	Total: 13,793,916	
		% of Total Budget: 34%	% of Total Budget: 33%	
487	<b>Auxiliary</b> – Student housing, bookstore, dining services, and vending.	State: 0	State: 0	7.3-25
488		Federal: 0	Federal: 0	
489		Other: 2,254,309	Other: 2,264,788	
		Total: 2,254,309	Total: 2,264,788	
		% of Total Budget: 6%	% of Total Budget: 5%	
486	<b>Institutional Support</b> -Admin. functions to include executive management, personnel services, fiscal operations, administrative computing, and public relations.	State: 1,036,744 Federal: 0 Other: 1,861,397 Total: 2,898,141 % of Total Budget: 7%	State: 1,111,756 Federal: 0 Other: 1,919,401 Total: 3,031,157 % of Total Budget: 7%	7.3-22
490	<b>Research</b> -Activities specifically organized to produce research outcomes, commissioned either by external entities or through a separate budget process of an organizational unit within the institution.	State: 0 Federal: 223,454 Other: 134,539 Total: 357,993 % of Total Budget: 1%	State: 0 Federal: 173,155 Other: 224,694 Total: 397,849 % of Total Budget: 1%	7.3-23
491	<b>Public Service</b> -Activities established to provide non-instructional services beneficial to individuals and groups external to the institution.	State: 57,346 Federal: 478,214 Other: 1,836,238 Total: 2,371,798 % of Total Budget: 6%	State: 61,495 Federal: 476,535 Other: 1,743,449 Total: 2,281,479 % of Total Budget: 5%	7.6-1
492	<b>Academic Support</b> -Administrative functions that directly support instruction, research, career advising, and public service to include libraries, computing services, and academic administration.	State: 824,227 Federal: 0 Other: 1,624,698 Total: 2,448,925 % of Total Budget: 6%	State: 883,862 Federal: 0 Other: 1,967,642 Total: 2,851,504 % of Total Budget: 7%	7.3-21
493	<b>Student Services</b> -Student focused activities to include admissions, health, athletics, registration, academic advising, student organizations, and other student services.	State: 1,105,700 Federal: 0 Other: 2,891,472 Total: 3,997,172 % of Total Budget: 10%	State: 1,185,701 Federal: 144,686 Other: 3,036,544 Total: 4,366,931 % of Total Budget: 10%	7.3-24
494	<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance Administration</b> -Facilities support services to include campus security, capital planning, facilities administration, buildings and grounds maintenance, utilities, and major repairs and renovations.	State: 980,325 Federal: 0 Other: 1,696,086 Total: 2,676,411 % of Total Budget: 7%	State: 1,051,254 Federal: 0 Other: 1,810,164 Total: 2,861,418 % of Total Budget: 7%	7.3-26
495	<b>Scholarships</b> -Scholarships and fellowships in the form of outright grants to students selected by the institution and financed in the form of current funds, both restricted and unrestricted.	State: 0 Federal: 3,075,296 Other: 6,638,199 Total: 9,713,495 % of Total Budget: 24%	State: 0 Federal: 2,938,518 Other: 6,803,432 Total: 9,741,950 % of Total Budget: 23%	7.3-5,6,7,8,9,10,11, 12,13
<b>Grand Total</b>		State: 9,578,918 24% Federal: 3,898,960 10% Other: 27,177,682 67% Total: 40,655,560 100%	State: 10,271,979 25% Federal: 3,759,876 9% Other: 27,559,137 66% Total: 41,590,992 100%	

13. Organizational structure for 2005-06



## Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility

### *1.1 How do senior leaders develop and deploy their organization’s vision and values throughout the leadership system, to all faculty and staff, to key suppliers and partners, and to students and stakeholders, as appropriate? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to the organizational values?*

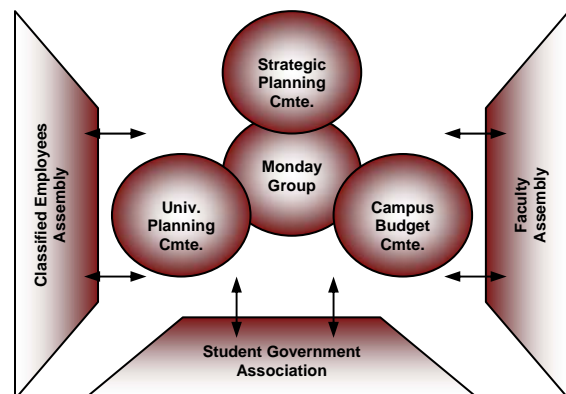
Senior leaders foster a mission-driven environment at USC Aiken which is both inclusive and participatory. These leaders have deployed an ongoing and collaborative process that has involved all stakeholders to develop a statement of the university’s vision and values. In terms of vision, USC Aiken aspires to be among the top comprehensive liberal arts institutions in South Carolina and the Southeast. This vision is grounded in the university values (see p. 1) that are prominently integrated into campus life. The university’s vision and values are promoted by senior leaders through active participation in formal and informal venues for communication and shared governance. The Chancellor delivers an annual State of the Campus address to members of the campus community, the Aiken Partnership, the Aiken County Commission on Higher Education, friends of the university, and local media. In addition to attending all meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the Classified Employees Assembly, the Chancellor provides a formal update to all faculty and staff about university and issues and finances at the end of each major semester. Further, Chancellor’s Panels for students are held monthly to gather feedback from students and to share information. Other senior administrators also attend these meetings to answer questions and discuss issues with faculty and staff and with student leaders.

### *1.2 How do senior leaders promote and support an environment that fosters and requires: legal and ethical behavior; and, fiscal, legal, and regulatory accountability? How are these monitored?*

Senior leaders oversee processes and units at USC Aiken that ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local legislation and regulations as well as compliance with requirements from the university’s regional accreditor and specialized national accreditors in various fields. The Business and Finance Division conducts audits and regularly monitors key financial and performance indicators. Regular audits are conducted every three years by the USC Internal Audit Department. Budgeted and actual expenditures are routinely reported to state and federal oversight agencies. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness coordinates and monitors external reporting to assure consistency and accuracy. Additionally, an ethics training program is planned for faculty and staff in Fall 2006.

### *1.3 How do senior leaders create a focus on action to accomplish the organization’s objectives, improve performance, and attain your vision?*

Senior leaders meet every Monday morning, as the “Monday Group” to discuss and coordinate tactical and strategic operations to advance the university’s mission, vision, and values. The Monday Group



regularly reviews financial and operational performance measures and provides annual reports to the Strategic Planning Committee. Further, Monday Group members belong to the Faculty Assembly and they participate on the Strategic Planning Committee, the Campus Budget Committee, and the University Planning Committee, as well as various other standing committees of the Faculty Assembly.

***1.4 How do senior leaders create an environment for organizational, faculty, and staff learning?***

Senior leaders encourage and provide support for unit-level retreats as well as for professional development workshops and support for conference attendance by faculty and staff. An orientation and mentor program for new faculty and staff assist in the seamless integration of new employees into the University community. Tuition reimbursement and flexible scheduling enable faculty and staff to take courses for undergraduate and graduate credit. Senior leaders also support invited reviews of programs and services by external consultants. For instance, in 2005-06 consultants were retained to review the academic advising system as well as the University's marketing strategies and admission processes. Regularly scheduled professional development workshops are provided through the Office of Human Resources.

***1.5 How do senior leaders promote and personally participate in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders?***

The development of future organizational leaders in the university is promoted through regular executive staff consultations with directors at the mid-management level. The development of these leaders is formally monitored through the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS). Additionally, the University sponsors leaders at all levels on campus to participate in development opportunities such as the South Carolina Executive Institute, Leadership Aiken County, and Leadership South Carolina. Succession planning issues are also discussed each year at the annual senior staff retreat.

***1.6 How do senior leaders communicate with, empower, and motivate all faculty and staff throughout the organization? How do senior leaders take an active role in faculty and staff reward and recognition processes to reinforce high performance throughout the organization?***

Senior leaders engage in formal and informal review of faculty and staff to reward outstanding performance, and they promote a culture of recognition for accomplishments. The EVCAA reviews annual evaluations of all faculty and approves any salary increase based on inequity or compression. Appropriate executive staff members review annual evaluations of classified employees reporting through their divisions and approve any pay-for-performance increases. Faculty and staff achievement is recognized by senior leaders at Classified Employment Assembly and Faculty Assembly meetings and the annual Faculty/Staff Appreciation Luncheon. Faculty awards for teaching and service are presented by the Chancellor at Academic Convocation staff awards are also presented annually in May. The Chancellor also sends letters recognizing accomplishments, birthdays, and employment anniversaries.

***1.7 How does your organization evaluate the performance of your senior leaders, and the governance board/policy making body? How do senior leaders use these performance reviews to improve their own leadership effectiveness and that of the board and leadership system, as appropriate?***

Every three years, 360 degree evaluations are conducted of the senior administration (7.6-4), and results are a part of their performance reviews. On an annual basis, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness invites members of Academic Council to evaluate the performance of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (EVCAA), and a similar performance evaluation process was adopted for the Chancellor beginning in 2005-06. The Chancellor evaluates executive staff annually, and Department Chairs and Deans are reviewed annually by the EVCAA.

***1.8 How does your organization address and anticipate any adverse impacts of its programs, offerings, services, and operations? What are the key compliance related processes, goals, and measures?***

Regular and ongoing review of programs, services, and offering by senior leaders prompts quick and proactive anticipation to reduce adverse impacts. Typically, such instances involve changes in or elimination of programs. As a recent example, in 2005 a change of the minimum SAT score required for admission prompted the Chancellor to meet with leaders of the African American community because students from this demographic group would be most affected by the change. Significant efforts to coordinate curricula with P-12 school systems are underway, and various academic units make use of community- and business-based advisory boards. The University reports regularly about the impact and effectiveness of its programs to state and federal agencies, including the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and the U.S. Department of Education.

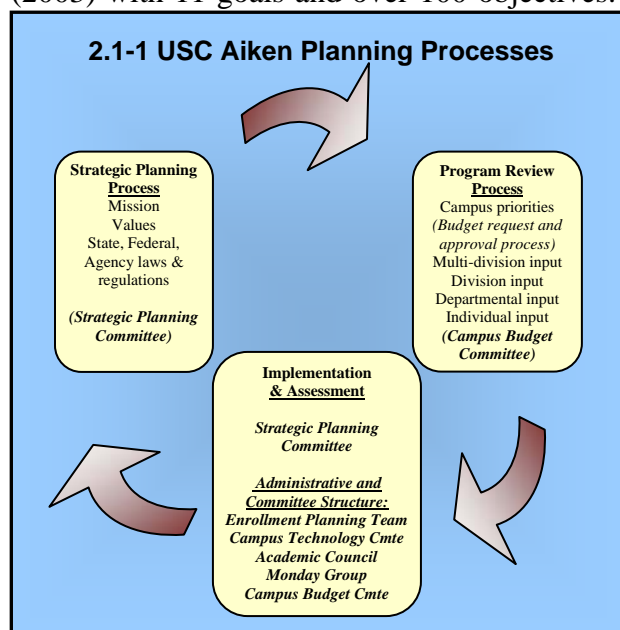
***1.9 How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates?***

Senior leaders involve themselves deeply in the local and regional community and reinforce the integration of the University into the fabric of the state economy and culture. These leaders serve on advisory boards and boards of directors, coordinate and encourage American Democracy Project programs and service learning initiatives, and participate in civic and volunteer related activities. These include the Chambers of Commerce in Aiken, North Augusta, and Midland Valley; Aiken Rotary Clubs; the Kiwanis Club; Project VISION and other United Way initiatives; Habitat for Humanity; Children's Theatre and Concert Series; holiday food drives for non-profit agencies, and various community health initiatives, such as the CSRA Heart Walk, and the Relay for Life.

## Category 2 – Strategic Planning

**2.1. What is your Strategic Planning process, including key participants, and how does it address: a. Your organizations' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; b. Financial, regulatory, and other potential risks; c. Shifts in technology, student and community demographics, markets, and competition; d. Long-term organizational sustainability and organizational continuity in emergencies; e. Your ability to execute the strategic plan**

The strategic planning process at USC Aiken emphasizes collaboration and shared responsibility for outcomes to promote tactical flexibility while remaining focused on strategic priorities. In the Fall of 2001, USC Aiken began a strategic planning process involving faculty, staff, students and representatives from the Aiken Community to identify institutional values, mission, and vision statements, and examine the external environment in an effort to determine strategic goals and objectives for achieving those goals. This process resulted in a *Final Strategic Planning Report* (2003) with 11 goals and over 100 objectives. This plan has since been refined to focus on the



overarching theme of graduating engaged learners and principled citizens. It features five overarching goals in the following areas: (1) Excellent Academic & Co-curricular Programs, (2) Dynamic Student Centered Environment, (3) Superior Faculty and Staff, (4) Strong Community Relations, and (5) Enhanced Campus Environment. Two to five specific objectives have been identified for each of these areas (2.3-1). Priorities for accomplishing goals and objectives are set by senior executives, who report on progress throughout the year to the Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee reviews strategic indicators and progress on the strategic plan and has refashioned goals and objectives to adapt to the changing environment.

**2.2. How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?**

The Strategic Planning committee monitors the progress of the plan and receives updates from the senior administration and appropriate groups, such as the Enrollment Planning Team, Budget Planning Committee, Campus Technology Committee, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness to analyze trends which lead to adjustments in the plan. The outcomes and effectiveness of this process are evaluated by the senior administration on an ongoing basis.

USC Aiken's strategic planning process ensures the responsiveness to student, staff, faculty, and community needs through (1) its establishment of and/or restructuring of key committees or groups, (2) its continuous attention to monitoring the progress made toward accomplishing objectives, (3) and requiring that the annual program review (see III-4) and budgeting process for the campus supports the strategic objectives of the University.

*What are your key strategic objectives? (Address in Strategic Planning Chart)*

**2.3-1 Strategic Planning Chart**

<b>Program Number and Title</b>	<b>Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Related FY 05-06 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)</b>	<b>Key Cross References for Performance Measures*</b>
<b>482-85. Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 Modify/Enhance the curriculum to promote the development of engaged learners and principled citizens</p> <p>1.2 Increase support for faculty to develop effective teaching strategies and techniques</p> <p>1.4 Review degree offerings to ensure continuing viability of existing programs and to capitalize on new and emerging degree opportunities</p> <p>3.1 Recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff</p> <p>3.2 Recruit and retain increasing numbers of qualified African American faculty and professional staff and other minorities as appropriate to our student population</p>	<p>7.1-5, 7.1-6, 7.1-9, 7.1-10, 7.1-12, 7.1-14, 7.1-16, 7.1-17, 7.2-5</p> <p>7.1-11, 7.1-14, 7.1-15, 7.3-20</p> <p>7.1-1, 7.1-3, 7.1-4, 7.1-7, 1.1-8</p> <p>7.4.2, 7.4-3, 7.4-4, 7.4-5, 7.4-6, 7.4-7, 7.4-8, 7.4-9, 7.4-10, 7.4-11, 7.4-12</p> <p>7.4-6</p>
<b>487-89. Auxiliary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	<p>5.1 Strengthen the campus community by increasing the opportunity for students to live on campus</p> <p>2.2 Expand recruitment of students beyond the CSRA</p>	<p>II.2-1, 7.1-9, 7.1-10, 7.1-11, 7.1-12, 7.1-13, 7.2-1, 7.2-2, 7.5-13</p> <p>II.2-1, 7.3-1, 7.5-17</p>
<b>486. Institutional Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Strong Community Relations</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	<p>5.4 Improve student services by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative systems and business processes</p> <p>4.2 Increase engagement of USC Aiken alumni to build lifelong relationships with USC Aiken.</p> <p>2.1 Continue to use the EPT to address enrollment management issues</p>	<p>7.2-6, 7.3-22, 7.3-24, 7.3-25, 7.3-26</p> <p>7.2-3, 7.2-4, 7.2-5, 7.2-6, 7.2-7</p> <p>7.3-1, 7.3-2, 7.3-3, 7.3-4, 7.5-16, 7.5-17</p>
<b>490. Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Strong Community Relations</li> </ul>		7.3-23



<b>Program Number and Title</b>	<b>Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Related FY 05-06 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)</b>	<b>Key Cross References for Performance Measures*</b>
<b>491. Public Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Strong Community Relations</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	4.1 Expand and enhance USC Aiken partnerships in the local area to strengthen relationships and broaden the educational experience  4.4 Build community pride and commitment to USC Aiken in the local area	7.6-3  7.2-7
<b>492. Academic Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	1.3 Expand initiatives that promote student retention and academic success  2.3 Increase the effectiveness of academic advising	7.1-5, 7.1-6, 7.1-22 7.5-1, 7.5-3, 7.5-5  7.1-22, 7.5-13
<b>493. Student Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Superior Faculty and Staff</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	2.4 Plan for the expansion of housing and the programs and services due to this expansion  2.5 Develop ways to enhance community at USC Aiken  2.6 Utilize technology to increase safety and security.	II.2-1, 7.1-12, 7.1-13 7.2-1, 7.2-2 7.3-24, 7.3-25  7.2-6, 7.5-5, 7.5-8, 7.5-9  7.5-10, 7.5-12
<b>494. Operations &amp; Maintenance Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	5.2. Stimulate informal learning, study, and social engagement outside the classroom  5.3 Enhance the academic environment by improving the quality and versatility of space for formal learning	7.1-10, 7.1-12  7.1-10 7.3-25, 7.3-26
<b>495. Scholarships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Academic and Co-curricular Programs</li> <li>• Dynamic Student Centered Environment</li> <li>• Enhanced Campus Environment</li> </ul>	4.3 Substantially expand financial support of USCA through annual contributions and major gifts	7.2-3, 7.2-4, 7.2-5, 7.2-6, 7.2-7 7.3-14

**2.4. What are your key action plans/initiatives? (Address in Strategic Planning Chart)**  
 (See Strategic Planning Chart)

**2.5. How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives? Include how you allocate resources to ensure the accomplishment of your action plans.**

Key to USC Aiken’s planning and implementation process is overlapping membership of the Strategic Planning Committee, the Campus Budget Committee, and the Monday Group (senior administration) to ensure fiscal alignment with strategic goals and objectives. Fiscal planning and resource allocation take place in the context of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

**2.6. *How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, action plans and related performance measures?***

Each of the five goals of the strategic plan is assigned to a senior administrator who champions its implementation and coordinates reporting and communication of progress and accomplishments. These reports are made on an ongoing basis to the Strategic Planning Committee, and all proceedings and reports of this committee are posted on the strategic planning web site. Recently conducted focus groups on institutional values, image, and other areas indicated that the campus population at-large wants more effective communication about strategic planning and its outcomes.

**2.7. *How do you measure progress on your action plans?***

Progress on action plans between 2003 and 2006 has generally been measured by the extent to which strategies were implemented or accomplished; these accomplishments are reported by senior administrators to the Strategic Planning Committee, and summary reports are posted on the strategic planning web site (2.9, 7.6-1). The most recent round of strategic planning in conjunction with preparation of the state accountability report has begun the linkage of plans to specific indicators, which will be monitored by the senior administration and the Strategic Planning Committee.

**2.8. *How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Organizational Profile?***

Strategic objectives were crafted specifically to align with major challenges facing the institution in the areas of recruiting a qualified student body, improving educational outcomes, and managing faculty retirements over the next 3-7 years (see II-9).

**2.9. *If the organization's strategic plan is available to the public through its internet homepage, please provide an address for that plan on the website.***

The strategic planning web site URL is <http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/>.

### **Category 3 – Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus**

**1. *How do you identify the student and market segments your educational programs will address? How do you determine which student and market segments to pursue for current and future educational programs, offerings, and services?***

Student and market segments are determined on the basis of the university's mission; analysis of need at the local, state and national levels; and ongoing internal and external research. As part of USC Aiken's mission, the university attracts students of varying ages and diverse cultural backgrounds who have demonstrated the potential to succeed in a challenging academic environment. In addition to serving the Savannah River area, USC Aiken actively seeks student enrollment from all parts of South Carolina as well as from other states and countries. Following the SC Commission on Higher Education's guidelines for approval of new academic programs,

all proposals for new programs include an analysis of student demand and interest, anticipated employment opportunities for graduates, or demand for services. Ongoing survey and focus group research with current students and research about the external environment also contribute to these practices.

