



ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2011-2012



Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Organization Name	<u>University of South Carolina Aiken</u>
Date of Submission	<u>September 17, 2012</u>
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Section I – Executive Summary

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

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.

USC Aiken endeavors to apply knowledge, skills and wisdom in ways that promote the common good. Accordingly, the university seeks to build strong community ties. The institution enriches the quality of life not only on campus but also throughout the surrounding region through a variety of activities including the fine and performing arts, athletics, continuing education, distance learning, and community service. In fulfilling its role as an institution of higher learning, the University of South Carolina Aiken is a community of individuals engaged in broadly based educational experiences necessary for an enlightened society.

Vision Statement

USC Aiken's vision for the future flows from its institutional mission, its statement of core values, and its strategic goals and objectives.

The University of South Carolina Aiken aspires to be among the top comprehensive liberal arts institutions in South Carolina and the Southeast. At USC Aiken, we:

- Emphasize excellence in teaching and collaborative learning experiences, stressing the connections between the liberal arts and professionally based courses;
- Encourage and support high quality scholarly and creative endeavors;
- Emphasize collegiality, civility, cooperation and collaboration within a nurturing campus community where there is mutual support to grow and excel;
- Honor human diversity and respect differences;
- Encourage integrity, honesty, and accountability, and foster responsible citizenship and working for the common good;
- Sustain a strong academic support system for all students and offer quality curricular and co-curricular programs that prepare students to be citizen leaders and effective participants and contributors in a dynamic global society;
- Maintain a moderately-sized campus where students can expect an optimal faculty-student ratio and individual attention;
- Maintain a campus environment that supports creativity and productivity;
- Inspire all members of the campus community to participate in supporting the institutional mission;
- Demonstrate commitment to the effective and efficient use of resources and the wise use of technology; and
- Continue to foster and protect strong community ties and to enrich the lives of all community members.

USC Aiken embraces 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 encourage critical thinking, independent learning, an understanding of the connection between the liberal arts and discipline-specific courses, and 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

Significant progress was made on deferred maintenance items this past year. USC Aiken also sustained its excellence in its academic programs; USCA has had a total of 43 Magellan Scholars named, more than all the other non-Columbia campuses combined; the S.C. Academy of Science recognized Dr. G. Smith as the winner of the 2012 Governor's Award for Excellence in Scientific Research at a predominantly undergraduate institution; and the official pass rate for students in USC Aiken's School of Nursing on the National Council Licensure Examination for January 1-December 31, 2011 was 94.34 percent – higher than the 89.6 percent pass rate for the state of South Carolina and the 87.9 percent rate for the nation. The campus continued its trend toward increased energy efficiency and carbon footprint reduction. USC Aiken was recognized by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education's District III with its highest award – a Grand Gold Award in the category of Total Programs, Public Affairs Programs for its 50th anniversary campaign. The University continued to receive recognition at the regional and national levels: the institution received a designation as a military friendly school in recognition of an increased focus on providing academic and peer support services to veteran students and was ranked as the top public baccalaureate college in the south by *U.S. News and World Report's Guide, "America's Best Colleges"* for the eighth time, marking the 14th consecutive year that the institution has been ranked among the top 3.

3. Key strategic goals for the present and future years***Strategic Goals for 2009-2014***

- I. Teaching & Learning***
- II. Research, Scholarship & Creative Achievement***
- III. Service Excellence***
- IV. Quality of Life in the University Community***
- V. Recognition & Visibility***

4. Key Strategic Challenges

Educational – In the face of significant budgetary shortfalls, maintenance of educational quality is the foremost challenge. The environment for recruiting and retaining qualified students continues to be competitive. We continue to be challenged to increase the number of graduates through an admission process focused on both demonstrated talent and scholarly potential without being so selective that we fail to serve our key constituents. The provision of accessible academic and student support services that promote success is also essential despite reduced staff.

Operational – The resources to address faculty and staff work-loads, allocate appropriate office space, and distribute increased responsibilities in the face of continuing budget constraints and human resource challenges must be established.

Human Resources – A significant number of faculty and staff retirements has prompted heightened competition with other institutions for qualified personnel. Coupled with this are difficulties in attracting and retaining faculty and staff given state pay limitations, and the existence of declining state appropriations that do not allow for any salary increases and inequity/compression adjustments. The state economic context has made it much more difficult to attract and retain highly qualified candidates.

Financial – Sharp decreases in state allocations have significantly shifted costs to students whose ability to pay for increased tuition is limited. Lack of funding for new construction decreases the University's ability to serve more students and to improve the educational experience for those who are already enrolled. We need to identify other substantial resources to offset decreasing state appropriations and to increase allocations to severely depleted operating budgets.

Community-related – Public service and outreach activities are threatened by economic conditions. USCA has currently reached 40% of its \$26 million comprehensive fundraising campaign. Even greater efforts by our staff as well as community volunteers will be needed in the next several years to reach our goal. Greater connections with alumni, friends, and the surrounding community must continue to be developed to build financial support for USC Aiken. We need to be increasingly strategic in our outreach activities and external relationships.

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

This report is reviewed annually by senior administrators who participate in its preparation. The report is provided to the Strategic Planning Committee. Following a review of the contents of the report and a realignment of the institution's Strategic Plan with a new USC system-wide Strategic Plan, the institution has adopted a "balanced scorecard" approach. Additionally, Academic Council, the Enrollment Planning Team, and a variety of committees have been given copies of the report to review. USC Aiken envisions continuing to use this report as an increasingly central means to focus institutional energy along strategic lines.

Section II – Organizational Profile

1. Main educational programs, offerings, and services and their primary delivery methods

USC Aiken offers 9 baccalaureate degrees in 21 programs of study in the areas of Business, Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Nursing, and Sciences. In addition, 2 master's degree programs are offered in educational technology, and applied clinical psychology. USC Aiken provides campus housing for almost 960 students, fields 11 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 90 student clubs and groups. While some courses are delivered online, the principal method of delivery is via in-class and laboratory based instruction.

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

II.2-1 Key Student Segments and Requirements (Fall 2011)

Geographic Market Segments		Key Student Segments	Requirements / Expectations
Local Counties	64%	Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding programs that develop skills, knowledge, and values necessary for success in a dynamic global environment. Exemplary instruction and individualized contact with student-centered faculty and staff High quality academic, social, and living facilities, equipped with cutting-edge technology Employment or further education after graduation Student services that include advising, academic support, counseling, career services, health care, housing, dining, and safety
Aiken	43%	Non-degree Seeking	
Lexington	9%	Degree Seeking	
Edgefield	5%	Residential Students	
Richland	4%		
Orangeburg	3%	Graduate Students	
Other SC Counties	23%	Full-time	
Out-of-State	11%	Part-time	
International	2%		

II.2-2 Additional Stakeholder Groups


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

3. Operating locations

Main campus: Aiken, SC (Fall 2011 Headcount: 3,277)

Completion program in business: USC Sumter campus (Fall 2011 Program Headcount: 50)

Completion program in education: USC Salkehatchie campus (Fall 2011 Program Headcount: 13)



4. The number of employees, segmented by faculty and staff or other appropriate categories

In Fall 2011, USC Aiken had 340 full-time employees and 185 part-time employees. Of the full-time employees, 111 were tenured or tenure-track faculty, librarians, or administrators; 44 were instructors; and 185 were permanent staff. Temporary employees consisted of 87 faculty and 98 staff.