### 3.1-1 Recent Program Closures and Additions

Recent Program Closures / Additions	Basis for Decision
Transfer of 2-year Nursing program to Aiken Tech	Mission, resources
Closure of Physical Education program	Lack of statewide demand
Suspension of Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies	Lack of student enrollment
Addition of Bachelor's in Music Education	Statewide demand for graduates

#### ***2. How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing student and stakeholder needs and expectations (including educational programs, offerings, and service features)? How do you determine the relative importance of the expectations to these groups' decisions related to enrollment?***

USC Aiken employs deliberate and structured contact with students and stakeholders to closely monitor their needs and expectations. Student feedback about satisfaction, expectations, and outcomes is collected before enrollment, throughout their careers as students, and several years following graduation. Collected data are processed and analyzed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and results are returned to specific programs. While such data can be included in program review at the unit level, the process for systematic comparison and prioritization of internal and external and examination of institutional alignment with stakeholder needs as they relate to enrollment may require further optimization.

#### ***3. How do you use information from current, former, and future students and stakeholders to keep services and programs relevant, and provide for continuous improvement?***

Feedback from students and stakeholders through survey and focus group research is integrated into the program review process at the unit level (see III-4), and these academic and non-academic units regularly conduct evaluations of their effectiveness. The results of assessments that have campus-wide implications are disseminated to key groups on campus, such as the senior administration, Academic Council, the Strategic Planning Committee, Campus Budget Committee, Campus Technology Committee, and the Enrollment Planning Committee. In addition, the results of these assessments are posted on the Institutional Effectiveness website (<http://ie.usca.edu>).

#### ***4. How do you determine student and stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction and use this information to improve?***

As a part of the university's comprehensive system of institutional effectiveness, USC Aiken monitors student and stakeholder satisfaction, outcomes, needs, and demands at regular intervals through paper- and web-based surveys, focus group research, course evaluations, employer surveys, and direct assessment of learning. The results of evaluative processes are used by departments to optimize program offerings or eliminate programs that are ineffective. Department heads and senior administrators continuously adjust their programs and processes based on feedback from students and other stakeholders.

**3.4-1 Stakeholder Satisfaction Research Methods**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Post-admission follow-up	Admitted students	Following admission
Orientation surveys	Incoming students, parents	Before classes begin
CIRP freshman survey	Incoming freshmen	During orientation
Course evaluations	Current students	End of every course
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Current freshmen and seniors	Every other spring
Your First College Year survey	Current freshmen	Every other spring
Residence life survey	Residential students	Every spring
Focus groups	Current students	Ongoing
Area-based surveys (Health Ctr., Athletes, Library, etc.)	Current students	Ongoing
Academic advisement survey	Current students	Every spring
Stop-out phone surveys	Departing non-graduates	Following start of term
Senior exit surveys	Graduating seniors	Before graduation
Employer surveys	Employers of certain majors	Annual
Alumni surveys	Graduates	Every other spring, 2-4 years after graduation

**5. How do you build positive relationships to attract and retain students and stakeholders, to enhance student performance, and to meet and exceed their expectations for learning? Indicate any key distinctions between different student and stakeholder groups.**

A commitment to providing students with individualized attention is one of USC Aiken’s hallmarks and is prominently featured in the university values statement (see p.1) as well as in marketing and communication strategies, such as the branding slogan that USC Aiken is “focused on you.” Students remark regularly that one of USC Aiken’s primary strengths is its vibrant and welcoming community and high degree of student-faculty contact, as well as being a small campus connected to the resources of a large university system.

USC Aiken begins building positive relationships with students even before they enroll with personalized service through the Admissions and Financial Aid Offices. Following enrollment, small groups for key programs like New Student Orientation, individual meetings with faculty and staff members for academic advising, and small class sizes continue to foster positive and lasting relationships among students, faculty, and staff. Students receive ongoing one-to-one academic advising throughout their careers as students, and the campus offers multiple opportunities for individualized programs of study and undergraduate research.

**Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Review of Organizational Performance**

**4.1 How do you select which operations, processes and systems to measure to determine student learning, for tracking organizational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans?**

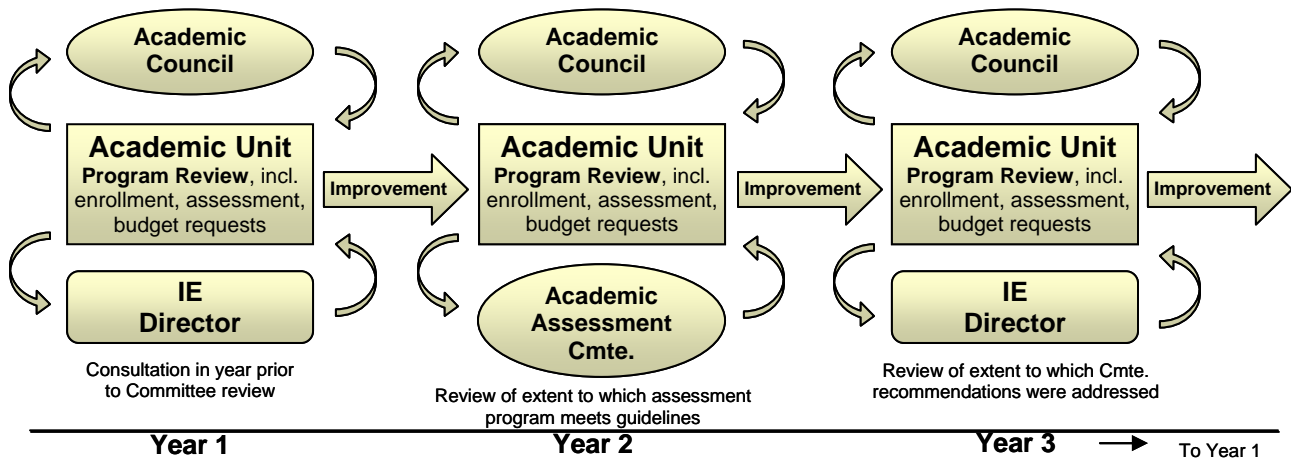
As a requirement for accreditation through SACS, all academic and administrative units must identify outcomes, regularly measure and analyze results, and use findings for improvement. Faculty members determine educational outcomes appropriate for students and assess the extent to which students have achieved these outcomes. Administrative units identify appropriate outcomes and assess their efficacy in consultation with the senior administrator responsible for

their division. The results from assessment are included in annual program reviews and used to improve student learning and the quality of services. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness consults with all units about the structure and implementation of their assessment systems. An examination of the effectiveness of the administrative program review process was begun in 2005-06 and will be completed in 2006-07.

**4.2 How do you use data/information analysis to provide effective support for decision making throughout your organization?**

Each academic unit implements ongoing assessment of degree programs and general education courses in their areas. Faculty members have the responsibility to articulate goals and objectives for student learning, periodically measure learning outcomes in major disciplines and general education, analyze findings, and use results for improvement. All of these activities are documented annually in program reviews. The Academic Assessment Committee oversees this process and coordinates the general education assessment process, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides leadership, consultation, and overall coordination of this process to ensure that appropriate outcomes meet institutional goals.

**4.2-2 Three-Year Academic Assessment Review Cycle**



Administrative units also participate in ongoing assessment activities and report how findings were used for improvements in annual program review reports. These reports are examined by the senior administrator responsible for each division, who extracts budget requests from the reports for consideration by the Campus Budget Committee.

**4.3 What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with educational services needs and directions?**

Key measures are posted on PacerDash, the web-based institutional dashboard maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and monitored on an ongoing basis. Indicators are benchmarked against a national peer group of 84 comparable and aspirational public institutions with similar missions, programs, geographic settings, and enrollments, including the public teaching institutions in South Carolina, except for The Citadel and USC Beaufort. In some cases

data are benchmarked solely against public institutions in South Carolina. This set of indicators will be reviewed following the submission of the State Agency Accountability Report.

**4.3-1 Key Indicators on Institutional Dashboard**

<b>Academics</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Finance</b>
Degrees Awarded by Level Retention & Graduation Rates Faculty Composition Student-Faculty Ratio NSSE Benchmarks Exam Pass Rates	Headcount Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment Student Body Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Race &amp; Gender</li> <li>o International Students</li> <li>o Place of Residence</li> </ul>	Student Charges Revenue Per FTE by Area Expenditures Per FTE by Area Faculty Salaries Giving Rates, Foundation Assets Staff Per FTE

**4.4 How do you select and use key comparative data and information from within and outside the academic community to support operational and strategic decision making?**

Indicators for the institutional dashboard were developed from an examination of traditional metrics used by leading higher education institutions and then refined by the senior administration to tailor them to USC Aiken’s needs, mission, and strategic plan. To monitor the efficacy of programs and their alignment with strategic and tactical goals, the senior administration receives additional reports from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as well as program reviews from academic and administrative departments. The administration then analyzes trends and other notable findings and identifies appropriate action plans including responsible departments or committees. Analysis also occurs at the department level resulting in recommendations which are forwarded through the appropriate level of the organization for approval.

**4.5 How do you ensure integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security and availability of data for decision making?**

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides data to senior and mid-level administrators on a regular schedule and conducts in-depth studies upon request. The IE Office also audits data to ensure its integrity, accuracy and security. However, an aging information management system on a 25 year-old mainframe has limited the availability of information to make strategic and tactical decisions based on data analysis. A new ERP package through the OneCarolina Project in the USC System will address many of these issues, but full implementation is at least two to three years away.

**4.6 How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?**

Once findings are analyzed, appropriate feedback is provided to the responsible departments through the administrative head. Departments are responsible for development of improvement plans and subsequent reporting of progress. Strategic indicators are designed to provide five years of trend data or more when available.

**4.7 *How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge?  
How do you identify and share best practices?***

Organizational knowledge is communicated through policies, procedures, rules, and other documents which are updated as necessary. Supervisors serve as coaches transmitting knowledge to staff through informal and formal training opportunities, including cross-training. Senior administrators, department heads and others in the organization maintain relationships with peers in other higher education institutions, statewide, regionally and nationally, to identify best practices and establish benchmarks. Senior leadership, mid-level managers, and various faculty members serve on campus visit teams to other institutions for regional and national accreditation visits, research projects, and consortium agreements. Best practices are also identified and shared when administrators attend and make presentations at professional conferences.

**Category 5 – Faculty and Staff Focus**

**5.1 *How do you organize and manage work to enable faculty and staff to develop and utilize their full potential, aligned with the organization’s objectives, strategies, and action plans? How do you evaluate and improve your organization and HR processes?***

Senior administrators work directly with staff and faculty to communicate the objectives, strategies, and action plans to implement the university’s strategic plan and are encouraged to include this focus in the evaluation instruments used for faculty and staff. The Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) process used with classified staff encourages two-way communication between supervisors and employees. Department Chairs and School Heads conduct an annual review of each faculty member that is integrated into the promotion and tenure and post-tenure review processes. Human resources processes are evaluated annually through the administrative program review system in which a number of indicators, such as employee turnover rate (7.4-12), is monitored, and overall alignment of human resources with strategic needs is assessed in regular senior administration retreats.

**5.2 *How do you organize and manage work to promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, innovation, and your organizational culture?***

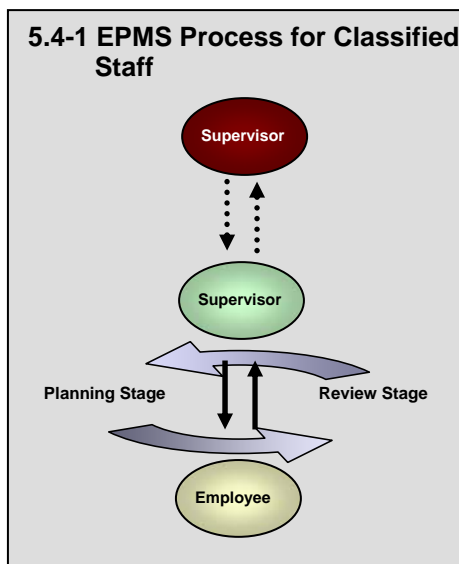
Grounded in USC Aiken’s value of collegiality, its organizational culture features openness through a flat organizational structure, allowing for increased communications without several layers of management. In a series of focus groups conducted in 2005-06, faculty and staff commonly described USC Aiken as a “family” and praised the richness of personal bonds formed among students, faculty, and staff. The Faculty Assembly and Classified Employee Assembly meet regularly for information sharing across departments and to make collective decisions (II.5-1). In addition, multiple cross-functional committees operate on the principle of inclusiveness and diversity, ensuring all campus constituencies have a voice in decision making processes.

### 5.3 *How do you achieve effective communication and knowledge/skill/best practice sharing across departments, jobs and locations?*

Academic Council, which includes all Deans, Department Chairs, the Head of the Library, and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, meets weekly to share knowledge and best practices across departments. Each Vice Chancellor also has regular staff meetings, in which staff from various offices participate and discuss issues. In addition to cross-functional committees (5.2), division and unit meetings are also held regularly to promote communication and cooperation, and the institution provides support for annual retreats at the division/department level. The Chancellor holds three campus-wide meetings each year to provide an overview of campus priorities. Consultants are retained to evaluate best practices on campus, including recent reviews of marketing efforts and academic advisement. Nevertheless, organizational communication was cited as an area for improvement in recent focus group research.

### 5.4 *How does your faculty and staff performance management system, including feedback to faculty and staff, support high performance work and contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

The EPMS process establishes clear performance expectations and measures for classified employees. In the planning stage, supervisors and employees agree upon meaningful objectives that benefit the employee and align with unit and university goals. In the review stage, supervisors evaluate the extent to which employees' performance has not met, met, exceeded, or substantially exceeded performance objectives. This process is monitored by the supervisor at the next level of management, and supervisors participate in periodic workshops offered by the University to develop critical skills to implement this process effectively. Faculty members participate in a systematic annual evaluation of their teaching, research, and service to ensure that they remain highly productive throughout their careers. The post tenure review process strengthens faculty assessment by providing the opportunity for peer feedback on faculty performance at regular six-year intervals. Because of the centrality of teaching to USC Aiken's mission, a process for peer review of teaching was implemented in 2005-06.



### 5.5 *How do you accomplish effective succession planning? How do you manage effective career progression for all faculty and staff through the organization?*

Succession planning for staff includes annual discussions among the senior administrators regarding staff with the potential to progress to more responsible leadership roles within the institution. Through the EPMS process, supervisors discuss the need for additional education and training as a means of career progression. Additionally, appointments to leadership roles on *ad*



*hoc* committees are named by senior staff. Each year employees are selected to participate in leadership programs such as Leadership Aiken County, Leadership South Carolina and the South Carolina Executive Institute. The tenure process for faculty is structured to provide multiple reviews to faculty members at every stage in their careers. In instances where shortcomings may be identified, faculty members have ample opportunity to make adjustments prior to official tenure decisions and subsequent promotions.

***5.6 How do your faculty and staff education, training and development address your key organizational needs? How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this education and training? How do you encourage on the job use of new knowledge and skills?***

The University recognizes the need for training and development of its employees and the value employees add to organizational growth and productivity. Training needs are continually identified through supervisory recognition, employee requests, and informal needs assessments. All employees may participate in workshops sponsored by the Human Resources Office on topics such as diversity and supervision (7.5-14). The Office of Academic Affairs arranges multiple workshops each year about teaching and learning, technology, and grant writing. Interested employees may receive tuition assistance for one free course a semester that may count toward a degree, and the Aiken Partnership of the USC Educational Foundation provides funding for faculty and staff for professional conferences and other training opportunities. Such activities are evaluated by participants upon completion, and the results are used to amend the instruction. Further, annual performance reviews are opportunities for supervisors and employees to reflect upon performance changes as a result of training and development opportunities.

***5.7 How do you motivate faculty and staff to develop and utilize their full potential?***

In general, the development of faculty and staff to reach their full potential is embodied in the University's value for a High Quality Learning Environment which prompts all members of the USC Aiken community to strive for excellence. Focus group research has suggested that internal motivations for quality and personalized service to students and community are hallmarks of faculty and staff at USC Aiken. Also, several campus-wide social events throughout the year for faculty and staff are designed to enhance morale, motivation and communication. Additional incentives for classified staff to improve are embedded in EPMS reviews, the opportunity for pay for performance increases to base salary, and four awards for Classified Employee of the Year as well as a Classified Employee of the Month Program. For faculty, incentives consist of funds for salary increases in the promotion and tenure and post-tenure review processes. Awards to recognize outstanding efforts by faculty include the Teaching Excellence, Scholarly Activity, Community Service, University Service, and Academic Advisement Awards

***5.8 How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment? (Include your workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)***

USC Aiken is committed to providing a safe work environment, free of recognizable hazards, and it is the policy of the University to comply with all applicable state and federal standards, codes and regulations, including the occupational safety and health standards established by the

federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). USC Aiken's Environmental Health and Safety Division in the Department of Operations provides health and safety services to the University community through technical support, information and training programs, consulting services, and periodic auditing of health and safety practices and regulatory compliance. Additionally, the USC Aiken Emergency Action Plan (EAP) has been developed to provide a carefully prepared guideline of appropriate response actions for a wide array of emergency scenarios on campus. The purpose of this plan is to save lives, reduce the incidence of personal injury, and prevent property damage. The plan may be found on the University website at <http://www.usca.edu/safety/>.

The University also actively encourages employee participation in wellness activities. The State Health Plan "Prevention Partners" promotes healthier lifestyles by providing health screenings on campus. The USC Aiken Wellness Center offers a discounted rate for faculty and staff to take advantage of exercise facilities and programs, and the Employee Assistance Program assists employees with a broad scope of professional and confidential counseling services aimed at prevention, early detection, and skillful early intervention with problems that could adversely impact employees' job performance.

***5.9 What assessment methods and measures do you use to obtain information on faculty and staff well-being, satisfaction and motivation?***

Focus groups with faculty and staff are conducted on an ongoing basis. In 2005-06, these groups discussed the university's image, mission, and values. The prior year, focus groups examined the role of athletics on campus. In 2004-05, USC Aiken participated for the first time in the triennial national survey of faculty conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). The results were widely shared and posted on the IE Office web site. This survey will be administered again in 2007. A satisfaction survey was last administered to classified employees in 2002, and a new survey will be implemented in 2006-07.

***5.10 How do you use faculty and staff satisfaction assessment findings to identify and determine priorities for improvement?***

Data about faculty and staff satisfaction is presented to the senior administration, the Strategic Planning Committee, and other groups on campus, such as the Faculty Welfare Committee. These groups may work with the administration or the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to conduct additional research and then make recommendations based on their findings. In the past three years, items such as teaching load, advising load, and salary inequities were identified through assessment as areas for improvement, and steps have been taken in each of these areas to address specific concerns.

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## Category 6 – Process Management

### ***6.1 How do you determine, and what are (list) your key learning-centered processes that deliver your educational programs, offerings and student services?***

Key learning-centered processes at USC Aiken are determined by the University's mission, student input, and stakeholder feedback. These learning-centered processes are broadly divided into (1) curricular experiences in (a) general education and (b) the major discipline and (2) co-curricular experiences or learning outside of the classroom. Experiences in the curriculum are delivered through small classes and individual attention, and learning-centered processes are designed to challenge students to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, to learn independently, and to acquire depth of knowledge in chosen fields.

### ***6.2 How do you incorporate input from students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, suppliers and partners for determining your key learning-centered process requirements?***

Input from students is incorporated at the course-level through Student Evaluations of Teaching in every course as well as at the program-level and institution-level through surveys, focus groups, and dialogue within the shared governance structure. Faculty design the curriculum and monitor its effectiveness. Minor adjustments are made on an ongoing basis by individual faculty and Departments; major changes, such as the addition or deletion of a course or a change to degree requirements, involves endorsement by the Faculty Courses and Curriculum Committee and approval by the Faculty Assembly. Other stakeholders, such as employers and graduate schools, participate in providing advice and counsel about content in the major discipline through advisory boards or other relationships with academic departments. Non-faculty staff members primarily determine and monitor the content and effectiveness of co-curricular experiences to ensure that they are aligned with the University's mission, although some faculty members are invited to consult in these determinations.