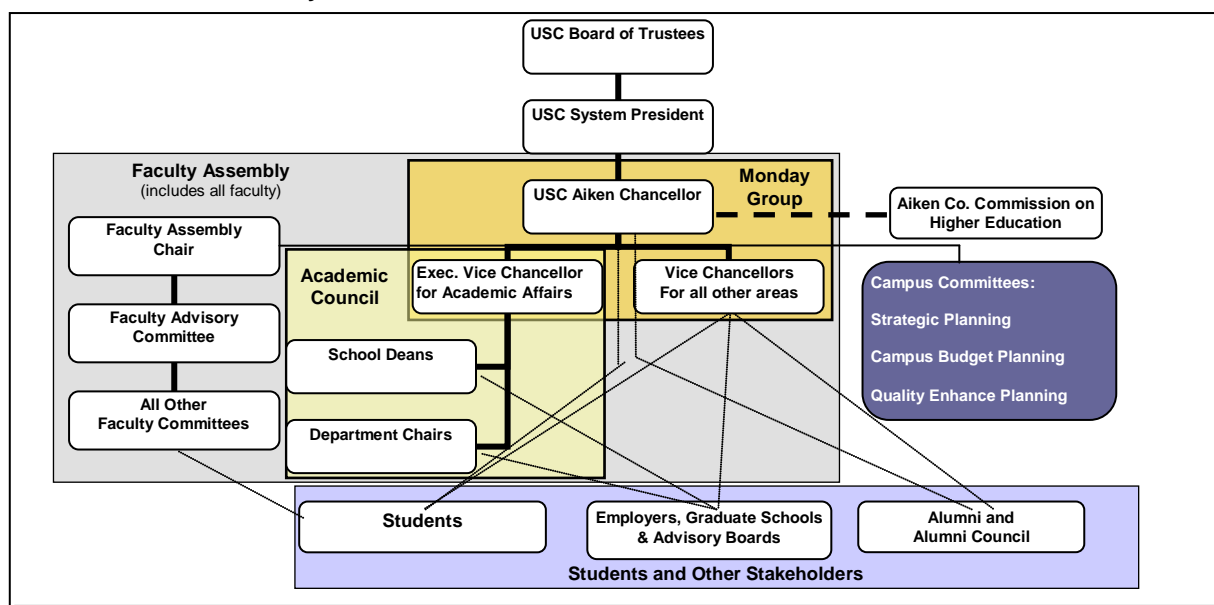
5. The regulatory environment under which the organization operates

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 Opportunity Act of 2004; 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, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, the National Association of Schools of Music, and the Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council.

6. Governance system

II.6-1 Shared Governance System



7. 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.

8. Key competitors

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.

9. Principal factors that determine competitive success

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, the ability to attract students who can succeed, and availability of jobs for graduates.

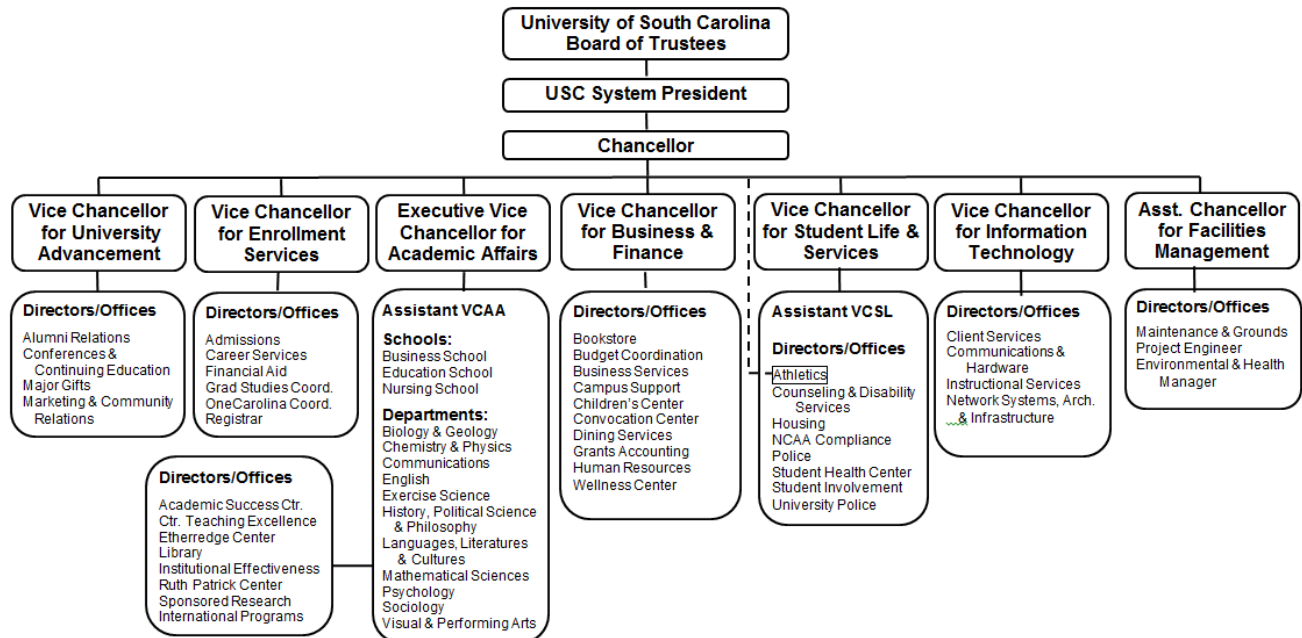
10. The organization's performance improvement systems

USC Aiken is committed to developing a culture of ongoing 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. As part of a shift to a balanced scorecard approach, efforts persist to align the performance improvement systems across the institutional levels.

II-10-1 Key Performance Improvement Systems

Level	Performance Area	Performance Improvement System
Institutional	Strategic Plan	Strategic Planning Committee Review
Departmental	Administrative Departments and Offices	Administrative Program Review
Programmatic	Academic Programs	Academic Program Review
Individual	Senior Administrators	Annual Review Annual Evaluation of Chancellor Annual Evaluation of Executive Vice Chancellor 360 Degree Evaluations
	Faculty	Tenure and Promotion Review Post-Tenure Review Annual Review Peer Review of Teaching
	Classified Employees	Employee Performance Management System (EPMS)

11. USC Aiken's Organizational Structure



12. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart**II-12-1 Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations (\$)**

Major Budget Categories	FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures		FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures		FY 12-13 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$20,083,412	\$5,135,000	\$20,529,347	\$4,820,000	\$20,900,400	\$4,820,000
Other Operating	\$24,890,072		\$26,108,295		\$25,760,569	
Special Items						
Permanent Improvements						
Fringe Benefits	\$5,525,574	\$1,072,411	\$5,835,586	\$1,104,243	\$5,667,957	\$1,104,243
Non-recurring	\$2,472,306					
Total	\$52,971,364	\$6,207,411	\$52,473,228	\$5,924,243	\$52,328,926	\$5,924,243

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	FY 08-09 Actual Expenditures	FY 09-10 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Reserve Funds	\$ -	\$ -
Bonds	\$ -	\$ -

Note: The Non-recurring is the ARRA Federal Stimulus funds. In FY10 \$629,706 was spent of the total ARRA Appropriations of \$1,469,806. In FY11 \$2,472,306 was spent of the total ARRA Appropriations of \$1,632,206. The amount spent in FY11 includes the unspent residual funds from FY10. All ARRA funds have been fully expended as of June 30, 2011.

13. Major Program Areas Chart

II.13-1 Major Program Areas

Program Number	Major Program Area and Purpose (Brief)	FY 10-11 Budget Expenditures	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
482 483 484 485	Instruction	State: 6,207,411 Federal: 10,775 Other: 8,627,162 Total: 14,845,348 % of Total Budget: 28.03%	State: 5,924,243 Federal: 0 Other: 9,597,725 Total: 15,521,968 % of Total Budget: 20.58%	7.3-1,2,3,4,5; 7.3-14,15,16,17,18; 7.3-19,20,27; 7.4-11,12, 13, 16
487 488 489	Auxiliary – Student housing, bookstore, dining services, and vending.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 3,654,308 Total: 3,654,308 % of Total Budget: 6.90%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 3,558,734 Total: 3,558,734 % of Total Budget: 6.78%	7.3-29
486	Institutional Support -Admin. functions to include executive management, personnel services, fiscal operations, administrative computing, and public relations.	State: 0 Federal: 410,540 Other: 3,432,599 Total: 3,843,139 % of Total Budget: 7.26%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 3,682,252 Total: 3,682,252 % of Total Budget: 7.02%	7.3-22
490	Research -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: 676,715 Other: 183,084 Total: 859,799 % of Total Budget: 1.62%	State: 0 Federal: 659,355 Other: 275,739 Total: 935,094 % of Total Budget: 1.78%	7.3-23,24,25,26
491	Public Service -Activities established to provide non-instructional services beneficial to individuals and groups external to the institution.	State: 0 Federal: 201,580 Other: 1,905,829 Total: 2,107,409 % of Total Budget: 3.98%	State: 0 Federal: 343,648 Other: 1,613,908 Total: 1,957,556 % of Total Budget: 3.73%	7.6-3
492	Academic Support -Administrative functions that directly support instruction, research, advising, and public service to include libraries, computing services, and academic administration.	State: 0 Federal: 280,653 Other: 2,616,701 Total: 2,897,354 % of Total Budget: 5.47%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 3,097,632 Total: 3,097,632 % of Total Budget: 5.90%	7.3-21
493	Student Services -Student focused activities to include admissions, health, athletics, registration, career advising, student organizations, and other student services.	State: 0 Federal: 300,829 Other: 4,838,612 Total: 5,139,441 % of Total Budget: 9.70%	State: 0 Federal: 114,148 Other: 5,096,667 Total: 5,210,815 % of Total Budget: 9.93%	7.3-28
494	Operations & Maintenance Administration -Facilities support services to include campus security, capital planning, facilities administration, buildings and grounds maintenance, utilities, and major repairs and renovations.	State: 0 Federal: 1,598,840 Other: 2,474,332 Total: 4,073,172 % of Total Budget: 7.69%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 3,595,915 Total: 3,595,915 % of Total Budget: 6.85%	7.3-30
495	Scholarships -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: 6,243,767 Other: 9,307,627 Total: 15,551,394 % of Total Budget: 29.36%	State: 0 Federal: 5,826,873 Other: 9,086,389 Total: 14,913,262 % of Total Budget: 28.42%	7.3-7,8,9,10,11; 7.3-12,13
Grand Total		State: 6,207,411 Federal: 9,723,699 Other: 37,040,254 Total: 52,971,364	State: 5,924,243 Federal: 6,944,024 Other: 39,604,961 Total: 52,473,228	

Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Criteria

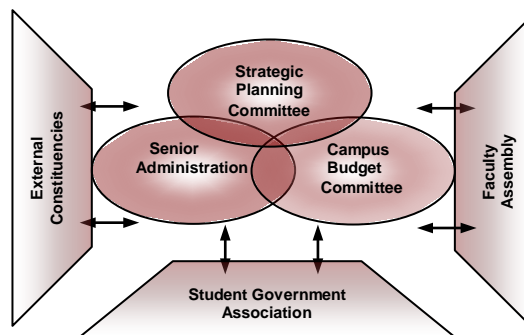
Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility

1.1 How do senior leaders develop and deploy their organization's vision and values throughout the leadership system, to the workforce, 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 collaborative process that has involved all stakeholders to develop a statement of the university's vision and values. 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 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, USCA Alumni Council, Inclusion Advisory Council, the Aiken County Commission on Higher Education, friends of the university, and local media. In addition to making informative presentations at regular meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the Classified Employees Assembly, the Chancellor provides a formal update to all faculty and staff about university issues and finances each semester. Further, the Chancellor and senior administrators frequently meet with faculty, staff, and students to gather feedback, to answer questions, and to discuss issues.

1.2 How do senior leaders create a sustainable organization with a focus on action to accomplish the organization's mission, strategic objectives, improve performance, and attain its vision?

Senior leaders typically meet Monday mornings each week to discuss and coordinate tactical and strategic operations to advance the university's mission, vision, and values. The Senior Administration regularly reviews financial and operational performance measures and provides annual reports to the Strategic Planning Committee. Further, senior administrators belong to the Faculty Assembly and they participate on the Strategic Planning Committee, the Campus Budget Committee, and appropriate committees of the Faculty Assembly.



1.3 How do senior leaders personally promote and support an organizational 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 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. Ethics training is also offered periodically to faculty and staff through the Human Resources Office.