### ***6.3 How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors such as cycle time, into process design and delivery?***

Minimum class sizes, program enrollments, and degree production provide cost controls for learning-centered processes and are used to reduce inefficiencies. Institutional policies for student probation and suspension establish a minimum for satisfactory academic progress, i.e. cycle time, as students pursue their degrees. A recent review of these minimums has indicated that a higher threshold will improve academic success, and the process of making these policies more stringent is underway.

The University regularly evaluates and implements new technology to improve cycle time in various other processes. For instance, faculty members are required to submit grades online, students register for their courses online, library materials continue to migrate to internet-based resources, and the School of Nursing has transformed its RN completion program to be delivered online. Such transformations improve customer satisfaction by delivering services when students want them and also improve the speed of delivery.

**6.4 What are your key performance measures or indicators used for the control and improvement of your learning-centered processes? How do you ensure these processes are used? How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?**

Multiple performance measures have been identified at various points in the curriculum to determine the extent to which learning has occurred. Policies and procedures set minimum standards for admission and the number of students needed for a class to run. Other measures are reported in annual program reviews and examined by Academic Council each fall.

**6.4-1 Key Performance Measures for Learning-Centered Processes in the Curriculum**

Performance Measures	Point in Process	Process Control	Figures
SAT scores, HS grades	Input	Admission requirements	7.1-23, 7.1-24
Program enrollment	In process	Min. program, course enrollments	--
Student satisfaction	In process	Annual program review	7.2-1 through 7.2-6
Student learning	In process	Annual program review	7.1-16 through 7.1-22
Student engagement (NSSE)	In process	Campus-wide review	7.1-9 through 7.1-14
Retention rates	In process	Enrollment Planning Team review	7.1-6
Course evaluations	In process	Annual faculty evaluations	--
Degrees awarded	End process	Annual program review	7.1.1 through 7.1-4
Graduation rates	End process	Enrollment Planning Team review	7.1-5
Placement rates	End process	Strategic Planning Committee review	7.1-7, 7.1-8
Alumni self-assessment	End process	Academic Council Review	7.1-15

**6.5 How do you systematically evaluate and improve your learning-centered processes?**

Annual academic program reviews incorporate a battery of common indicators that include faculty loads, credit and contact hours by discipline, enrollment counts, average class sizes, and number of graduates. Additionally, each program provides discipline-specific outcomes for student learning and evidence about the extent to which students have mastered these outcomes as well as how the results from assessment have been used to make program-level changes (7.6-4). Student evaluations of teaching are also monitored, as are data from senior exit surveys and campus-wide surveys by discipline.

**6.6 What are your key support processes, and how do you evaluate, improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?**

Units delivering support processes determine metrics for success in consultation with senior administrators, stakeholders, and members of the shared governance structure. These measures are reported in annual program review reports as well as in periodic updates to campus-wide committees, such as the Enrollment Planning Team and the Strategic Planning Committee. A recent change in principles for accreditation issued by SACS requires that all support processes be linked specifically to outcomes, especially outcomes for student learning, and an evaluation of USC Aiken's program review process and its requirements on the administrative side is underway, with recommendations for improvement expected in Fall 2006.

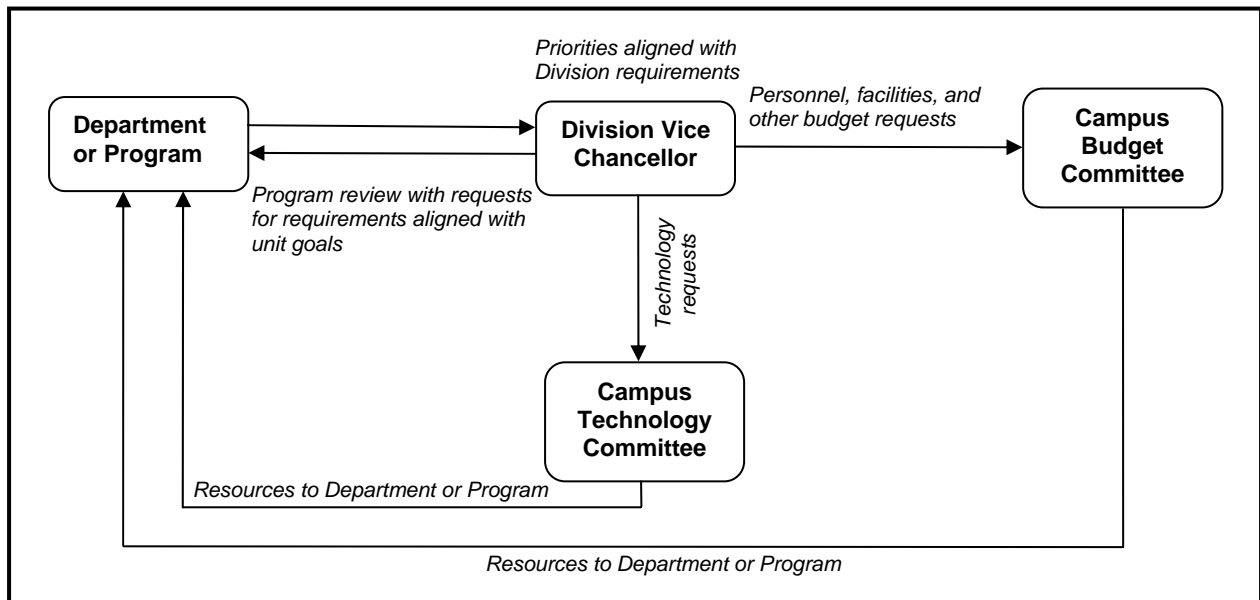
**6.6-1 Support Processes and Performance Measures**

Support Process	Performance Measures	Figures
Admissions	Number and quality of new admits	7.1-23, 24
Advancement	Giving rates and amount of funds raised	7.2-7, 7.4-1
Advisement	Satisfaction with advising	7.5-11
Business and Finance	Tuition & fees; revenue & expenditures per FTE	7.3-3, 5, 14, 15
Financial Aid	Students on financial aid; award types & amounts	7.3-7 through 13
First Year Experience	Enrollment in FY seminar, learning outcomes	7.1-22
Housing	Satisfaction with residence life	7.5-13
Information Technology	Computer resources per student	7.5-10, 7.5-12
Student Services	Student satisfaction, time use	7.2-1, 2, 4

**6.7 How does your organization ensure that adequate budgetary and financial resources are available to support your operations? How do you determine the resources needed to meet current budgetary and financial obligations, as well as new education related initiatives?**

The annual program review process for academic and administrative units requires departments, programs, and offices to submit budget requests in the annual program review report, including requirements for additional personnel, new or upgraded facilities, and technology. These requests are reviewed and prioritized by the senior administrator leading each division. The Campus Budget Committee, which includes all members of the senior administration and selected faculty and staff leaders, evaluates items on all prioritized lists for budget requests and makes recommendations for the allocation of financial resources within constraints of the anticipated budget for the upcoming year. Requests for new technology are reviewed separately by the Campus Technology Committee.

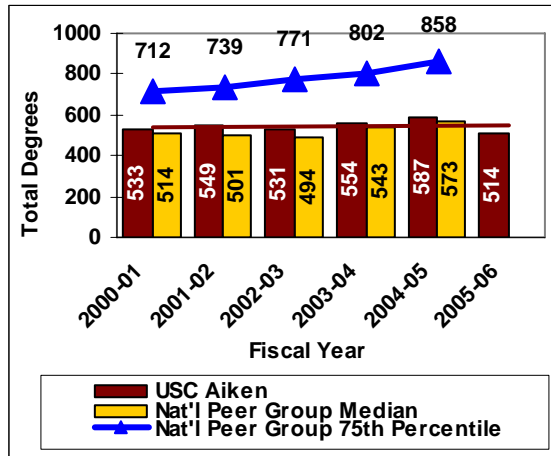
**6.7-1 Budgeting and Resource Allocation Process**



### Category 7 – Organizational Performance Results

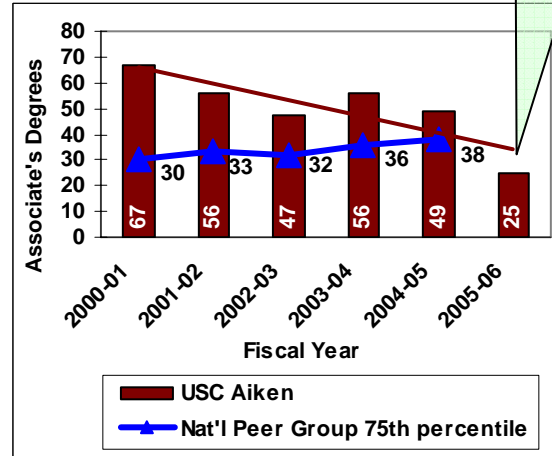
7.1 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on student learning, and improvements in student learning? How do your results compare to those of your competitors and comparable organizations?

7.1-1 Total Degrees Awarded



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

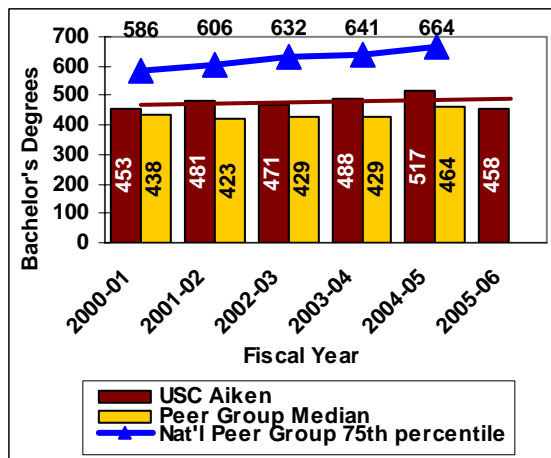
7.1-2 Associate's Degrees Awarded



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

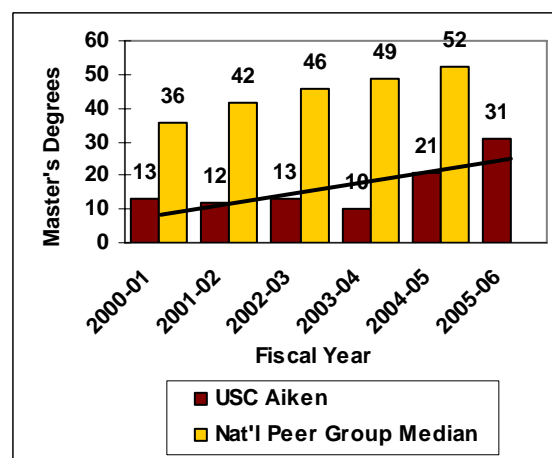
Degree attainment is in many ways the most significant indicator of student learning and the outcome sought by most entering students. Levels of degree attainment have ranged between a low of 469 in 1999-00 to 587 in 2004-05, and these numbers are directly linked to enrollment (7.1-1). The decline in associate's degrees represents a planned phase-out of the lone two-year degree still offered by USC Aiken, an ADN in nursing, a program that is now offered by Aiken Technical College (7.1-2). A slight decline in bachelor's degrees in 2005-06 is the result in part of an unusually high number of degrees awarded in the previous year (7.1-3). The number of master's degrees awarded has been increasing since graduate degrees began to be awarded in 1994 (7.1-4).

7.1-3 Bachelor's Degrees Awarded



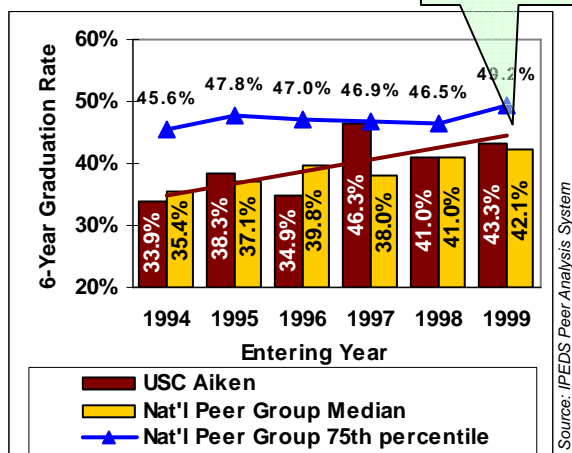
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.1-4 Master's Degrees Awarded

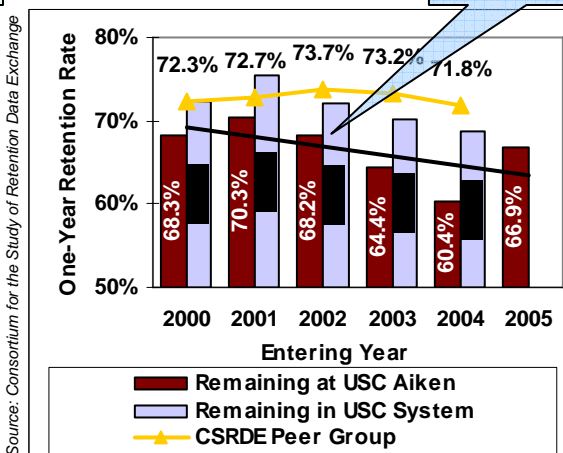


Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

**7.1-5 Six-Year Graduation Rate** 9.4 percentage point increase in 8 years

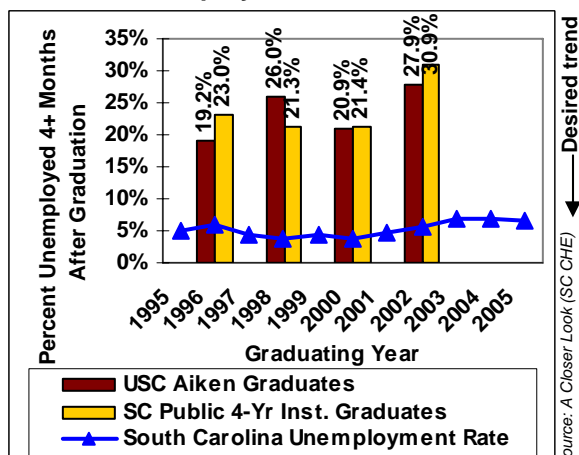


**7.1-6 One-Year Retention Rate** Change in Requirements for LIFE Scholarship

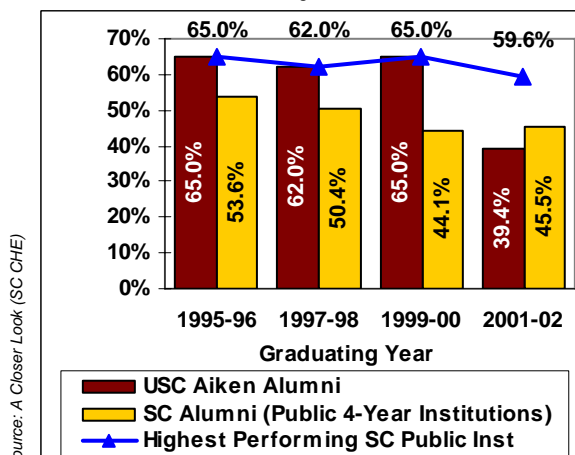


In addition to degree attainment, the proportion of students who earn degrees in a reasonable amount of time is a key indicator of institutional effectiveness (7.1-5). Since 1991, the six-year graduation rate among baccalaureate degree seeking students entering as full-time freshmen has increased from 32.2% to 43.3% for those entering in 1999, an increase of 9.4 percentage points, or a 28% change in the graduation rate. Some of this improvement is attributable to higher admission standards implemented throughout the 1990s. By contrast and of significant concern is the decline in the one-year retention rate from a high of 70.3% for those freshmen entering in 2001 to 60.4% for those entering in 2004, a decline of about 10 percentage points (7.1-6). The increased share of the cost of higher education that has been shifted to students has contributed to this decline. To address the issue, the university has also directed resources toward increased academic support. Additionally, the proportion of students transferring from USC Aiken to another USC institution (primarily the Columbia campus) has increased from 2-3% in the early 1990s to 8.3% for those entering in 2004.

**7.1-7 Graduates Taking 4 Months or More to Find Employment**



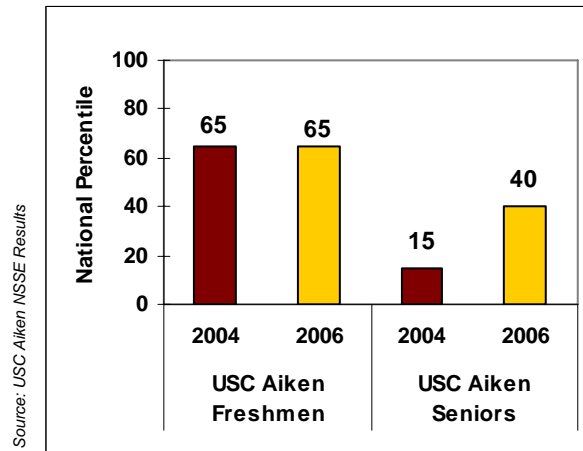
**7.1-8 Percent of Graduates with Job Highly Related to Major After 2-3 Years**



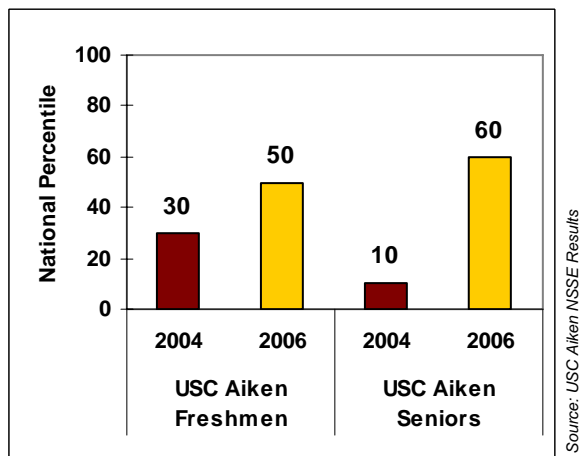
Employment rates are notoriously difficult to measure as more and more students begin working before graduating from college. The rate at which USC Aiken students do not find work within four months in general is at or below rates for other institutions. Until the past two years, graduates from USC Aiken found employment highly related to their majors at higher levels than graduates from all other public four-year universities in the state (7.1-8).

USC Aiken participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every two years and links results to strategic planning objectives. Some increases in student performance from 2004 to 2006 (7.1-9 through 7.1-13) are a result of an increased response rate from 32% to 59%. Results compare USC Aiken to all 500+ public and private institutions participating in the survey each year. Findings indicate that in most areas, USC Aiken is at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. In offering a supportive campus environment, USC Aiken ranks in the top 15-20% of institutions nationwide.

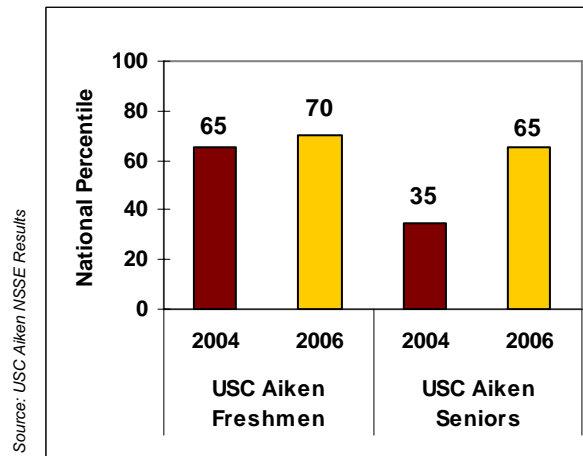
**7.1-9 Level of Academic Challenge**



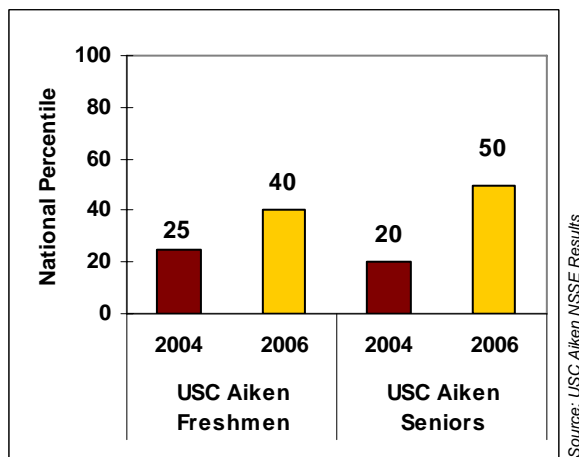
**7.1-10 Active and Collaborative Learning**



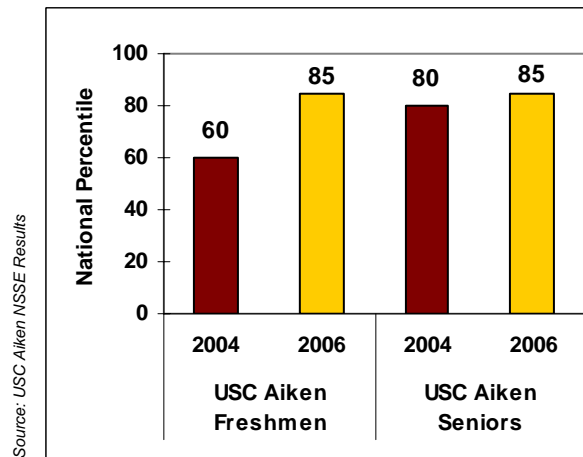
**7.1-11 Student-Faculty Interaction**



**7.1-12 Enriching Educational Experiences**



**7.1-13 Supportive Campus Environment**





Additional results from the NSSE indicate that the experience students receive at USC Aiken contributes to their educational and personal development to a greater extent than the experiences delivered by other institutions nationwide. Increases from 2004 were observed across the board in 2006. Most prominently USC Aiken students reported that their university experience had helped them to develop writing skills, technology skills, quantitative skills, and work-related knowledge at higher levels than did their peers at other universities (7.1-14).

**7.1-14 Educational and Personal Growth (NSSE Results)**

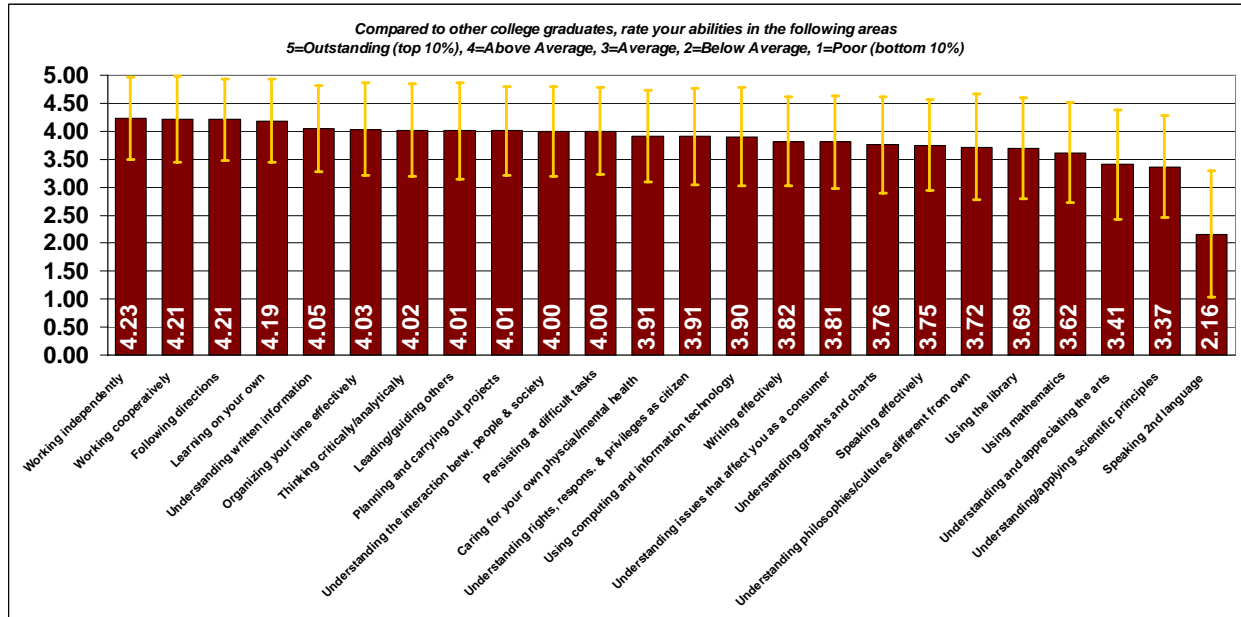
			2004				2006			
			USC Aiken	NSSE National Group, N=557			USC Aiken	NSSE National Group, N=557		
Class	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Sig <sup>b</sup>	Effect Size <sup>c</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Sig <sup>b</sup>	Effect Size <sup>c</sup>		
To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much										
a.	Acquiring a broad general education	FY 3.22	3.16			3.30	3.12	*	.23	
		SR 3.39	3.32			3.41	3.24	*	.21	
b.	Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	FY 2.75	2.67			2.91	2.70	*	.22	
		SR 3.14	3.02			3.33	3.02	***	.34	
c.	Writing clearly and effectively	FY 3.18	2.97	**	.25	3.36	2.95	***	.48	
		SR 3.29	3.12	*	.21	3.42	3.07	***	.41	
d.	Speaking clearly and effectively	FY 2.95	2.73	**	.24	2.99	2.75	**	.25	
		SR 3.14	3.01			3.28	2.96	***	.35	
e.	Thinking critically and analytically	FY 3.31	3.17	*	.17	3.38	3.16	**	.28	
		SR 3.47	3.37			3.60	3.33	***	.36	
f.	Analyzing quantitative problems	FY 2.90	2.63	***	.29	3.11	2.85	**	.28	
		SR 3.08	2.87	*	.24	3.33	3.02	***	.35	
g.	Using computing and information technology	FY 3.12	2.85	***	.29	3.27	2.99	**	.31	
		SR 3.32	3.12	*	.23	3.53	3.21	***	.39	
h.	Working effectively with others	FY 3.00	2.85	*	.17	3.16	2.92	**	.27	
		SR 3.34	3.14	*	.24	3.40	3.14	**	.31	
i.	Voting in local, state, or national elections	FY 2.12	1.88	**	.25	2.08	1.92			
		SR 2.07	1.84	*	.24	2.29	2.10	*	.19	
j.	Learning effectively on your own	FY 3.01	2.91			3.11	2.85	**	.30	
		SR 3.15	3.09			3.12	3.00			
k.	Understanding yourself	FY 2.76	2.74			2.96	2.71	**	.26	
		SR 2.81	2.88			2.94	2.78			
l.	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	FY 2.63	2.53			2.87	2.57	***	.30	
		SR 2.83	2.58	**	.26	2.79	2.57	*	.21	
m.	Solving complex real-world problems	FY 2.64	2.50			2.86	2.58	***	.31	
		SR 2.97	2.69	**	.30	2.94	2.72	*	.23	
n.	Developing a personal code of values and ethics	FY 2.55	2.61			2.77	2.59	*	.19	
		SR 2.80	2.72			2.77	2.65			
o.	Contributing to the welfare of your community	FY 2.27	2.32			2.59	2.34	**	.26	
		SR 2.46	2.42			2.62	2.42	*	.20	
p.	Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	FY 2.03	2.10			2.27	2.05	*	.20	
		SR 1.99	1.99			1.98	1.92			

a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.  
 b \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\* p<.001 (2-tailed).  
 c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

A majority of graduates surveyed in Spring 2005 identified their abilities in a range of learning outcomes and competencies as above average or outstanding compared to other college graduates (7.1-15). Most highly rated abilities were in broad areas critical for success after college, such as working independently, working as a member of a team, and learning on their own. General education outcomes rated most highly were: understanding written information, thinking critically, and understanding the interaction between people and society. General education outcomes least positively rated were: understanding and appreciating the arts, understanding and applying scientific principles, and speaking a foreign language.

7.1-15 Alumni Self-Assessment of Abilities (3-4 Years Following Graduation)

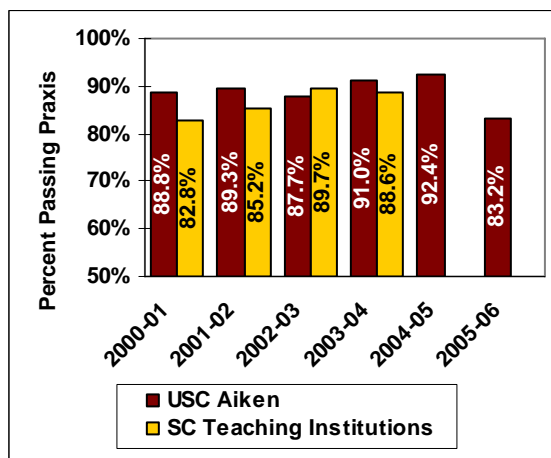


Error bars represent +/- one standard deviation

Source: USC Aiken Survey of Alumni '00-'02 (conducted in 2005)

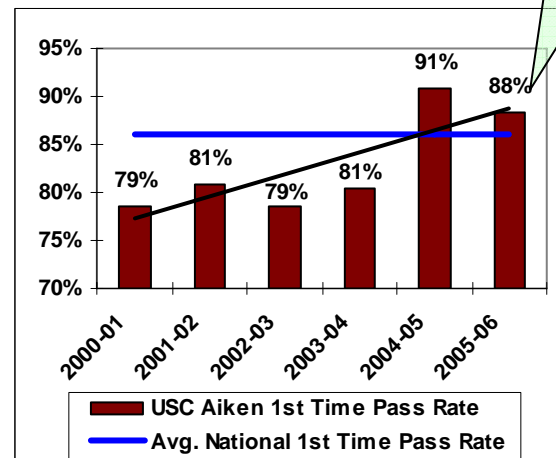
Research on students at USC Aiken who are aspiring to be teachers indicates the Praxis exams represent major barriers to enter the program, perhaps indicating preparation issues among students aspiring to become teachers (7.1-16). Examination pass rates are monitored closely by state and federal agencies as well as NCATE, the national accrediting body. Pass rates of first time test takers on licensure examinations in general are at or exceed national or state averages. In the case of nursing, pass rates have increased from 79% in 2000-01 to 88% in 2004-05 (7.1-17). This increase reflects the addition of a full-fledged four-year BSN program and phasing out of the two-year ADN program.

7.1-16 Percent Passing Teaching Licensure Exams on First Attempt<sup>1</sup>



Source: A Closer Look (SC CHE, 2003, 2006)

7.1-17 Percent Passing Nursing Licensure Exams on First Attempt<sup>1</sup>



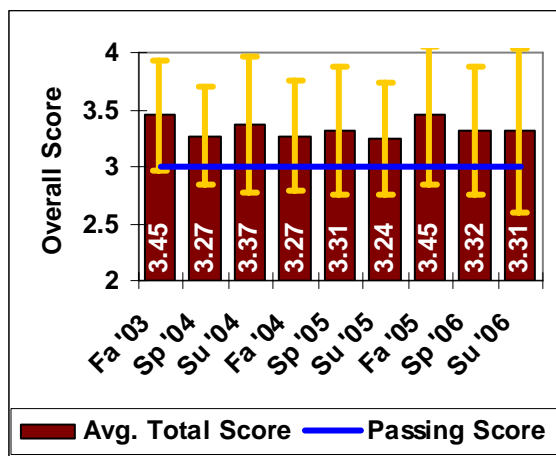
Source: National Council of State Boards of Nursing; USC Aiken data reported to CHE

Eleven percentage point increase over five years

<sup>1</sup> Data for USC Aiken and South Carolina institutions is for April 1 - March 31 (period determined by SC CHE).

USC Aiken is a national leader in assessment techniques for the direct measurement of learning outcomes. Student competencies across most outcomes are either directly measured by faculty or other qualified professionals, or these measures are under development. Several recent peer reviewed presentations have outlined the effectiveness of these methods as well as their improved utility compared to self-reported measures. These measures are most advanced in writing proficiency (7.1-18 through 7.1-21). An effort to address documentation and research skills over the past two years has improved the overall score on Use of Sources at statistically significant levels, although there is still room for improvement in this area.

**7.1-18 Junior Writing Portfolio Results By Semester**



Source: USC Aiken General Education Outcomes Results Generator (GEORGE)

**7.1-19 Writing Portfolio Results By Major**

Major	N	Score
English	32	4.08
Chemistry	13	3.61
History	26	3.57
Fine Arts	49	3.50
Biology	91	3.45
Nursing	157	3.43
All Other Majors	16	3.39
Education	228	3.37
Political Science	24	3.36
Psychology	80	3.30
Math & Comp Sci	38	3.28
Business	368	3.26
Exercise Science	71	3.22
Communications	73	3.21
Sociology	77	3.06

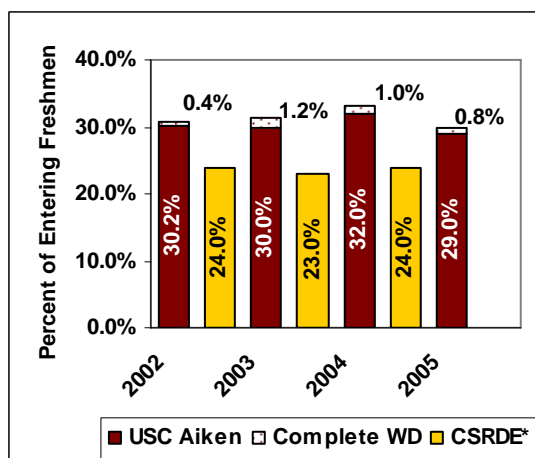
**7.1-20 Writing Portfolio Results By Outcome**

Learning Outcome (N=1,343)	Mean
Clarity of Purpose	3.47
Quality of thought	3.46
Organization of Content	3.43
Language and Style	3.30
Use of sources	3.22
Grammar and Mechanics	3.18
<b>Average Total Score</b>	<b>3.34</b>

**7.1-21 Writing Portfolio Results by Race & Gender**

Learning Outcome (N=1,343)	Mean
African American Men	3.03
African American Women	3.04
White Men	3.37
White Women	3.45

**7.1-22 First Semester GPA of Entering First Year Students**

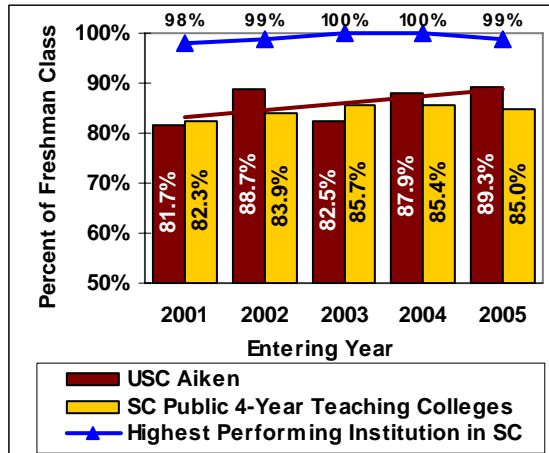


Source: Consortium for the Study of Retention Data Exchange

Internal research has indicated that a major barrier to student persistence and degree attainment is academic success in the first semester. Just under a third (29%) of freshmen entering in 2005 earned a first semester GPA below 2.0 (a “C” average), and typically only about one out of three of these students returns for a second year. By contrast, only about a quarter of entering freshmen at similar institutions nationwide earn a first semester GPA below 2.0. Strategic goals to improve academic success use this indicator as a proxy to monitor the proportion of students who earn a minimally adequate first semester GPA.

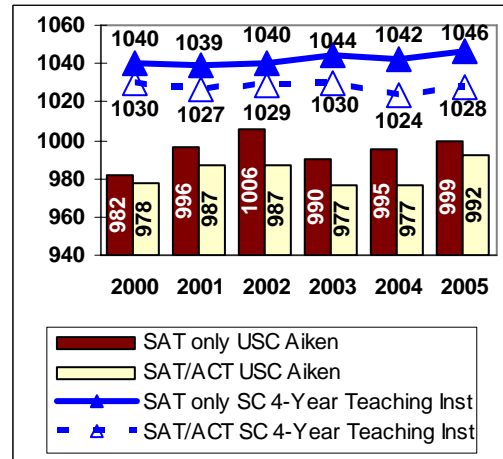
Academic inputs are still used as quality measures by various state and federal agencies, and have been shown to be linked closely to success in college. USC Aiken both regulates minimum levels of ability through admission requirements and monitors the quality of the applicant pool. Admission requirements are keyed from the university mission and set to optimize the number of students who can be successful on the campus while providing access to an increasingly qualified and diverse range of students.

**7.1-23 Entering Freshmen with SAT > 1100, GPA>3.0, or HS Rank Over 30%**



Source: SC CHE, Performance Funding Indicator 6A/B

**7.1-24 Average SAT Scores of Entering Freshmen in South Carolina 4-Year Teaching Universities**



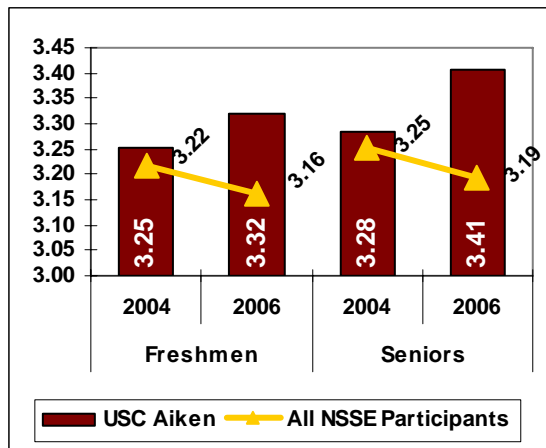
Source: SC CHE, CHEMIS

**7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on student and stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction? How do your results compare with competitors and comparable organizations?**

While educational outcomes and the quality of student learning are ultimately more important than satisfaction, USC Aiken recognizes the need to monitor stakeholder satisfaction and adjust services accordingly. The university employs a variety of methods to gauge student satisfaction. Benchmarked surveys include NSSE, CIRP, and the South Carolina biannual survey of alumni. A range of local surveys to measure satisfaction with advising, housing, academic programs, and other areas are used to gather detailed information about student satisfaction.

**7.2-1 Quality of College Experience (NSSE)**

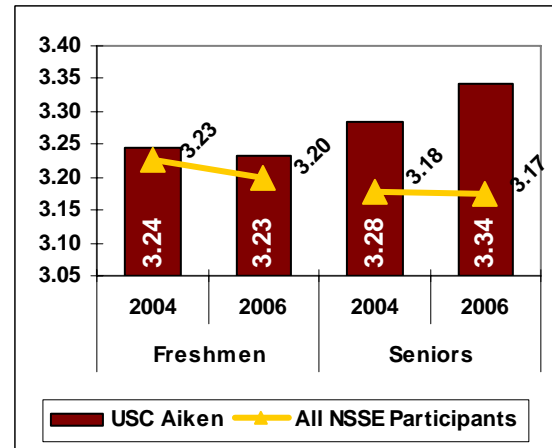
*How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent*



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

**7.2-2 Satisfaction with College Choice (NSSE)**

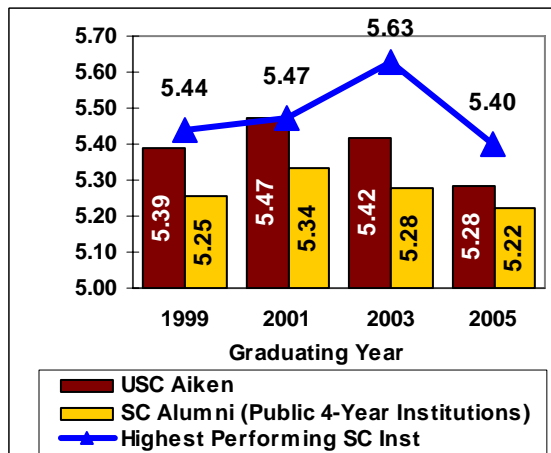
*If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? 1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes*



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

**7.2-3 Alumni Satisfaction with Overall Academic Program**

*6=Very Satisfied, 5=Satisfied, 4=Somewhat Satisfied, 3=Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 1 = Very Dissatisfied*



Source: SC CHE, A Closer Look

Students rate the quality of their college experience at USC Aiken more highly than do students at other institutions, and more USC Aiken students report they would attend the institution again than do their peers at other universities (7.1-2). Both of these indicators show USC Aiken outperforming other institutions around the country at statistically significant levels. The biannual survey of public colleges in South Carolina shows that USC Aiken alumni report similar levels of satisfaction with their overall academic program (7.2-3). These levels of satisfaction have declined slightly since 2001. Some reasons for this drop in satisfaction may include regional economic weakness, downsizing at the Savannah River National Lab, and the rising cost of tuition reducing perceived return on investment.