1.4 How do senior leaders create an environment for organizational and workforce learning?

Senior leaders encourage and provide support for unit-level retreats, professional development workshops, and conference attendance by faculty and staff. Orientation and mentoring programs for new faculty and staff help to integrate new employees into the University community. Tuition reimbursement and flexible scheduling enable faculty and staff to take courses for undergraduate and graduate credit. The Center for Teaching Excellence provides faculty workshops throughout the year, and professional staff development workshops are routinely scheduled through the Human Resources Office.

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. Additionally, the University sponsors leaders at all campus levels to participate in opportunities such as the Leadership Aiken County and Leadership South Carolina. Succession planning issues are discussed each year at the annual senior staff retreat.

1.6 How do senior leaders communicate with, engage, empower, and motivate the entire workforce throughout the organization? How do senior leaders take an active role in 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 employs an annual comprehensive study of salary inequity and compression to evaluate faculty salaries and approve increases when funds are available. Similarly, a comprehensive review of staff salary is done periodically, with the last one being conducted in 2011. Funds, if available, are used to address observed inequities. Appropriate executive staff members review annual evaluations of classified employees reporting through their divisions. Senior leaders recognize faculty and staff achievement at Classified Employee Assembly and Faculty Assembly meetings and the annual Faculty/Staff Appreciation Luncheon. Faculty awards for teaching, scholarship, and service are presented by the Chancellor at Academic Convocation, and staff awards are presented annually in May. The Chancellor also sends letters recognizing accomplishments, birthdays, and employment anniversaries.

1.7 How does the organization evaluate the performance of senior leaders including the head of the organization, 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?

At least every three years, 360 degree evaluations are conducted of the senior administration, with the results becoming part of their performance reviews; these evaluations last occurred in 2012 and are next scheduled for Fall 2014. 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 the executive administration to evaluate the Chancellor. The Chancellor also evaluates executive staff annually, and Department Chairs and Deans are reviewed annually by the EVCAA. Senior leaders use feedback from these evaluations to adjust their management style in an effort to improve their leadership effectiveness.

1.8 What performance measures do senior leaders review to inform them on needed actions?

Key measures are maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and are reviewed by senior administrators and the Strategic Planning Committee on an ongoing basis. Most indicators are tracked

over a several years to identify trends and are benchmarked against five peer groups of relevance to USC Aiken: a national peer group of 84 comparable and aspirational public institutions with similar missions, programs, geographic settings, and enrollments; a southeastern United States regional comprehensive peer group consisting of 43 comparable institutions; a state peer group of 12 South Carolina public institutions; a peer group of 9 South Carolina state teaching institutions; and a group of 10 institutions in the Peach Belt Athletic Conference, of which USC Aiken is a charter member. All administrative and academic departments also submit an annual review in which performance measures are used to justify continuing use of, modifications to, or additional operational strategies. These departmental outcomes drive budgetary allocations.

1.8-1 Key Performance Indicators

Academics	Enrollment	Student Costs & Financial Aid	Finance & Advancement
Degrees Awarded by Level Retention & Graduation Rates Faculty Composition Student-Faculty Ratio NSSE Benchmarks Licensure Exam Pass Rates	Headcount Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment Student Body Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Race & Gender o International Students o Place of Residence 	Tuition & Fees % Receiving Fin. Aid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Any Aid o Federal Grants o State/Local Grants o Institutional Grants o Loans 	Revenue Per FTE by Area Expenditures Per FTE by Area Faculty Salaries Giving Rates, Foundation Assets Staff Per FTE

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

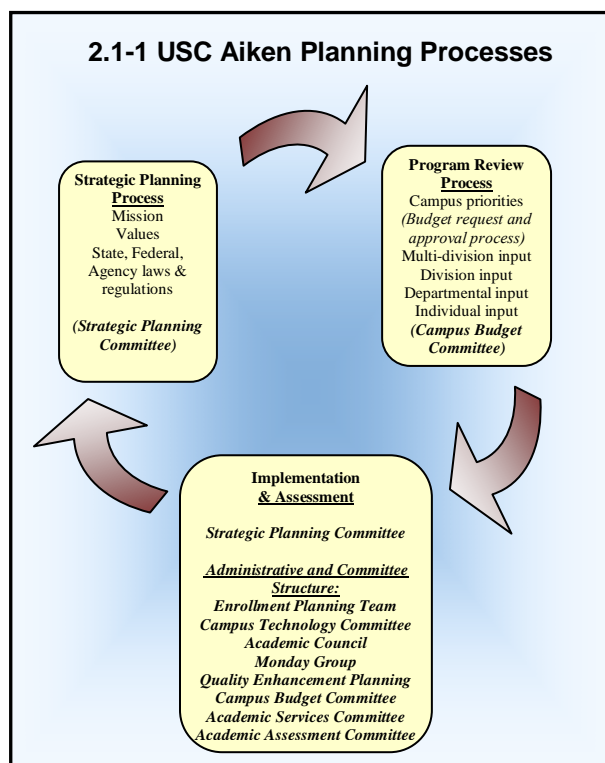
Regular and ongoing review of programs, services, and offerings enables senior leaders to anticipate and take proactive steps to reduce adverse impacts. Typically, such instances involve changes in or elimination of programs. In response to budgetary drawbacks by the State, a series of “grapevine” sessions were held with constituent groups to discuss the impact of various courses of action, to solicit ideas of how to save resources and to discuss means to minimize the impact on the quantity and quality of academic offerings. Significant efforts have been undertaken to coordinate curricula with P-12 school systems, 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 its accreditors as well as state and federal agencies.

1.10 How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates? Include how senior leaders determine areas of emphasis for organizational involvement and support, and how senior leaders, the workforce, and the organization’s students contribute to improving these communities.

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 service learning initiatives and student organizations and activities focused on community service; 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. Areas of emphasis are determined in part by visibility, the contribution of activities to the development of student engagement and principled citizenship, and the opportunity to make a difference in the community and region. We also support the community by providing office space for the Regional Economic Development Partnership, Cardiac Rehabilitation with the Aiken Regional Medical Center, and the Small Business Development Association on campus.

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

2.1. What is your Strategic Planning process, including key participants, and how does it address: the organizations' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; financial, regulatory, and other potential risks; shifts in technology, student and community demographics, markets, student and stakeholder preferences, and competition; workforce capabilities and needs; long-term organizational sustainability and organizational continuity in emergencies; and your ability to execute the strategic plan.