**7.2-4. Alumni Satisfaction with Overall Academic Program by Institution (2005)**

6=Very Satisfied, 5=Satisfied, 4=Somewhat Satisfied, 3=Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 1 = Very Dissatisfied

	Response Rate	% Very Satisfied + % Satisfied	Mean
1. Winthrop Univ.	16.3%	93.8%	5.40
2. College of Charleston	15.3%	93.4%	5.39
3. USC Aiken	25.4%	90.4%	5.28
4. Francis Marion Univ.	14.9%	88.1%	5.26
5. The Citadel	17.1%	89.6%	5.24
6. Lander University	23.7%	85.5%	5.22
7. USC Beaufort	13.4%	88.9%	5.22
8. USC Upstate	17.8%	89.3%	5.18
9. USC Columbia	23.5%	90.4%	5.17
10. Coastal Carolina Univ	18.7%	91.3%	5.17
11. Clemson University	12.4%	81.8%	5.15
12. South Carolina State	23.9%	68.5%	4.97

Source: SC CHE, A Closer Look, 2006

**7.2-6 USC Aiken Alumni Satisfaction by Functional Area**

6=Very Satisfied, 5=Satisfied, 4=Somewhat Satisfied, 3=Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 1 = Very Dissatisfied

	% Very Satisfied + % Satisfied	Mean
Your OVERALL academic program	90.4%	5.28
Your MAJOR program of study	86.0%	5.21
Instruction in your major	85.2%	5.21
Availability of faculty	82.1%	5.12
Level of academic challenge	82.9%	5.11
Interactions with administrators	79.4%	5.03
Campus facilities	79.6%	5.01
INSTRUCTION in your general education program	76.4%	5.00
University communications	77.9%	4.94
Your GENERAL EDUCATION program of study	76.5%	4.92
Advising by faculty	75.9%	4.92
Integration of computers/ technology into course work	75.5%	4.91
Class scheduling	74.1%	4.89
Student life	71.7%	4.85
Opportunities for independent study/research	68.9%	4.80
Extracurricular activities	63.6%	4.70
Contact with other alumni	40.5%	4.20

(Includes bachelor's degree recipients for 2000-02)  
Source: USC Aiken Biannual Alumni Survey (2005)

Based on the biannual alumni survey conducted by all public institutions in South Carolina, USC Aiken has ranked among the top three four-year institutions in the state in terms of satisfaction with the overall academic program since 1999 (7.2-5).

**7.2-5 Institutional Rank in Alumni Satisfaction with Overall Academic Program**

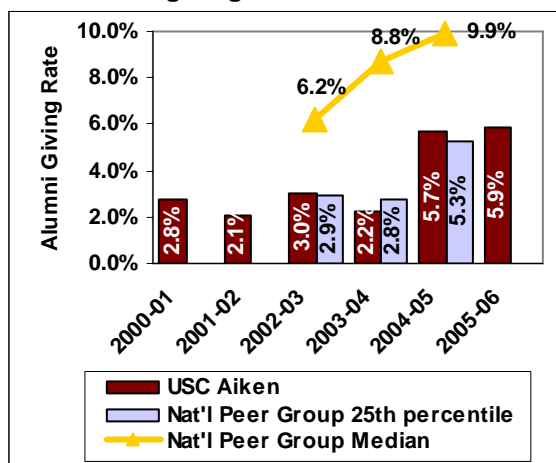
	1999	2001	2003	2005
#1	SC State	Francis M	Clemson	Winthrop
#2	USC Aiken	Winthrop	USC Aiken	Coll. of Ch.
#3	Winthrop	USC Aiken	Coll. of Ch.	USC Aiken

Source: SC CHE, A Closer Look

In general, satisfaction among recent graduates with non-academic and co-curricular areas has been reported as ten to twenty percentage points lower than the level of satisfaction with the overall academic program (7.2-6).

In 2005, nine out of ten (90.4%) of bachelor's degree recipients were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall academic program, about eight out of ten were very satisfied or satisfied with campus facilities (79.6%) and interactions with campus administrators (79.4%). Additionally, about three out of four were very satisfied or satisfied with university communications (77.9%), advising by faculty (75.9%), integration of computers or technology into course work (75.5%), and class scheduling (74.1%). Seven out of ten respondents reported they were very satisfied or satisfied with student life (71.7%) and opportunities for independent study or research (68.9%). Just over six out of ten (63.6%) indicated they were very satisfied or satisfied with extracurricular activities (7.2-5). The lowest ranked item in terms of satisfaction was contact with other alumni, with just four out of ten (40.5%) reporting they were very satisfied or satisfied. Strategic objectives for a Dynamic Student Centered Environment and an Enhanced Campus Environment are designed to improve these lower rated items.

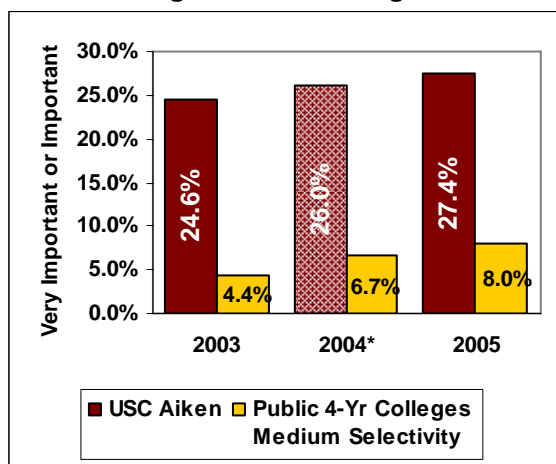
7.2-7 Alumni giving rate



Source: Council for Aid to Education Benchmarking Tool

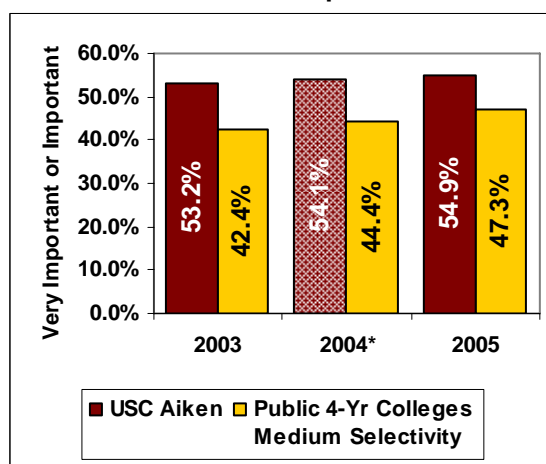
The rates at which alumni contribute to institutions following graduation is an additional indicator of overall satisfaction. Public baccalaureate colleges like USC Aiken traditionally struggle in this area for a number of reasons, but USC Aiken has made improvement in this area a strategic priority. These rates have doubled from below 3% to almost 6% in recent years, although a similar increase observed among peer group institutions may reflect a heightened effort to raise money from private sources in the face of declining public funding (7.2-7).

7.2-8 Reasons Students Attend Institution: Rankings in National Magazines



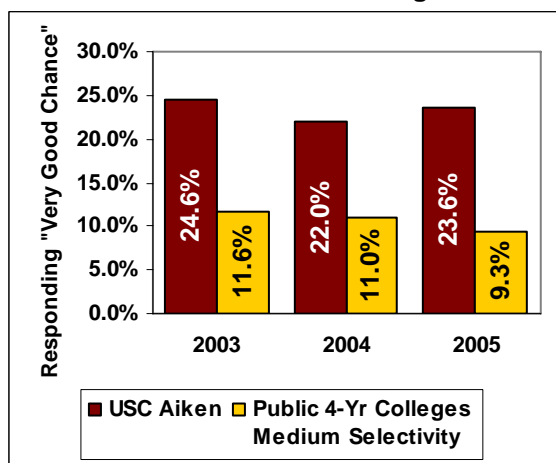
\* USC Aiken data interpolated for 2004  
Source: CIRP Freshman Survey

7.2-9 Reasons Students Attend Institution: Good Academic Reputation



\* USC Aiken data interpolated for 2004  
Source: CIRP Freshman Survey

7.2-10 Entering Freshmen Who Plan to Transfer Before Graduating



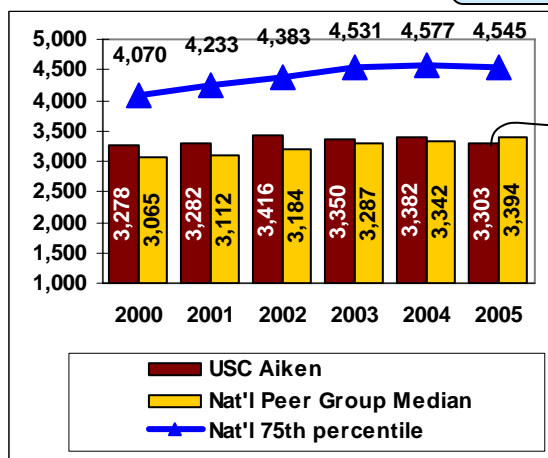
Source: CIRP Freshman Survey

Various additional measures for stakeholder perceptions of the institution are collected on entry using the nationally benchmarked Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshmen Survey. Entering freshmen at USC Aiken are three times more likely to cite the institution's ranking in national magazines as a very important or important reason they chose USC Aiken (7.2-8). Nevertheless, almost a quarter (23.6%) of entering freshmen indicated they plan to transfer to another institution before graduating, more than twice the average proportion (9.3%) of students from similar institutions who plan to transfer (7.2-10).

**7.3 What are your performance levels for your key measures on budgetary and financial performance, including measures of cost containment, as appropriate?**

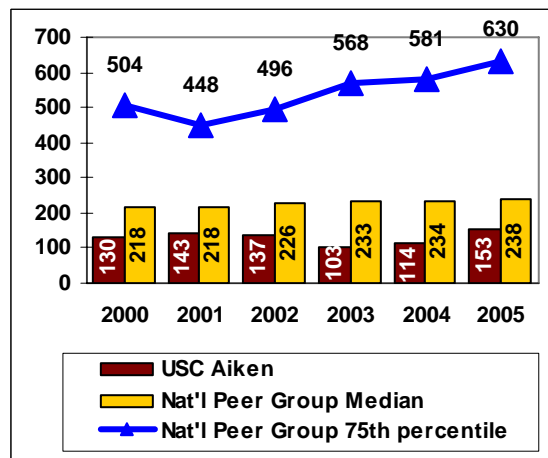
Revenue has become increasingly dependent on student enrollment and the tuition dollars these enrollments generate. Fall headcount and FTE enrollments are used as a baseline to track the number of customers and as a proxy for expected revenue. Specific revenue calculations use annualized FTE for more precise measurements. Enrollments over the past five years have been reasonably stable, ranging between about 3,300 and 3,400 students, with about 100 to 150 graduate students. An unexpected 3.3% decline in enrollment between 2004 and 2005 placed financial stress on various university systems. Multiple factors account for this decline, including lower enrollments during summer school, discontinuation of the two-year nursing program, a decline in part-time student enrollment, the loss of about 60 students to USC Beaufort when it became a four-year institution, and a declining retention rate. An underlying pressure driving some of this change is the rising cost of tuition, coupled with a change in LIFE scholarship criteria. Continued fiscal health requires USC Aiken to maintain or increase student enrollment.

**7.3-1 Fall Headcount (All Students)** 3.3% decline from peak in 2002



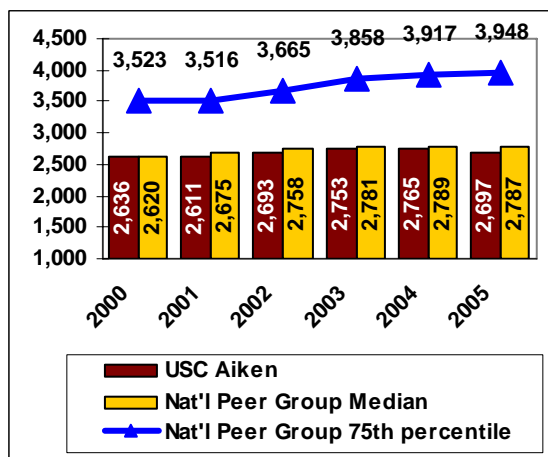
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

**7.3-2 Fall Headcount (Graduate Students)**



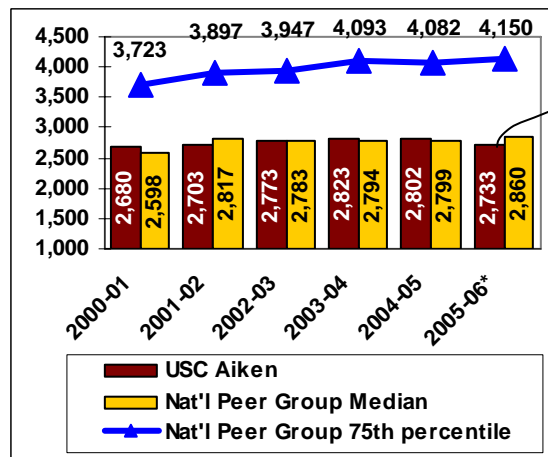
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

**7.3-3 Fall Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment**



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

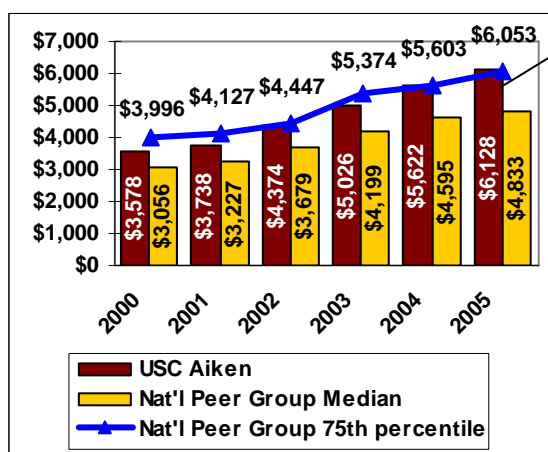
**7.3-4 Annualized Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment** 3.2% decline from peak in 2003-04



\* Figures for 2005-06 are estimates  
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System



7.3-5 Tuition and Fees



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-6 2005-06 Tuition and Fees of Competitors

Institution Name	Type	Tuition & Fees
Augusta State University (GA)	4-Year	\$2,920
Piedmont Technical College	2-Year	\$3,172
Aiken Technical College	2-Year	\$3,276
Midlands Technical College	2-Year	\$3,776
USC Beaufort	4-Year	\$5,284
Francis Marion University	4-Year	\$5,984
<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>4-Year</b>	<b>\$6,128</b>
SC State University	4-Year	\$6,480
The Citadel	4-Year	\$6,522
College of Charleston	4-Year	\$6,668
USC Upstate	4-Year	\$6,762
Lander University	4-Year	\$6,818
Coastal Carolina University	4-Year	\$6,860
USC Columbia	4-Year	\$7,314
Winthrop University	4-Year	\$8,756
Clemson University	4-Year	\$8,816

Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-7 Percentage of First-Time Full-Time Students Receiving Financial Aid

		1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
<b>Total Aid</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>94</b>
	25th %ile	69	69	71	72	73	75
	Median	81	80	83	84	85	85
	75th %ile	89	91	90	91	91	93
<b>Federal Grants</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>
	25th %ile	24	24	26	29	24	26
	Median	37	36	36	38	37	37
	75th %ile	46	44	47	46	46	45
<b>State/Local Grants</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>80</b>
	25th %ile	21	25	27	25	26	27
	Median	40	38	36	36	38	38
	75th %ile	50	50	54	53	49	51
<b>Institution Grants</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>
	25th %ile	18	20	17	21	20	22
	Median	31	36	34	34	31	39
	75th %ile	49	52	51	54	54	50
<b>Student Loans</b>	<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>
	25th %ile	40	36	38	38	41	43
	Median	51	49	47	49	53	54
	75th %ile	65	62	64	64	66	66

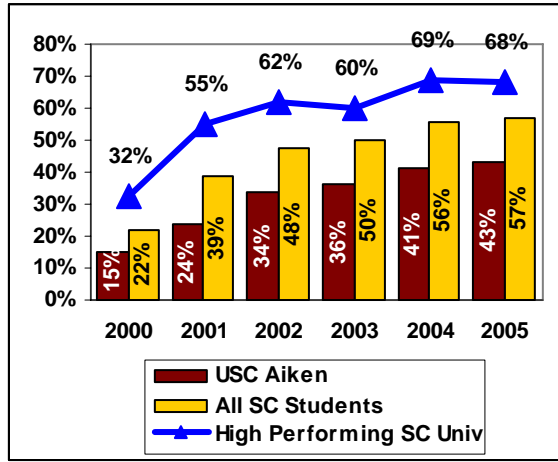
\* Chart percentiles refer to national peer group  
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

Change in Requirements for LIFE Scholarship

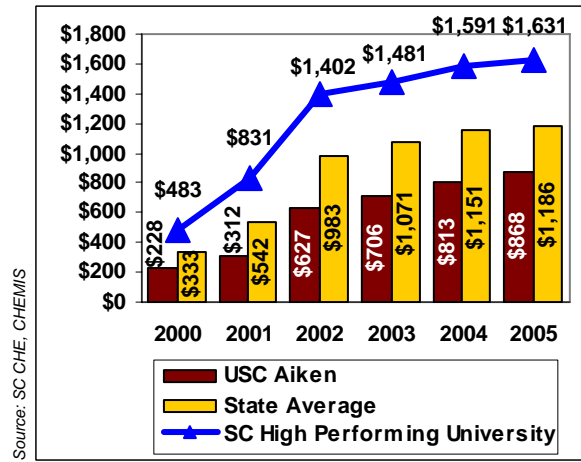
Tuition and fees have risen as revenues from the state have fallen. Charges for tuition and fees for full-time undergraduates in 2000-01 were \$3,578; this amount had risen to \$6,053 in 2005-06, an increase of 71%. Nevertheless, USC Aiken continues to be among the four-year institutions in South Carolina with the lowest student charges, behind only USC Beaufort (which only recently became a four-year institution) and Francis Marion University. Student departures from USC Aiken indicate that more than half of the students who leave and stay enrolled in higher education migrate to nearby technical colleges, which charge lower tuition. Since student charges at USC Aiken are now more than double those at Augusta State University, where residents of Aiken and Edgefield counties receive tuition reciprocity, additional loss of students to that institution is expected.

As cost and financial need have increased, the proportion of students receiving financial aid has increased dramatically. One significant factor is the expansion of LIFE Scholarship eligibility criteria that more than doubled the proportion of first-time full-time students who received merit-based scholarships from the state from 2001-02 to 2002-03 (7.3-7). Over the past five years, the proportion of all students receiving merit-based aid has risen from 15% in Fall 2000 to 43% in Fall 2005 (7.3-8). When this calculation is restricted to full-time students only, the increase is from 22% of full-time undergraduates receiving merit-based state scholarships in Fall 2000 to 60% in Fall 2005. However, the proliferation of merit-based awards has redistributed the cost burden to returning students, part-time students, and others who do not qualify for these awards. Compared to students at the public institution in the state with the highest per student yield rate in disbursements, USC Aiken students receive only 53% as much in state support (7.3-9).

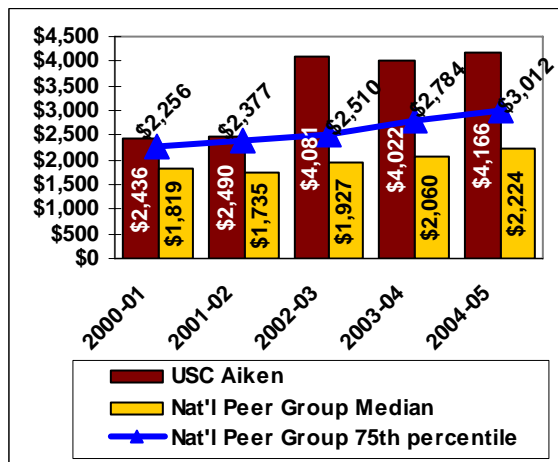
**7.3-8 Percentage of SC Undergraduate Students Receiving State Merit-Based Aid**



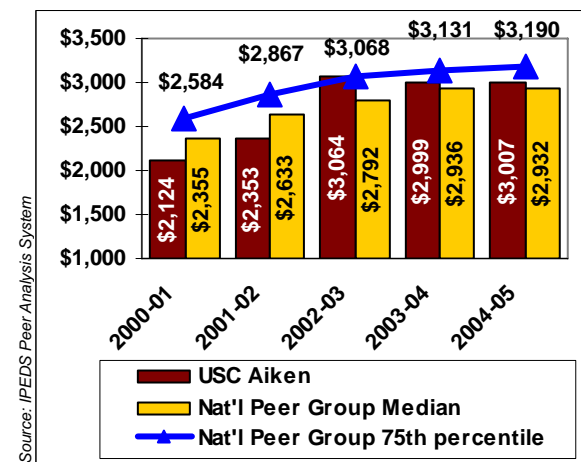
**7.3-9 State Scholarship Disbursements Per SC Undergraduate Student**



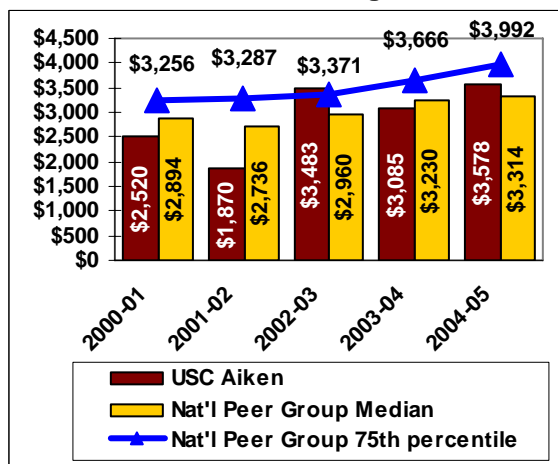
**7.3-10 Average State/Local Grant Amount to Full-Time First-Time Students Receiving State/Local Grants**



**7.3-11 Average Federal Grant Amount to Full-Time First-Time Students Receiving Federal Grants**



**7.3-12 Average Loan Amount to Full-Time First-Time Students Receiving Loans**



**7.3-13 2005-06 Average Institutional Grant to First-Time Students Receiving Grants**

Institution Name	Percent Receiving	Average Award
The Citadel	38%	\$12,665
SC State University	22%	\$4,972
Clemson University	27%	\$4,828
College of Charleston	24%	\$4,633
Coastal Carolina University	20%	\$4,555
Winthrop University	12%	\$3,973
Lander University	26%	\$3,383
USC Columbia	44%	\$2,888
Augusta State University	5%	\$2,773
USC Upstate	14%	\$2,746
<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>\$2,352</b>
Francis Marion University	15%	\$2,040
USC Beaufort	2%	\$2,025
Piedmont Technical College	2%	\$1,000
Aiken Technical College	8%	\$787
Midlands Technical College	0%	--

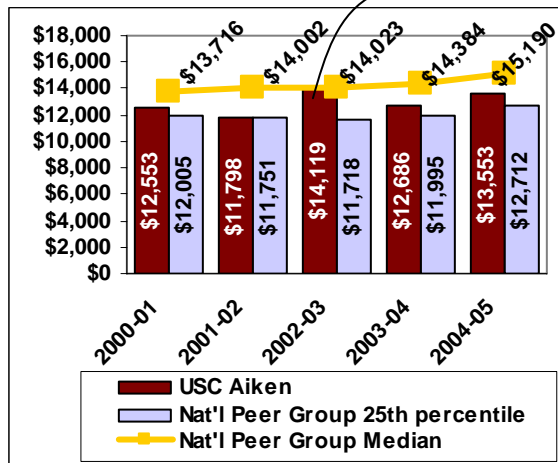
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

Total revenue from all sources per FTE student has increased from \$12,553 in 2000-01 to \$13,553 in 2004-05 for an average annual increase of less than 2% (7.3-14). By contrast, increases in the higher education price index (HEPI) averaged 3.8% during the same period, and when adjusting total revenue by HEPI, USC Aiken's total revenue per FTE has declined from \$12,553 in 2000-01 to \$11,527 in 2004-05 in constant 2000 dollars (7.3-15), an 8.2% decline in real revenue over four years. While this decline is observed across the national peer group, USC Aiken has remained significantly below the median in the 30-35<sup>th</sup> percentile in four out of the last five years in terms of total revenue per FTE student. This decline in revenue is indicative of the state-level decisions to shift costs for higher education from the government to individual students. While tuition increases have appeared high (7.3-5), they have not been enough to replace revenue lost from state appropriations.

One-time technology grants from Lottery Funds raised revenues in 2002-03

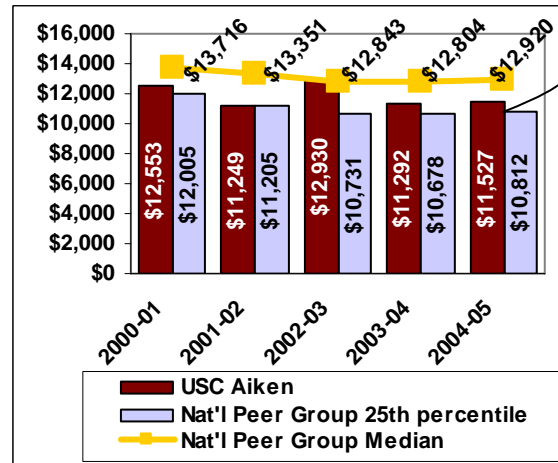
8.2% drop in real total revenue over four years

7.3.14 Total Revenue Per FTE Student (Unadjusted Dollars)



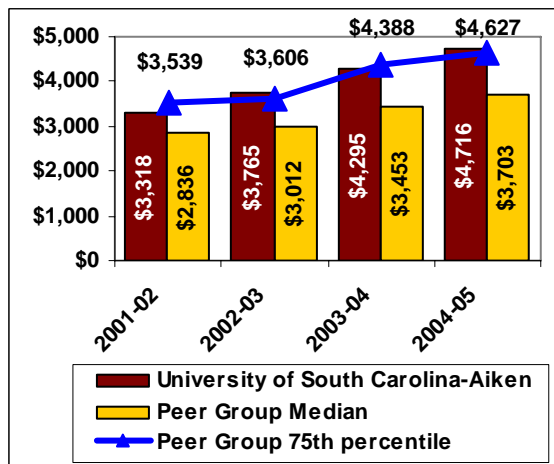
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3.15 Total Revenue Per FTE Student (FY 2000 Dollars, Adjusted by HEPI)



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System; HEPI is from Commodityfund.org

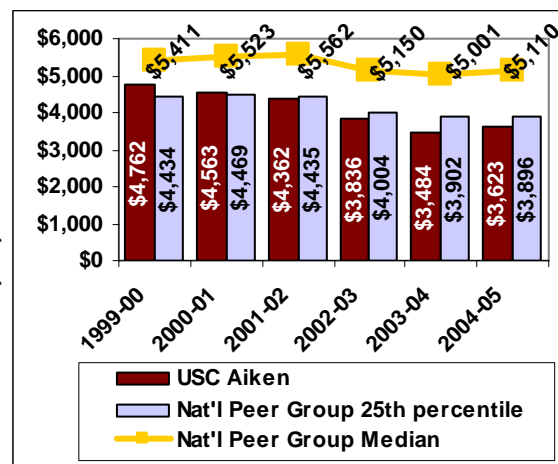
7.3.16 Tuition Revenue Per FTE Student\*



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

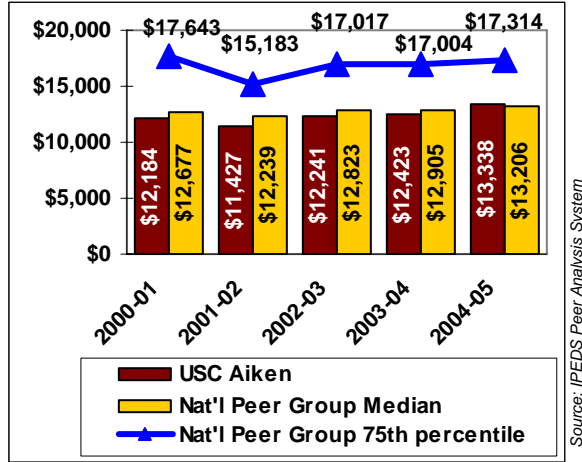
\* Move to GASB standards makes tuition revenue data prior to 2001 not comparable to recent data

7.3.17 Revenue: State Appropriations Per FTE Student

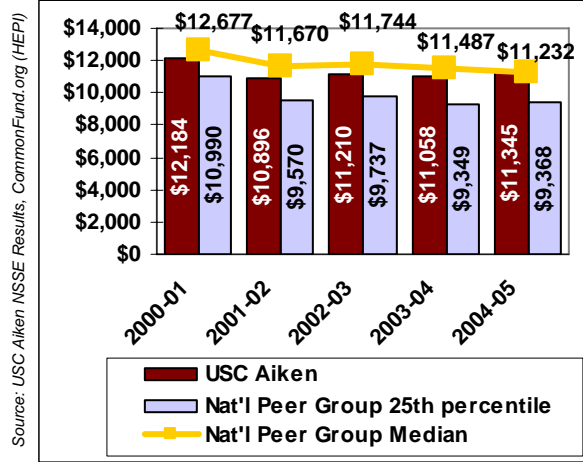


Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

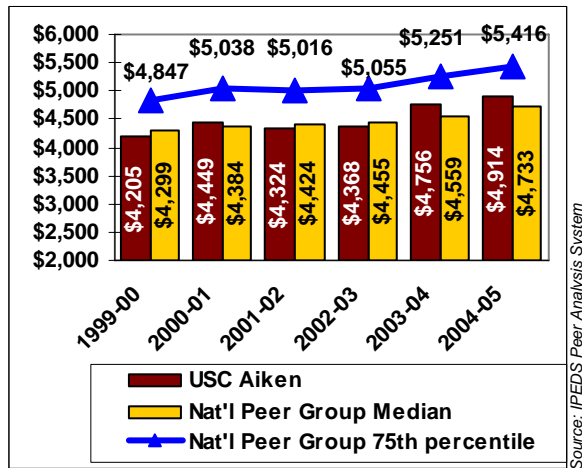
7.3-18 Total Expenditures Per FTE Student (Unadjusted Dollars)



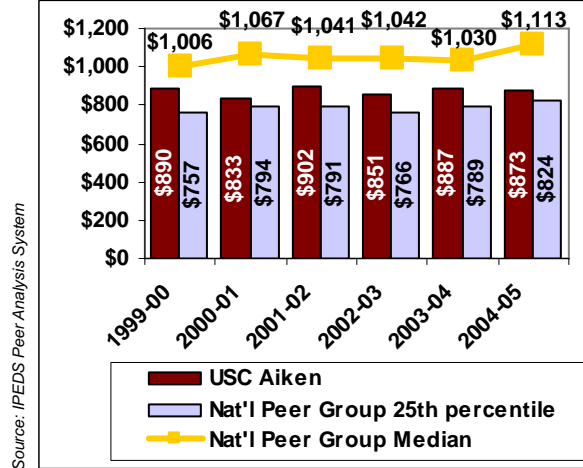
7.3-19 Total Expenditures Per FTE Student (FY 2000 Dollars, Adjusted by HEPI)



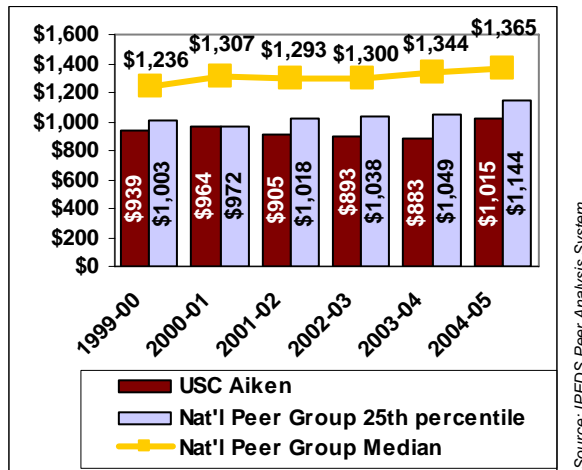
7.3-20 Instructional Expenditures Per FTE



7.3-21 Academic Support Expend. Per FTE

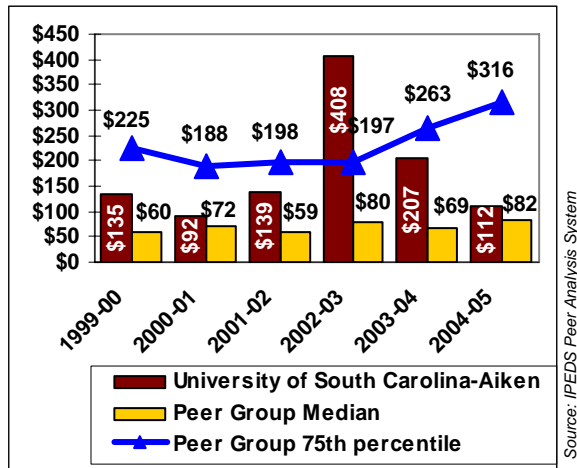


7.3-22 Institutional Support Expenditures Per FTE Student

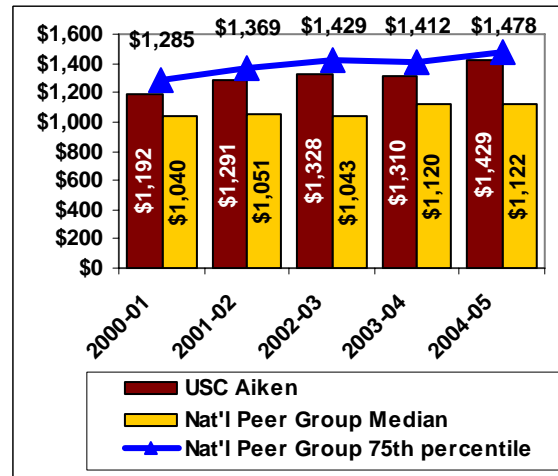


To monitor cost containment and institutional efficiency, the university closely scrutinizes the proportion of funds spent on institutional support for administrative services, management and long range planning, legal and fiscal operations, space management, employee personnel and records, logistical services such as purchasing and printing, and public relations and development. USC Aiken's expenditures on institutional support have consistently ranged between \$900 and \$1,000 per FTE, indicating USC Aiken is well-positioned in the top quartile of the most efficient institutions in its national peer group (7.3-22).

7.3-23 Research Expenditures Per FTE Student

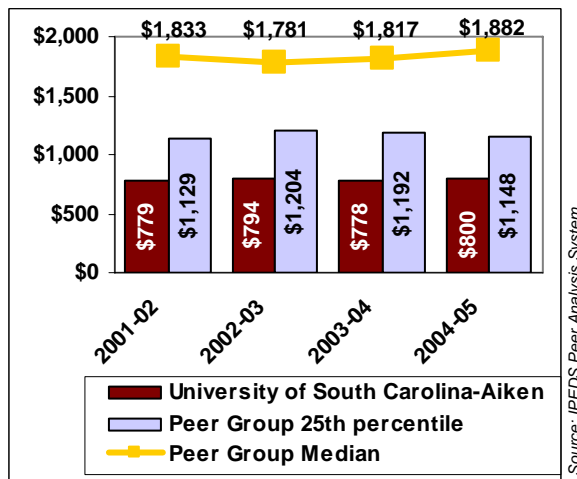


7.3-24 Student Services Expenditures Per FTE Student

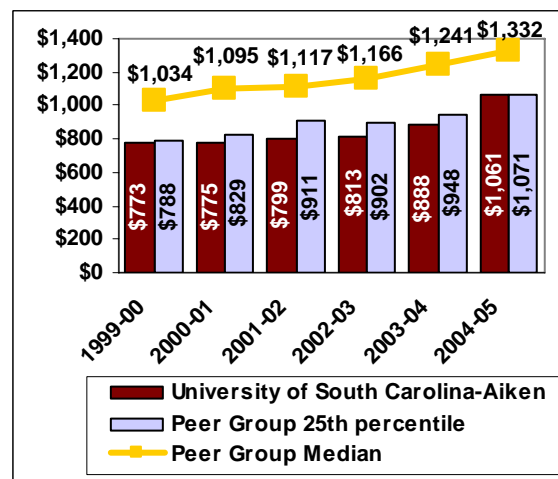


Research expenditures per FTE student at USC Aiken reflect grant activity and typically exceed the median of the University’s national peer group. The spike in expenditures in 2002-03 to \$408 per FTE student resulted from technology grants from lottery funds (7.3-23). Expenditures related to student services and auxiliary functions are difficult to compare within the national peer group because of differences in accounting practices. In particular, some institutions include their intercollegiate athletics programs in auxiliary expenditures while others, including USC Aiken, budget expenditures for athletics in student services. The 20% increase in expenditures on student services is reflective of doubling the population of students living on campus in 2004 (7.3-24). Expenditures per FTE student on operations and maintenance have increased 37% over five years from \$773 per FTE student in 1999-00 to \$1,061 per FTE student in 2004-05 (7.3-26). Despite these increases, USC Aiken still spends less on operations and maintenance than 75% of its national peer group.

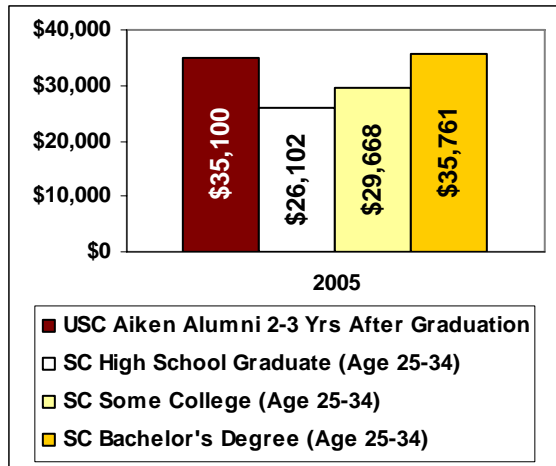
7.3-25 Auxiliary Expenditures Per FTE Student



7.3-26 Operations Expenditures Per FTE Student



**7.3-27 Estimated Median Salaries By Level of Education**



Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey (2005)

The most recent survey of USC Aiken graduates indicated that 2-3 years after graduation, alumni earn \$35,100 a year, which is about the median salary for individuals in their age group in South Carolina and \$9,000 more per year than an individual in their age group with just a high school diploma. This earnings gap widens with age. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the difference in earnings between an individual with a bachelor's degree and an individual with a high school diploma is \$19,194 in 2004 dollars.<sup>2</sup> This difference in earning power represents a tremendous return on the initial investment of time, money, and effort on the part of individuals to earn a degree.

This difference in earnings also represents a tremendous return on investment for the state, which benefits from an expanded tax base, the power to attract quality industry, and a higher standard of living for its citizens. For FY 2005, there were 10,191 USC Aiken alumni, and 9,090 of them had graduated prior to the end of 2002. The additional earning power of these 9,090 USC Aiken alumni represents an estimated \$163 million annually beyond what they would have earned if they only possessed a high school diploma. This amount increases with every graduating class for a long term return on all stakeholders' investments in the institution (7.3-28).