The strategic planning process at USCA emphasizes shared responsibility for outcomes. The Strategic Planning Committee, which meets throughout the academic year, includes senior administrators and faculty leaders as well as staff, and student representatives. This group reviews internal and external challenges and opportunities, monitors progress and key strategic indicators, and proposes adjustments to goals, objectives and strategies. In light of a new strategic plan for the USC system, a significant review and revision process occurred in 2009. Continuing initiatives from the previous Strategic Plan were reorganized around 5 new system-wide goals, new initiatives and indicators were developed, and a “balanced scorecard” approach was adopted. In 2010-11, the Strategic Planning Committee used key indicator data to prioritize initiatives. In 2011-12, the Strategic Planning Committee focused on retention and graduation rates.

2.2. How do strategic objectives address the strategic challenges identified in the Executive Summary? (Section 1, question 4).

2.2-1 Relationship between Strategic Challenges and Strategic Objectives

Key Strategic Challenges (Section I, p.3)	Strategic Objectives (Section 2.7, p.17)
Educational In the face of significant budgetary shortfalls, maintenance of educational quality is the foremost challenge. The environment for recruiting and retaining qualified students continues to be competitive. We continue to be challenged to increase the number of graduates through an admission process focused on both demonstrated talent and scholarly potential without being so selective that we fail to serve our key constituents. The provision of accessible academic and student support services that promote success is also essential despite reduced staff.	I-A. Graduates who are engaged learners and principled citizens I-B. Faculty who are dynamic teachers I-D. Policies and practices that promote student achievement I-E. Campus spaces that stimulate learning II-A. Support for research, scholarly and creative endeavors that enhance the quality and profile of the institution II-C. Students engaged in external research, scholarly and creative endeavors III-A. Degree programs that are responsive to local, regional and global needs and opportunities
Operational The resources to address faculty and staff work-loads, allocate appropriate office space, and distribute increased responsibilities in the face of continuing budget constraints and human resource challenges must be established.	II-A. Support for research, scholarly and creative endeavors that enhance the quality and profile of the institution III-B. Partnerships that capitalize on and expand capabilities, expertise, and service III-D. Programs and activities that provide services to the community III-G. Programs and activities focused on environmental sustainability

Key Strategic Challenges (Section I, p.3)	Strategic Objectives (Section 2.7, p.17)
	IV-B. Enhanced recruitment and retention activities IV-C. Engaging activities that enhance the quality of life on the campus and promote university values IV-D. Enhanced campus environment IV-E. Business and operational processes that increase effectiveness and efficiency V-B. Recognition and visibility of University achievements
Human Resources A significant number of faculty and staff retirements has prompted heightened competition with other institutions for qualified personnel. Coupled with this are difficulties in attracting and retaining faculty and staff given state pay limitations, and the existence of declining state appropriations that do not allow for any salary increases and inequity/compression adjustments. The state economic context has made it much more difficult to attract and retain highly qualified candidates.	I-B. Faculty who are dynamic teachers III-B. Partnerships that capitalize on and expand capabilities, expertise, and service. III-F. Environmentally astute faculty and staff IV-A. High quality and diverse faculty and staff
Financial Sharp decreases in state allocations have significantly shifted costs to students whose ability to pay for increased tuition is limited. Lack of funding for new construction decreases the University's ability to serve more students and to improve the educational experience for those who are already enrolled. We need to identify other substantial resources to offset decreasing state appropriations and to increase allocations to severely depleted operating budgets.	II-B. Stable source of funding for research, scholarly and creative endeavors III-C. Efficient and sustainable partnerships and programs IV-E. Business and operational processes that increase effectiveness and efficiency IV-F. Financial plan that advances University goals and objectives V-A. Alumni and donor relationships that enhance USC Aiken
Community-related Public service and outreach activities are threatened by economic conditions. Greater connections with alumni, friends, and the surrounding community must continue to be developed to build financial support for USC Aiken. We need to be increasingly strategic in our outreach activities and external relationships.	II-C. Students engaged in external research, scholarly and creative endeavors III-D. Programs and activities that provide services to the community III-E. Increased environmental consciousness V-A. Alumni and donor relationships that enhance USC Aiken V-B. Recognition and visibility of University achievements V-C. Community pride in and commitment to USC Aiken

2.3. *How do you evaluate and improve the strategic planning process?*

The Strategic Planning Committee monitors the progress of the plan and receives updates from the senior administration and appropriate groups. The outcomes and effectiveness of this process are evaluated by the senior administration on an ongoing basis. USC Aiken's strategic planning process ensures responsiveness to student, staff, faculty, and community needs through (1) establishment of and/or restructuring of key committees or groups, (2) continuous attention to monitoring progress made toward accomplishing objectives, and (3) linking of annual program review and budgeting processes to strategic objectives of the University.

2.4. *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.*

Potential initiatives and action plans associated with strategic objectives can arise from myriad sources, including best practices employed at other institutions, alumni, community constituents, faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Suggestions for strategies are carefully considered by the Strategic Planning Committee. Key to USC Aiken's planning and implementation process is overlapping membership of the Strategic Planning Committee, the Campus Budget Committee, and the Senior Administration to ensure fiscal alignment with strategic objectives. Fiscal planning and resource allocation takes place in the context of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The implementation of action plans is evaluated by the senior administration on an ongoing basis and is documented annually in a Strategic action report.

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

Each strategic objective associated with the five goals of the strategic plan is assigned to one or more senior administrators who champion its implementation and coordinate communication of accomplishments. Implementation progress is noted through regular updates given to the Strategic Planning Committee. All proceedings and reports of this committee are posted on the strategic planning web site maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. In response to recently conducted focus groups suggesting that more effective communication about strategic planning and its outcomes is desired, the Strategic Planning Committee has adopted a “balanced scorecard” approach to track and communicate progress on strategic objectives.

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

Progress on action plans has generally been measured by the extent to which strategies were implemented or accomplished; these accomplishments have been reported by senior administrators to the Strategic Planning Committee, and summary reports are posted on the strategic planning web site.

2.7. *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 plan URL is <http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/StrategicPlanning.html>.