**7.3-28 Return on Investment: Graduates' Additional Earnings Related to Degree**

\$163 million return on investment in 2005

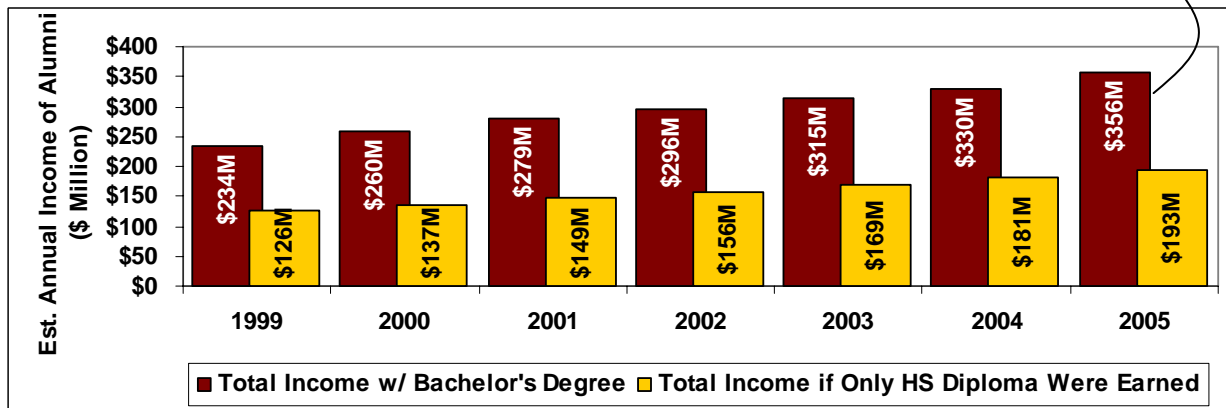


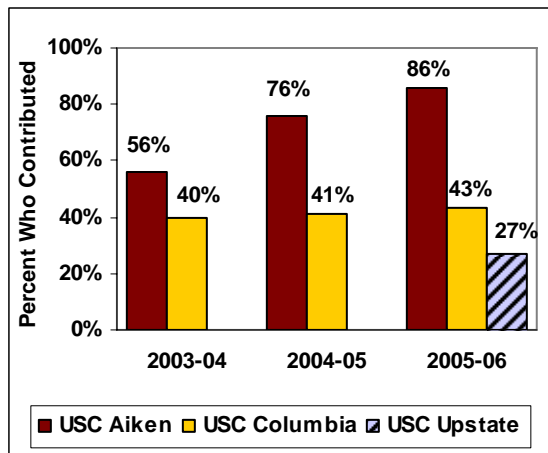
Chart uses 2004 constant dollars. Since research shows graduates do not achieve age- and education-appropriate salaries until two years after graduation (7.3-27), alumni graduating after 2002 are not included in the Return on Investment calculation.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2006). Historical income tables. Table P-16 Educational attainment.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2006). Historical income tables. Table P-16 Educational attainment.  
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/incpertoc.html>

**7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on work system performance, faculty and staff learning and development, and faculty and staff well-being, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction?**

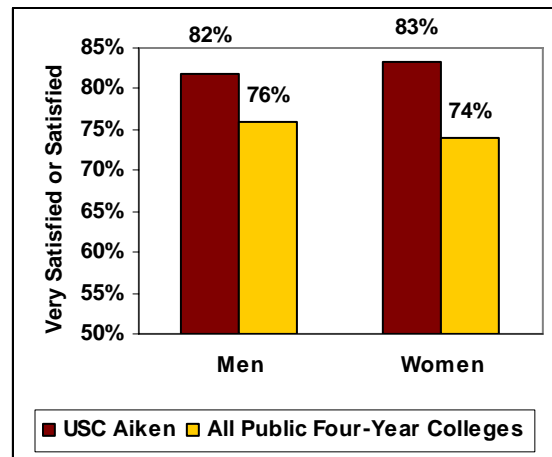
The extent to which USC Aiken integrates the value of collegiality into its institutional culture is evident in the level at which faculty and staff members give back to the university and in the overall satisfaction levels of employees. USC Aiken’s Family Fund giving rate has increased from 56% in 2003-04 to 87% in 2005-06, a significantly higher increase than at other four-year campuses in the USC System (7.4-1). Findings from the HERI national survey of faculty in 2004 indicate that overall faculty satisfaction at USC Aiken outpaced the national average for faculty at public four-year institutions by eight to nine percentage points (7.4-2). Compared to peers at other institutions, USC Aiken faculty were more satisfied with child care, their relationship with the administration, and prospects for career advancement. Highest levels of dissatisfaction were with salary and fringe benefits, the quality of the students, opportunities for scholarly pursuits, and teaching load (7.4-3).

**7.4-1 Giving Rates of Faculty and Staff to the Family Fund**



Source: USC Columbia Advancement, USC Upstate Advancement web site

**7.4-2 Faculty Overall Job Satisfaction**



Source: HERI 2004 Faculty Survey

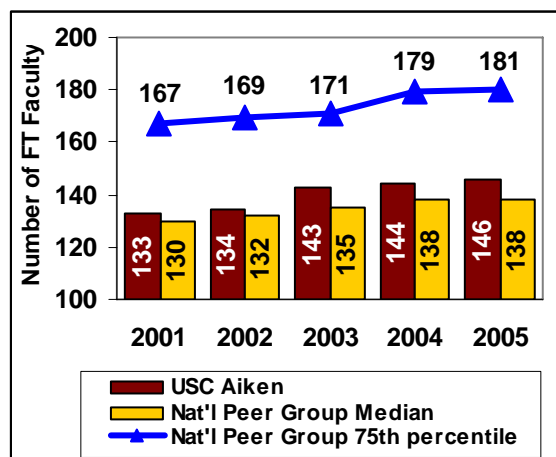
**7.4-3 Detailed Elements of Faculty Job Satisfaction**

Aspects of job noted as satisfactory or very satisfactory:	USC Aiken		Public 4-Yr Colleges		Difference	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Availability of child care at this institution*	1	93.8	16	36.8	15	57.0
Autonomy and independence	2	86.1	1	85.0	-1	1.1
Overall job satisfaction	3	82.5	4	75.4	1	7.1
Opportunity to develop new ideas	4	82.5	5	73.1	1	9.4
Professional relationships with other faculty	5	81.3	2	78.3	-3	3.0
Competency of colleagues	6	80.0	3	76.4	-3	3.6
Social relationships with other faculty	7	74.7	6	67.3	-1	7.4
Relationship with administration	8	74.0	8	54.6	same	19.4
Prospects for career advancement	9	57.9	10	51.5	1	6.4
Office/lab space	10	57.5	7	59.6	-3	-2.1
Clerical/administrative support	11	50.0	9	52.5	-2	-2.5
Visibility for jobs at other institutions/organizations*	12	48.1	13	43.3	1	4.8
Teaching load	13	40.0	11	46.2	-2	-6.2
Opportunity for scholarly pursuits	14	38.0	12	45.5	-2	-7.5
Quality of students	15	33.7	15	42.5	same	-8.8
Salary and fringe benefits	16	28.7	14	42.8	-2	-14.1

\* Low response rate for item. For availability of child care N=32, for Visibility for jobs at other Instns. N=54, for all others N=76-80.

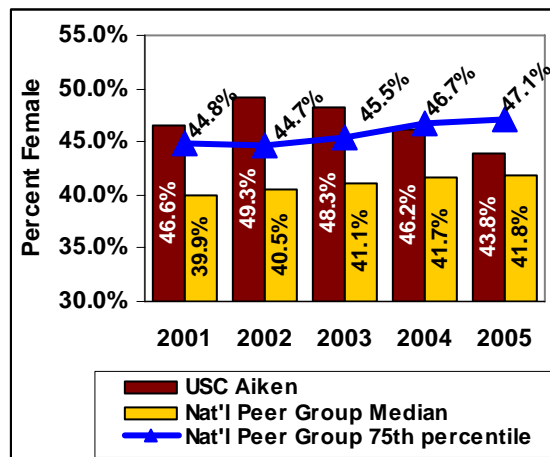
Source: HERI 2004 Faculty Survey

7.4-4 Number of Full-Time Faculty



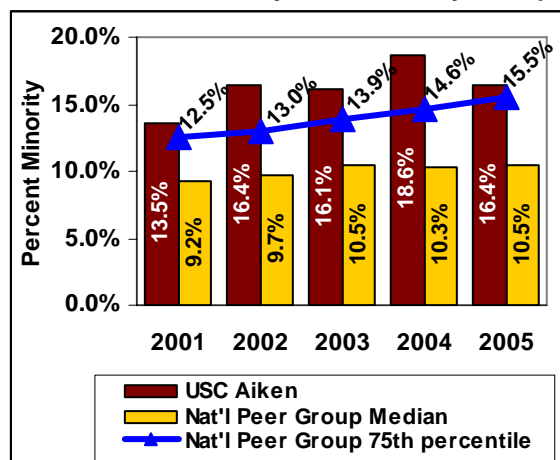
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-5 Full-Time Faculty Who Are Female



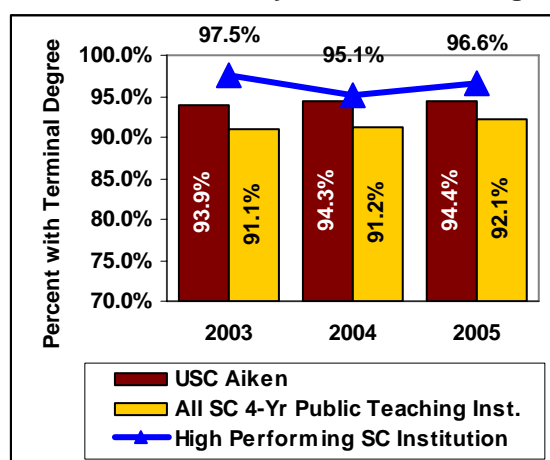
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-6 Full-Time Faculty from Minority Groups



Includes faculty coded as non-resident aliens.  
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-7 Full-Time Faculty with Terminal Degree

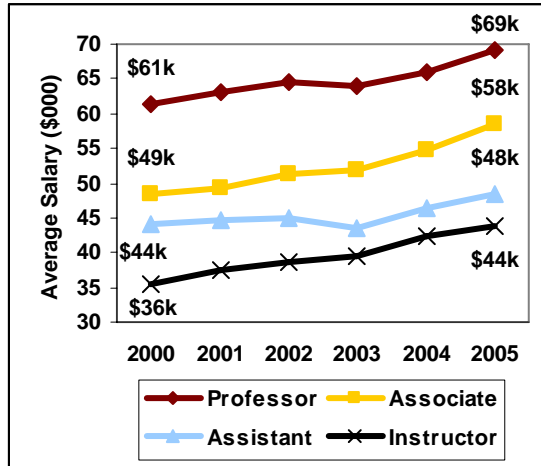


Source: SC CHE, CHEMIS

USC Aiken has set and continues to pursue strategic goals to recruit and retain quality faculty and staff. Almost 95% of USC Aiken’s full-time faculty members hold terminal degrees in their disciplines; this level of education is above the state median for public four-year teaching institutions, and just 3-4% below the level of the highest performing teaching institution in the state (7.4-7). By policy and practice, all undergraduate and graduate courses at USC Aiken are taught by faculty members, and so no courses are taught by graduate teaching assistants. The university has also set strategic goals to recruit highly qualified faculty and staff who reflect the demographic composition of the student population. While the realities of the academic labor market preclude achieving this goal in the short term, 16-18% percent of full-time faculty have a racial or ethnic background from a minority group, a level that places USC Aiken well above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile in its national peer group (7.4-6). At 43.8%, the proportion of female faculty members is also above the median for the national peer group, although this percentage has declined about 5% since 2002 (7.4-5).

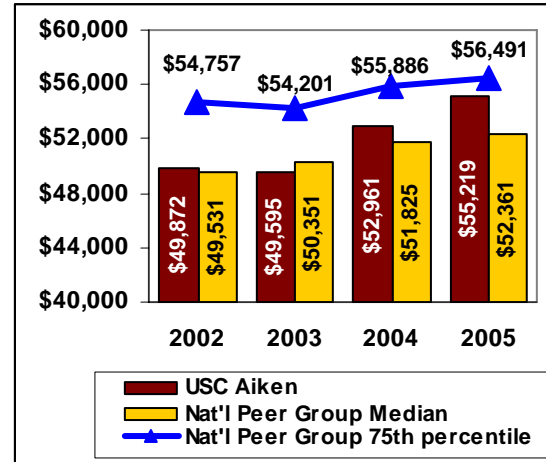


7.4-8 Mean USC Aiken Faculty Salaries By Academic Rank



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-9 Average Faculty Salaries, All Ranks, Equated to 9-Month Contracts



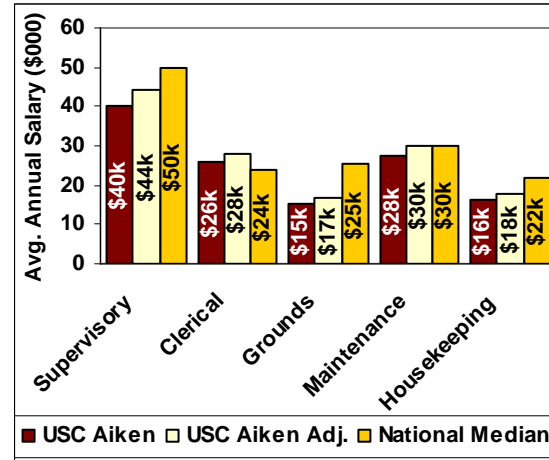
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-10 SC Faculty Salaries, 2005-06

Institution	Full Prof.	Assoc. Prof.	Asst. Prof.	Instr.
USC Columbia	\$96,700	\$68,600	\$60,800	\$39,900
Clemson U	\$94,800	\$70,000	\$62,500	\$48,300
The Citadel	\$77,700	\$64,400	\$52,600	\$45,300
Coll. of Charleston	\$75,100	\$60,200	\$49,600	\$42,700
Coastal Carolina U	\$71,900	\$59,200	\$51,400	\$34,500
Winthrop U	\$69,600	\$60,000	\$50,600	\$39,800
<b>USC Aiken</b>	<b>\$69,000</b>	<b>\$58,400</b>	<b>\$48,400</b>	<b>\$43,900</b>
Francis Marion U	\$66,800	\$57,500	\$47,200	\$41,000
USC Upstate	\$66,100	\$55,000	\$47,800	\$41,800
USC Beaufort	\$64,600	\$52,400	\$48,200	\$40,100
Lander U	\$58,500	\$51,300	\$46,700	\$37,700

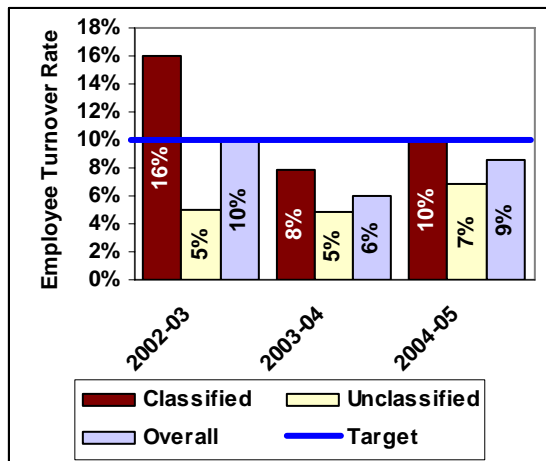
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-11 Operations Staff Salary Comparisons



Source: American Schools & University, Maintenance & Operations Cost Study

7.4-12 Employee Turnover Rates



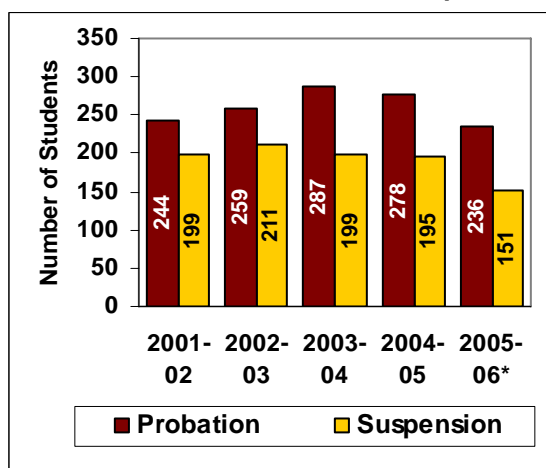
Source: USC Aiken Human Resources Office

To recruit highly qualified faculty and staff, USC Aiken has made an effort to offer competitive faculty salaries and address salary inequities. As a result of these efforts, average salaries for all faculty ranks have increased from \$48,872 in Fall 2002 to \$55,219 in Fall 2005 (7.4-9). Within the state of South Carolina, USC Aiken ranks #7 in the state among public universities for faculty salaries, although the lower cost of living in the western portion of the state lessens the impact of this small difference (7.4-10). Staff salaries in various areas lag behind the national median, even when adjusting for cost of living (7.4-11).

**7.5 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of organizational effectiveness/operational efficiency, learning-centered and support process performance (these could include measures related to the following: student performance and development; the education climate; responsiveness to student and stakeholder needs; supplier and partner performance; and cycle time).**

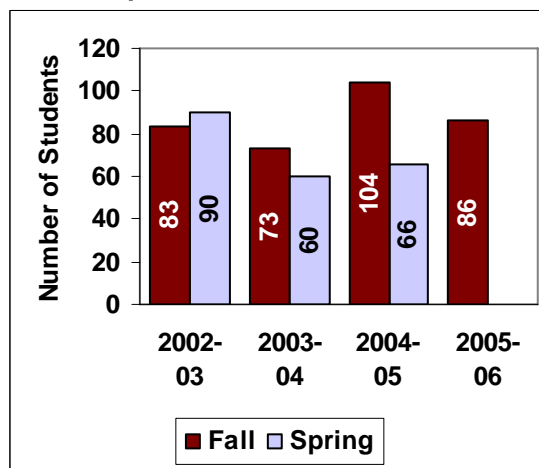
USC Aiken monitors a wide range of indicators to evaluate the success of its learning-centered processes. The number of students who have been suspended for academic reasons has declined 24% over four years from 199 in 2001-02 to 151 in 2005-06, while there was a slight increase and subsequent decline over this same period for students on academic probation (7.5-1). The number of students who withdraw completely from the University has ranged from 2-3% each term (7.5-2). Courses in which students earn Ds, Fs, or Ws at high rates are also closely monitored by Department Chairs responsible for those courses (7.5-3). Scholarship retention rates are also indicative of the efficacy of learning centered processes (7.5-4).

**7.5-1 Students on Probation or Suspended**



\* 2005-06 data are preliminary  
Source: USC Aiken Enrollment Services Division

**7.5-2 Complete Withdrawals from USC Aiken**



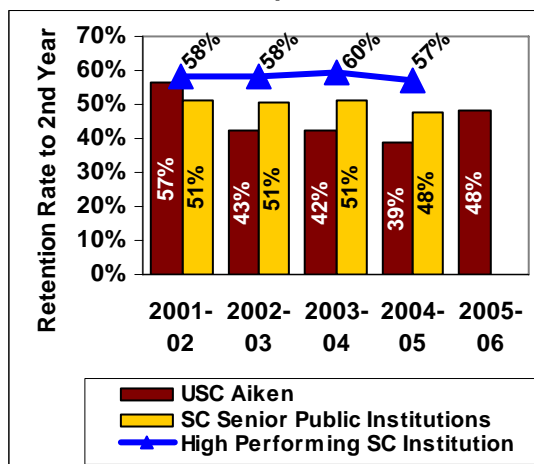
Source: USC Aiken Enrollment Services Division

**7.5-3 Courses with High Rates of Ds, Fs and Ws and Number of Early Warning Forms**

	2004-05		2005-06	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Total Course Grades Earned	13,315	12,125	13,121	12,049
Total Course Grades of D, F, and W	2,504	2,254	2,341	2,132
Proportion of Ds, Fs, and Ws	18.8%	18.6%	17.8%	17.7%
Early Warning Forms Submitted	103	190	136	N/A
Early Warning Forms as a Proportion of Ds, Fs, and Ws	4.1%	8.4%	5.8%	--

Source: Grade Totals and USC Aiken Advisement Office

**7.5-4 LIFE Scholarship Retention Rates Freshman to Sophomore Year**



Source: SC CHE, CHEMIS

7.5-5 Academic and Social Support

Class			2004				2006			
			USC Aiken	NSSE National Group, N=557			USC Aiken	NSSE National Group, N=557		
			Mean <sup>a</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Sig <sup>b</sup>	Effect Size <sup>c</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Mean <sup>a</sup>	Sig <sup>b</sup>	Effect Size <sup>c</sup>
To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much										
a.	Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	FY	3.31	3.15	*	.21	3.35	3.07	***	.36
		SR	3.27	3.14			3.25	3.08	*	.22
b.	Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	FY	3.14	3.10			3.30	2.99	***	.39
		SR	3.06	2.97			3.20	2.87	***	.40
c.	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	FY	2.65	2.60			2.88	2.57	***	.33
		SR	2.61	2.41	*	.21	2.76	2.40	***	.37
d.	Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	FY	2.16	2.15			2.49	2.13	***	.39
		SR	2.08	1.92			2.30	1.90	***	.43
e.	Providing the support you need to thrive socially	FY	2.39	2.36			2.76	2.37	***	.42
		SR	2.37	2.12	**	.28	2.46	2.14	***	.34
f.	Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	FY	2.95	2.83			3.11	2.75	***	.38
		SR	2.69	2.59			2.81	2.57	**	.26
g.	Using computers in academic work	FY	3.37	3.32			3.52	3.32	***	.25
		SR	3.52	3.45			3.62	3.47	*	.20

a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

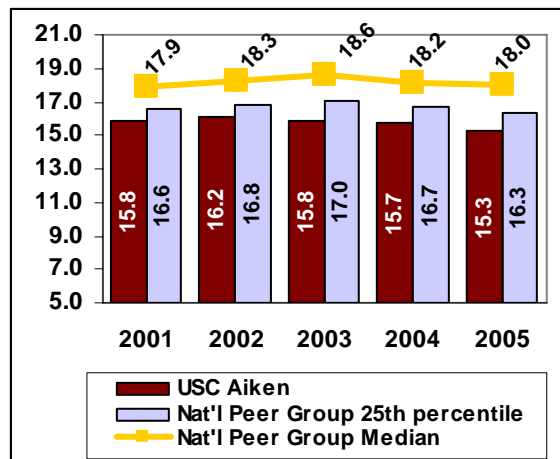
b \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\* p<.001 (2-tailed).

c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

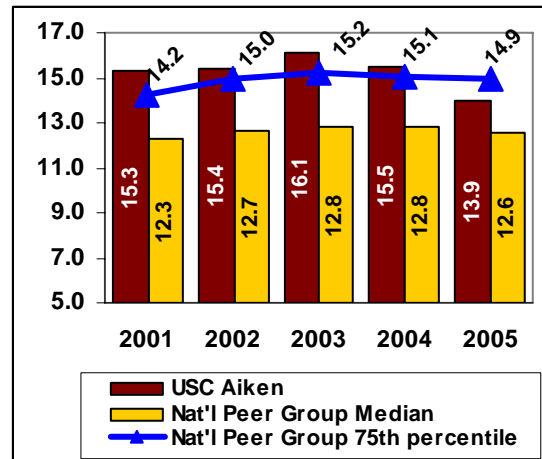
The effectiveness of support processes is monitored through surveys and academic success. Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) indicate the academic and social support offered at USC Aiken exceeds levels at other four-year institutions in the country by a quarter to half of a standard deviation, placing USC Aiken in the 55<sup>th</sup> to 70<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally in a range of support activities (7.5-7). Institutional emphasis on using computers registered as the lowest in this group of items, although it was still 0.20-0.25 of a standard deviation above the median for all other institutions nationally. The University’s recent initiatives on student success are aimed at continuing to raise item (a) “spending significant amounts of time on academic work,” in order to improve the depth and breadth of student learning.