2.7-1 Strategic Planning Chart

Program Number and Title	Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 12-13 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
482-85. Instruction	I-A. Graduates who are engaged learners and principled citizens	I-A.1. Establish an ongoing process to monitor and review the general education requirements and to revise as appropriate to better meet desired learning outcomes	7.1-1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9;
		I-A.2. Ensure that all graduates have participated in at least one experiential learning opportunity (e.g., faculty-mentored research, study abroad, service learning, internships, etc)	7.1-11,12,13,14,15;
		I-A.4. Expand social and academic networks through linked courses and learning communities	7.1-16, 17, 18, 19;
		I-A.5. Increase the number of graduates from the Honors Program	7.2-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6;
		I-A.6. Assign responsibility for American Democracy Project initiatives	7.3-20; 7.3-27;
			7.3-31; 7.3-33;
	I-B. Faculty who are dynamic teachers	I-B.1. Promote and expand the utilization of available resources on innovative teaching strategies for individual faculty and departments	7.4-2, 3, 4, 5;
		I-B.3. Review the Student Evaluation of Teaching instrument for possible revision	7.4-9;
	I-C. Policies and practices that promote student achievement	I-C.1. Conduct an annual discussion of factors affecting academic standards and student success	7.4-10, 11, 12, 13;
		I-C.2. Adjust class sizes as necessary to ensure effective student-instructor interaction	7.4-16;
	II-C. Students engaged in external research, scholarly and creative endeavors		7.5-1;
		II-C.1. Expand opportunities for students to engage in collaborative research, scholarly and creative endeavors (e.g., opportunities with business and local art groups, research collaborations, etc.)	7.5-4, 5, 6, 7;
		III-A.1. Explore development and/or modification of degree	7.5-12, 13, 14, 15, 16;
			7.5-17; 7.5-22, 23;
			7.5-24, 25, 26;

Program Number and Title	Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 12-13 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
	<p>III-A. Degree programs that are responsive to local, regional and global needs and opportunities</p> <p>III-E. Increased environmental consciousness</p> <p>III-G. Programs and activities focused on environmental sustainability</p> <p>IV-A. High quality and diverse faculty and staff</p> <p>IV-F. Financial plan that advances university goals and objectives</p>	<p>programs in response to regional research and employment opportunities as well as market demands</p> <p>III-A.2. Expand course delivery methods to respond to diverse populations</p> <p>III-E.1. Increase environmental consciousness among students</p> <p>III-G.1. Increase the number of courses with objectives that focus on environmental impact awareness</p> <p>III-G.2. Offer opportunities for Inter-curricular Enhancement (ICE) events that focus on environmental impact awareness</p> <p>IV-A.1. Enhance programs and office functions by adding faculty and staff positions as the need is demonstrated through the appropriate institutional planning processes</p> <p>IV-A.2. Develop a more effective and discriminating faculty evaluation rating system</p> <p>IV-A.4. Seek ethnic, racial and gender diversity among faculty and staff at all levels by developing search strategies and policies that ensure a diverse pool of qualified applicants</p> <p>IV-A.5. Develop external relationships with institutions such as professional associations, peer institutions and community-based organizations that will support campus diversity goals</p> <p>IV-A.6. Engage members of the Aiken community as a support system to make newly recruited minority faculty feel welcome in the community</p> <p>IV-F.2. Maintain competitive incoming salaries and address salary compression for continuing faculty and staff with the goal of matching, then maintaining, USCA salaries at the average salary of disciplinary peers</p>	<p>7.5-30, 31</p> <p>7.6-6</p>
487-89. Auxiliary	<p>III-C. Efficient and sustainable partnerships and programs</p> <p>IV-C. Engaging activities that enhance the quality of life on the campus and promote university values</p> <p>IV-E. Business and operational processes that increase effectiveness and efficiency</p> <p>IV-F. Financial plan that advances university goals and objectives</p>	<p>III-C.1. Monitor the viability of existing programs to effectively and efficiently meet the University mission</p> <p>IV-C.5. Assess current and develop new residential experiences that promote an enhanced campus community</p> <p>IV-E.4. Encourage responsible stewardship of existing resources</p> <p>IV-F.1. Increase alternative revenue sources to state appropriations</p>	<p>7.2-10; 7.2-12, 13, 14;</p> <p>7.5-27; 7.6-6</p>
486. Institutional Support	<p>II-B. Stable source of funding for research, scholarly and creative endeavors</p> <p>III-B. Partnerships that capitalize on and expand capabilities, expertise, and service</p> <p>III-C. Efficient and sustainable partnerships and programs</p>	<p>II-B.1. Establish a stable source of funding to provide faculty with start-up funding for research, scholarly pursuits and creative activities</p> <p>II-B.2. Establish a stable source of funding for equipment and facilities that support the research, scholarship and creative activities of faculty</p> <p>II-B.3. Establish a stable source of funding to increase library resources in support of research, scholarship and creative activities</p> <p>II-B.5. Increase the number of endowed chairs and professorships, as well as funds available to recognize and support distinguished faculty research, scholarship and creative endeavors</p> <p>III-B.1. Monitor the effectiveness and depth of outreach and collaboration across the University with K-12 education</p> <p>III-B.2. Increase collaborative interactions between USCA and other colleges</p> <p>III-B.3. Increase the effectiveness of professional Development School programs</p> <p>III-C.1. Monitor the viability of existing programs to effectively and efficiently meet the University mission</p> <p>III-C.2. Invest resources in identifying and developing programs and initiatives with other entities that will enhance revenue production</p>	<p>7.1-10; 7.2-7; 7.2-11;</p> <p>7.2-15; 7.3-1, 2, 3, 4;</p> <p>7.3-5, 6; 7.3-14, 15;</p> <p>7.3-16, 17, 18, 19;</p> <p>7.3-21, 22;</p> <p>7.3-28, 29, 30;</p> <p>7.3-32; 7.4-1;</p> <p>7.4-6, 7, 8;</p> <p>7.4-15; 7.4-17;</p> <p>7.5-2; 7.5-8, 9, 10, 11;</p> <p>7.5-20; 7.5-29;</p> <p>7.5-32, 33</p> <p>7.6-1, 2;</p>