7.5-6 Student-Faculty Ratio



Calculated as FTE Students per FTE Faculty  
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.5-7 Student-Staff Ratio

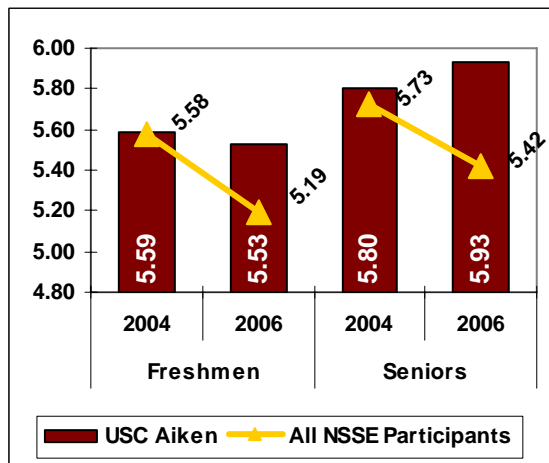


Calculated as FTE students per FT Non-Faculty Employees  
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

USC Aiken’s student-faculty ratio, a metric commonly used as a measure of academic quality, has ranged between 15.3 and 15.8 students per faculty member in recent years, consistently positioned in the quartile of peer institutions with the lowest ratios – a lower ratio is indicative of more student contact with faculty (7.5-6). On the staff side, USC Aiken had 13.9 students per staff member in 2005-06, compared to a median of 12.6 students per staff member at peer institutions. This ratio has been declining since 2003 when USC Aiken was in the quartile of peer institutions that had the fewest staff members per student (7.5-7). The qualitative measures of student relationships with staff and faculty show that students perceive their relationships with faculty and staff as much more friendly and supportive than do students at peer institutions (7.5-8 and 7.5-9). Additional surveys of various groups are conducted throughout the year, such as students living on campus (7.5-13) and student athletes (7.5-15).

**7.5-8 Student Relationships with Faculty**

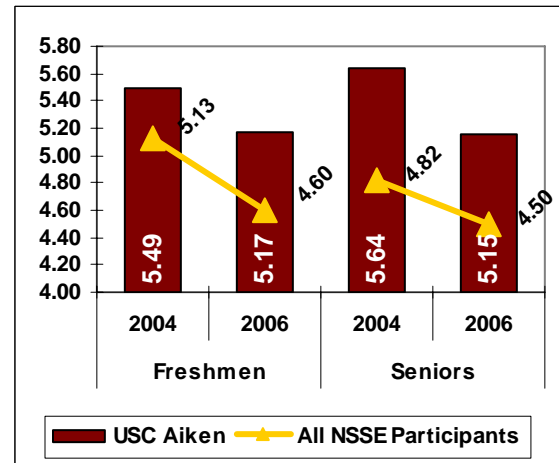
*Quality of your relationships with people at your institution.  
1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to  
7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging*



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

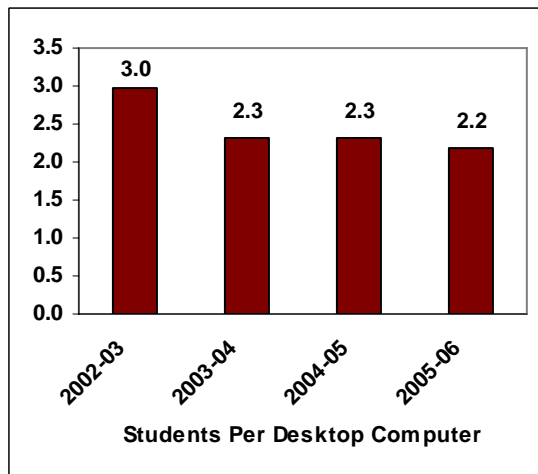
**7.5-9 Student Relationships with Administrative Personnel and Offices**

*Quality of your relationships with people at your institution.  
1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to  
7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging*



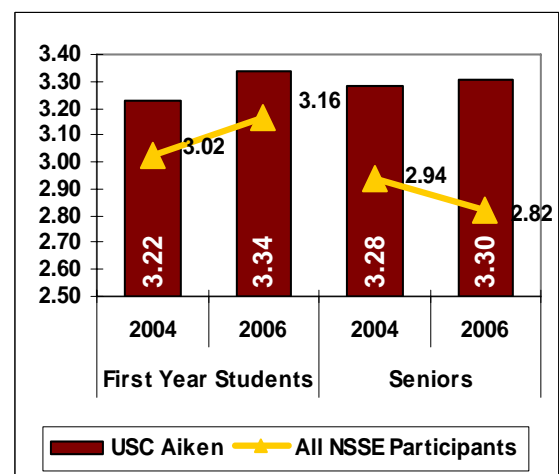
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

**7.5-10 Ratio of Students to Desktop Computers**



Source: USC Aiken Computer Services Division

**7.5-11 Satisfaction with Advising (NSSE)**



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

**7.5-12 Ranking in Most Unwired Campuses Survey**

Rank in Nat'l Peer Group	Overall Rank	University
1	12	Cal State Univ., Monterey Bay
2	24	College of Charleston
3	35	USC Aiken

Source: Intel's 2005 "Most Unwired College Campuses" Survey

**7.5-14 Training Workshops Sponsored by the Human Resources Office**

Year	# of Sessions	# of Attendees
2001-2002	12	137
2002-2003	11	122
2003-2004	11	247
2004-2005	14	124
2005-2006	14	188

Source: USC Aiken Human Resources Office

**7.5-15 Athlete Satisfaction**

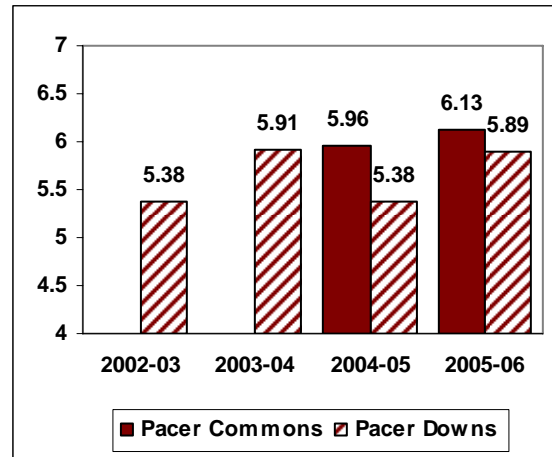
Please indicate your satisfaction with the following areas: (5=Very Satisfied, 4=Somewhat Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 2=Somewhat Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied)

	2005		2006		One Year Change	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
82.Quality of academic experience	4.64	1	4.25	1	-0.39	0
72.Access to training staff	4.49	3	4.22	2	-0.27	1
73.Professionalism of training staff	4.54	2	4.12	3	-0.42	-1
83.Overall experience as a student athlete	4.26	4	4.11	4	-0.15	0
74.Quality of care from the Student Health Center	--	--	4.07	5	--	--
78.Travel accommodations	3.85	7	3.91	6	0.06	1
81.Support from administrative offices	3.77	8	3.87	7	0.10	1
80.Support/coverage by the Sports Information Department	3.98	6	3.84	8	-0.14	-2
79.Tutoring and academic support	3.61	9	3.80	9	0.19	0
76.Quality of athletics facilities	4.14	5	3.67	10	-0.47	-5
75.Quality of care from Carolina Musculoskeletal Institute (CMI)	--	--	3.52	11	--	--
77.Campus involvement with your sport	2.93	10	3.13	12	0.20	-2

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

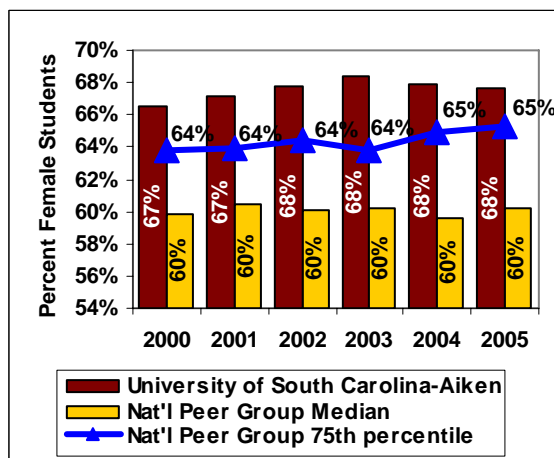
**7.5-13 Housing satisfaction**

Overall, the services offered by University Housing are of high quality. (7=Strongly Agree, 1=Strongly Disagree)



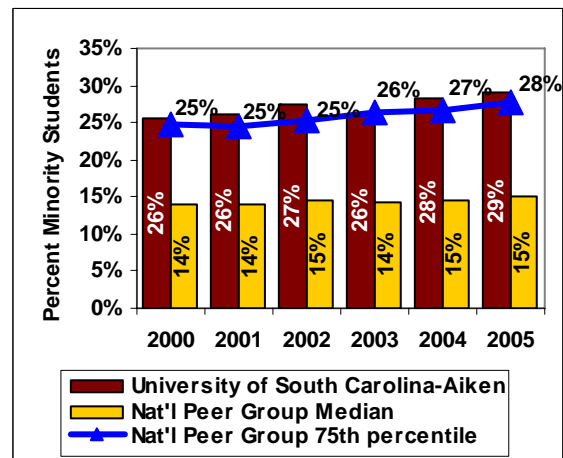
Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**7.5-16 Percent of Students Who Are Female**



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

**7.5-17 Percent of Students with Minority Racial/Ethnic Background**



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

**7.6 What are your performance levels for your key measures related to leadership and social responsibility:**

- a.) accomplishment of your organizational strategy and action plans
- b.) stakeholder trust in your senior leaders and the governance of your organization
- c.) fiscal accountability; and, regulatory, safety, accreditation, and legal compliance

USC Aiken’s strategic planning process and the accomplishment of its goals and objectives is well-documented and shared with the campus. The Strategic Planning Committee releases a progress report or updates annually (7.6-1). The University’s mission to serve the region and state is reflected in how resources are committed to facilities such as the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center and the Etherredge Center for performing arts. USC Aiken’s expenditures on these and other public service activities per FTE student places the University well above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of its peers nationally (7.6-3). Crime rates on campus at USC Aiken remain below the state average, although these are increasing with more students living on campus (7.6-7). No lost time accidents occurred on campus in the past two years (7.6-8). USC Aiken’s internal audits and the USC Internal Audit Department have found no significant violations or citations of legal, ethical, regulatory, or fiscal responsibilities for the past 20 years. The accreditation of USC Aiken and its programs has been fully affirmed or reaffirmed by its accreditors (7.6-9).

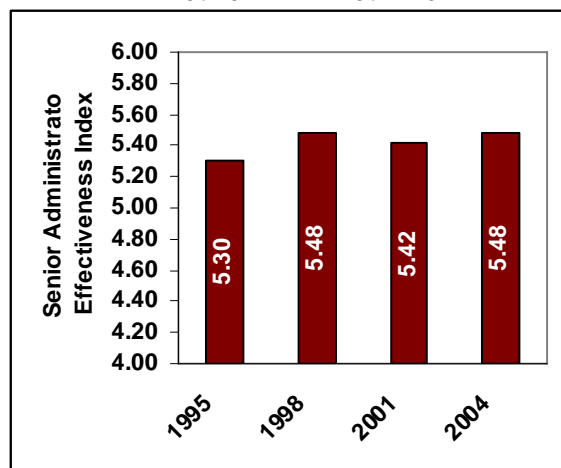
**7.6-1 Strategic Planning Progress Reports**

Date	Report Title	Web Location
2003	Final Strategic Planning Report	<a href="http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/FinalfinalReportWeb.htm">http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/FinalfinalReportWeb.htm</a> <a href="http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/FinalfinalReportWeb.htm">http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/FinalfinalReportWeb.htm</a>
2003	Keeping the Pace of Excellence	<a href="http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/KeepingPaceTLH.htm">http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/KeepingPaceTLH.htm</a>
2004	Strategic Plan Accomplishments and Priorities, 2003-2004	<a href="http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/AccomplishmentsPriorities.htm">http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/AccomplishmentsPriorities.htm</a>
2005	Strategic Planning Newsletter	<a href="http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/pdf/Newletter2.pdf">http://www.usca.edu/strategicplan/pdf/Newletter2.pdf</a>

Source: USC Aiken Strategic Planning Committee Web Site

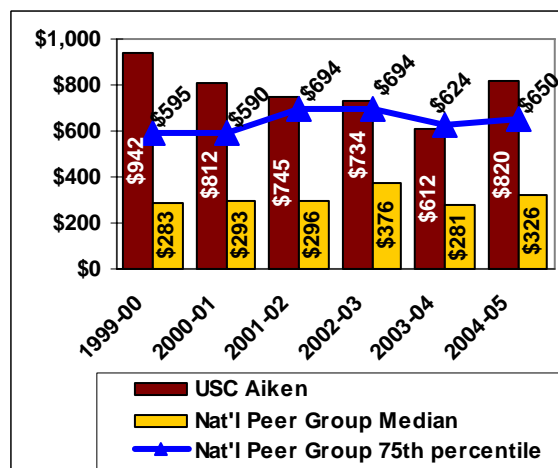
**7.6-2 Summarized 360 Senior Administrator Evaluation Results**

Overall Index of Senior Leader Effectiveness from 360 Degree Evaluations (6=Strongly Agree, 1=Strongly Disagree)



Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**7.6-3 Public Service Expenditures Per FTE Student**



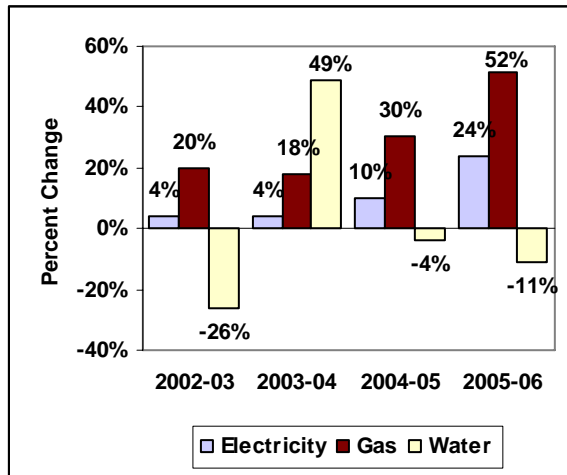
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.6-4 Assessment of Academic Programs

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
<b>Number of Majors Reviewed by Assessment Committee</b>	6	5	8
<i>1=Missing, 2=Approaches Guidelines, 3=Meets Guidelines, 4=Exceeds Guidelines</i>			
<b>Goals</b>	--	2.4	2.8
<b>Objectives</b>	--	1.8	2.3
<b>Measurement</b>	--	2.0	2.3
<b>Findings</b>	--	1.7	2.5
<b>Use of Results</b>	--	1.7	2.0

Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness

7.6-6 Utility Costs



Source: USC Aiken Operations Dept. Program Review

7.6-8 Safety Statistics

	2004-05	2005-06
Lost Time Accidents	0	0
Workman's Comp Claims	13	10
- Avoidable Accidents	6	5

Source: USC Aiken Environmental Health and Safety Division

7.6-9 Institutional and Program Accreditations

Institutional Component	Accreditor	Acronym	Status
USC Aiken (Regional Accreditation)	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools	SACS	Fully Accredited
Dept. of Exercise Science - Athletic Training Concentration	Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education	CAATE	Application in Process
Dept. of Psychology - Master's Program	Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council	MPAC	Fully Accredited
School of Business - All Programs	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business	AACSB	Fully Accredited
School of Education - All Programs	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education	NCATE	Fully Accredited
School of Nursing - All Programs	National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission	NLNAC	Fully Accredited

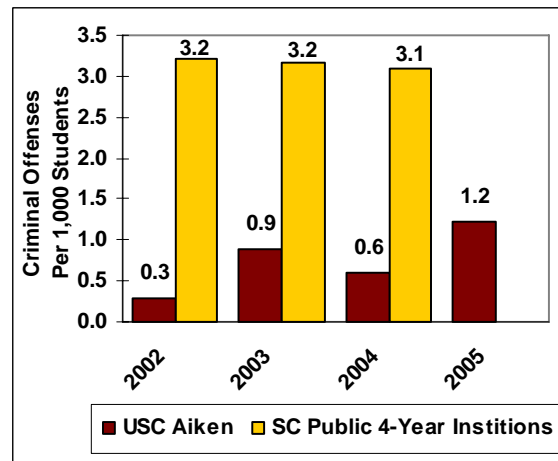
Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness

7.6-5 Classroom Utilization

2006-07 Utilization Table	Sq. Ft. per Stu. Station)	Avg. Room Hrs of Instruction Per Week	Station Utilization	SC Space Factor Calculation
<b>SC Guidelines</b>	<b>22.00</b>	<b>30.00</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>1.22</b>
USC-Beaufort	16.06	16.13	30%	3.29
Citadel	19.54	15.25	55%	2.35
SC State	18.34	18.81	46%	2.12
Francis Marion	17.66	16.35	56%	1.93
State Average	18.78	22.92	53%	1.73
Lander	20.14	21.56	59%	1.58
USC-Columbia	16.86	30.90	38%	1.44
Coastal Carolina	20.42	23.60	66%	1.30
<b>USC-Aiken</b>	<b>22.44</b>	<b>34.25</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>1.24</b>
Winthrop	19.03	26.87	60%	1.18
Clemson	16.40	31.77	44%	1.17
USC-Upstate	17.59	30.58	50%	1.15
Coll. of Charleston	16.53	25.79	58%	1.11

Source: SC CHE, 2006 Statistical Abstract

7.6-7 Criminal Offenses on Campus per 1,000 Students



Source: U.S Dept. of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education