Program Number and Title	Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 12-13 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
	<p>III-E. Increased environmental consciousness</p> <p>III-F. Environmentally astute faculty and staff</p> <p>III-G. Programs and activities focused on environmental sustainability</p> <p>IV-B. Enhanced recruitment and retention activities</p> <p>IV-E. Business and operational processes that increase effectiveness and efficiency</p> <p>IV-F. Financial plan that advances university goals and objectives</p> <p>V-A. Alumni and donor relationships that enhance USC Aiken</p> <p>V-B. Recognition and visibility of university achievements</p> <p>V-C. Community pride in and commitment to USC Aiken</p>	<p>III-E.1. Increase environmental consciousness among students</p> <p>III-F.1. Increase environmental consciousness among faculty and staff</p> <p>III-G.3. Engage in activities that promote the Presidents' Climate Commitment (e.g., decrease greenhouse gas emissions, increase recycling efforts, etc.)</p> <p>IV-B.5. Set academic tuition and fees for in-state residents comparable to those of peer institutions in South Carolina</p> <p>IV-E.1. Effectively implement new enterprise software systems to facilitate recruitment of students</p> <p>IV-E.2. Effectively develop and implement new enterprise software systems to facilitate assessment, planning and reaccreditation efforts</p> <p>IV-E.3. Identify and effectively implement appropriate operational support software systems</p> <p>IV-E.4. Encourage responsible stewardship of existing resources</p> <p>IV-F.1. Increase alternative revenue sources to state appropriations</p> <p>IV-F.2. Maintain competitive incoming salaries and address salary compression for continuing faculty and staff with the goal of matching, then maintaining average USCA salaries at the average salary of disciplinary peers</p> <p>IV-F.3. Review all unit level budgets every three years</p> <p>IV-F.4. Establish and fund a renovation reserve account for the regular maintenance of facilities and infrastructure needs, as well as non-technology furnishings and equipment.</p> <p>V-A.1. Increase participation in programs and events to maintain alumni relationships with USC Aiken</p> <p>V-A.2. Increase donor and alumni participation and the average size of gifts</p> <p>V-B.1. Develop a campus-wide initiative to promote recognition and visibility of student excellence in academics, research, creative endeavors, athletics, and public service</p> <p>V-B.2. Develop a campus-wide initiative to promote recognition and visibility of faculty excellence and leadership in teaching, scholarship, the arts, and professional and public service</p> <p>V-B.3. Develop a campus-wide initiative to promote recognition and visibility of staff excellence and leadership in public and professional service</p> <p>V-B.4. Develop a campus-wide initiative to promote recognition and visibility of alumni excellence and leadership in public and professional endeavors</p> <p>V-C.1. Develop a marketing campaign to increase community attendance at campus events and programs</p> <p>V-C.2. Develop a comprehensive approach for outreach efforts to retirees</p>	7.6-7, 8
490. Research	<p>II-A. Support for research, scholarly and creative endeavors that enhance the quality and profile of the institution</p> <p>II-B. Stable source of funding for research, scholarly and creative endeavors</p>	<p>II-A.1. Determine and implement additional means of faculty support to allow faculty more time to engage in research and creative activities</p> <p>II-A.2. Determine and implement a means to balance faculty workload to allow for more scholarly activities</p> <p>II-B.4. Increase the number of extramural funding requests in support of faculty research, scholarship, and creative endeavors</p>	<p>7.3-23, 24, 25, 26;</p> <p>7.4-17; 7.5-28</p>

Program Number and Title	Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 12-13 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
491. Public Service	<p>I-A. Graduates who are engaged learners and principled citizens</p> <p>III-B. Partnerships that capitalize on and expand capabilities, expertise and service</p> <p>III-D. Programs and activities that provide services to the community</p> <p>V-C. Community pride in and commitment to USC Aiken</p>	<p>I-A.3. Increase participation in co-curricular service opportunities</p> <p>III-B.1. Monitor the effectiveness and depth of outreach and collaboration across the University with K-12 education</p> <p>III-B.2. Increase collaborative interactions between USCA and other colleges</p> <p>III-B.3. Increase the effectiveness of professional Development School programs</p> <p>III-D.1 Increase and monitor opportunities for student organizations to participate in community service</p> <p>III-D.2. Pursue opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to participate in applied research and consulting that has an impact on the community</p> <p>V-C.1. Develop a marketing campaign to increase community attendance at campus events and programs</p> <p>V-C.2. Develop a comprehensive approach for outreach efforts to retirees</p>	7.6-3, 4
492. Academic Support	<p>I-B. Faculty who are dynamic teachers</p> <p>I-D. Advisors who provide effective and sound academic counsel</p> <p>II-B. Stable source of funding for research, scholarly and creative endeavors</p>	<p>I-B.1. Promote and expand the utilization of available resources on innovative teaching strategies for individual faculty and departments</p> <p>I-B.2. Fund library subscriptions on content area pedagogy and publicize through the Center for Teaching Excellence website. One major journal on teaching in each discipline should be funded</p> <p>I-D.1. Increase the size of the professional advising staff and offer more training for academic advisors</p> <p>I-D.2. Enhance the efficiency of academic advising by expanded use of electronic resources</p> <p>I-D.3. Limit advising loads to no more than 30 advisees</p> <p>II-B.1. Establish a stable source of funding to provide faculty with start-up funding for research, scholarly pursuits and creative endeavors</p> <p>II-B.2. Establish a stable source of funding for equipment and facilities that support the research, scholarship and creative activities of faculty</p> <p>II-B.3. Establish a stable source of funding to increase library resources in support of research, scholarship, and creative activities</p>	<p>7.2-8, 9; 7.4-17;</p> <p>7.5-3, 4; 7.5-19;</p> <p>7.5-34</p>
493. Student Services	<p>I-A. Graduates who are engaged learners and principled citizens</p> <p>III-D. Programs and activities that provide services to the community</p> <p>IV-B. Enhanced recruitment and retention activities</p> <p>IV-C. Engaging activities that enhance the quality of life on the campus and promote university values</p>	<p>I-A.4. Expand social and academic networks through linked courses and learning communities</p> <p>III-D.1 Increase and monitor opportunities for student organizations to participate in community service</p> <p>IV-B.1. Continue to use the Enrollment Planning Team to address enrollment management issues</p> <p>IV-B.2. Increase the size and diversity of a qualified student body</p> <p>IV-B.3. Increase opportunities for faculty and staff to actively participate in student recruitment and retention</p> <p>IV-B.4. Increase merit and need-based scholarship funding (fee waiver/Bookstore/partnership, by at least the same percentage annually as the percentage increase in tuition</p> <p>IV-B.5. Set academic tuition and fees for in-state residents comparable to those of peer institutions in South Carolina</p> <p>IV-B.6. Increase scholarship funding to the median of peer in-state institutions</p> <p>IV-C.1. Develop special traditions/ceremonies including those designed to celebrate the beginning and end of students' careers at USC Aiken</p> <p>IV-C.2. Develop social, academic and service events that bring students, faculty and staff together outside the classroom</p>	<p>7.1-20, 21; 7.5-18;</p> <p>7.5-21</p>

Program Number and Title	Supported Organization Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 12-13 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
	IV-D. Enhanced campus environment	IV-C.3. Encourage student, staff and faculty interaction in the organization of and participation in campus activities. IV-C.4. Expand campus programs that facilitate an examination of and tolerance for diverse views on politics, lifestyles, religion and culture IV-C.5. Assess current and develop new residential experiences that promote an enhanced campus community IV-D.1. Develop common areas that create opportunities for student interaction and social engagement IV-D.2. Invigorate campus space through increased use of high-quality graphic displays and banners that reinforce campus life and values IV-D.3. Engage students in campus beautification efforts IV-D.4. Encourage student leadership on initiatives to improve the health and safety of the campus environment	
494. Operations & Maintenance Administration	I-E. Campus spaces that stimulate learning III-G. Programs and activities focused on environmental sustainability IV-D. Enhanced campus environment IV-F. Financial plan that advances university goals and objectives	I-E.1. Create and enhance common areas to promote informal study I-E.2. Create spaces that encourage independent, assisted, and collaborative learning activities, including a dynamic learning center I-E.3. Expand and reassign academic space to satisfy programmatic growth III-G.3. Engage in activities that promote the Presidents' Climate Commitment (e.g., decrease greenhouse gas emissions, increase recycling efforts, etc.) IV-D.1. Develop common areas that create opportunities for student interaction and social engagement IV-D.2. Invigorate campus space through increased use of high-quality graphic displays and banners that reinforce campus life and values IV-D.3. Engage students in campus beautification efforts IV-D.4. Encourage student leadership on initiatives to improve the health and safety of the campus environment IV-F.4. Establish and fund a renovation reserve account for the regular maintenance of facilities and infrastructure needs, as well as non-technology furnishings and equipment.	7.4-14
495. Scholarships	V-A. Alumni and donor relationships that enhance USC Aiken	IV-B.4. Increase merit and need-based scholarship funding (fee waiver/Bookstore/partnership, by at least the same percentage annually as the percentage increase in tuition) IV-B.6. Increase scholarship funding to the median of peer in-state institutions V-A.2. Increase donor and alumni participation and the average size of gifts	7.3-7, 8, 9, 10, 11; 7.3-12, 13

Category 3 – Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus***3.1. 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, and anticipated employment opportunities for graduates. Survey and focus group research with current students and research about the external environment also contribute to these practices.

3.2. 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. The Chancellor holds a regular "Chancellor's Panel" as a means of gathering feedback from students. Student feedback about expectations, outcomes, and satisfaction is also 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 and communicated through reports and presentations to key constituent groups.

3.3. How do you use information and feedback 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, and 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.

3.4. 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 other indirect assessment instruments. The results of evaluative processes are used by departments to optimize program offerings by eliminate or modifying strategies 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

Instrument	Stakeholders	Frequency
Post-admission follow-up	Admitted students	Following admission
Orientation surveys	Incoming students, parents	Before classes begin
CIRP or In-house freshman survey	Incoming freshmen	During orientation alternates every other year
Course evaluations	Current students	End of every course
National Survey of Student Engagement	Current freshmen and seniors	Every other spring
Residence life survey	Residential students	Every spring
Bookstore Service Survey	Faculty, staff, students	Alternates faculty & staff, and students annually
Focus groups	Current students	Ongoing
Library	Faculty, staff, 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 2 years, 3-4 years after graduation
Chronicle's Great Places to Work Survey	Faculty & Staff	Annually

3.5. *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 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. They also value being a small campus connected to 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 time as students, and the campus offers multiple opportunities for individualized programs of study and undergraduate research.

3.6. *How does your student and stakeholder complaint management process ensure that complaints are resolved promptly and effectively?*

Formal grievances and complaints must follow specified steps and meet time requirements as delineated in the relevant grievance policy. If at any point during the grievance process someone fails to act within the required number of days, the principal parties in the grievance may appeal to the next step. Changes in the time requirements may be made only if all parties involved in the grievance agree. Formal grievance procedures are recorded and files are maintained according to policy. Student grievance policies are delineated in the Student Handbook; faculty grievance policies are specified in the Faculty Manual.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

4.1 *How do you select which operations, processes and systems to measure to determine student learning, for tracking daily operations and overall 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 are used to improve student learning and the quality of services. Further, operational outcomes at the departmental level are linked to strategic objectives whenever appropriate; these hierarchical links feed relevant operational assessment measures to key performance measures for strategic objectives. Vice-chancellors also report additional strategic actions completed within their scope of responsibility.

4.2 How do you select, collect, align, and integrate data/information for analysis to provide effective support for decision making and innovation throughout your organization?

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness consults with all units about the structure and implementation of their assessment systems and provides coordinated administrative oversight of the collection, storage, and presentation of data/information necessary for effective decision making. Key performance measures and comparative benchmarking data are organized and made available to unit directors via a secure internet portal maintained by the IE Office.

4.3 How do you keep your measures current with educational service needs and directions?

Each academic unit implements ongoing assessment of degree programs and general education courses in their areas. Faculty members keep current with developments in their disciplines and have the responsibility to articulate student learning outcomes for their academic programs, to periodically measure learning outcomes in major disciplines and general education, to analyze findings, and to use results from this process for curricular improvement. Directors of administrative offices, in consultation with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, identify and periodically review the measures and information needed for operations and effective decision making. *Ad hoc* reports and data requests can also be submitted to the Institutional Effectiveness Office via an on-line request form.

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?

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. Serving as a measure of relative program quality, academic units often employ nationally-normed, discipline-specific, standardized assessments such as Major Field Tests of student learning outcomes and the Proficiency Profile Test. Test results along with other assessment measures are reviewed annually by faculty to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and to provide guidance on possible curricular changes. Strategic indicators 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 make needed data and information available? How do you make them accessible to your workforce, students, and stakeholders?

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides access to data in support of operations and decision making. *Ad hoc* and standard reports can be generated via a secured web interface maintained by the

Office of Institutional Effectiveness. As well, summative data in the form of reports to external agencies are posted on a publically accessible website maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Information arising from institutional research projects and surveys is typically presented to various constituent groups on campus and is also posted on the website. Key performance indicators of the Strategic Plan are also maintained and made available to members of the Strategic Planning Committee and Senior Administration.

4.6 How do you ensure data 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, facilitates delivery of operational and strategic data via a secured web portal, and conducts in-depth studies upon request. The IE Office also audits data to ensure its integrity, accuracy and security.

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

Academic and administrative units participate in ongoing assessment activities and report how findings are used for improvements in annual program review reports. These reports are examined by the senior administrator responsible for each division. An enterprise software system called TracDat provides the means through which administrators can pull data and similar requests (e.g., facilities requests, personnel requests, technology requests, etc) to generate reports for consideration by various committees (e.g., the Campus Budget Committee). Senior administrators working with the Campus Budget Committee then prioritize budgetary requests and assign funding based upon the availability of financial resources.

4.8 How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge (knowledge assets)? 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 leadership, mid-level managers, and various faculty members serve on visiting teams to other institutions for regional and national accreditation, research projects, and consortium agreements. Best practices are also identified and shared when administrators attend and make presentations at professional conferences. Quality enhancement efforts undertaken by *ad hoc* Faculty Committees entail a deliberate effort to research and identify best practices.

Category 5 – Workforce Focus

5.1 How do you organize and manage work to enable your workforce to develop and utilize their full potential, aligned with the organization’s objectives, strategies, and action plans and promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, innovation, and your organizational culture?

Senior administrators work directly with staff and faculty to communicate the objectives, strategies, and action plans to implement the university’s Strategic Plan. The Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) process used with classified staff encourages two-way communication between supervisors and employees. Department Chairs and School Deans conduct an annual review of each faculty member that is integrated into the promotion and tenure and post-tenure review processes. Grounded in USC Aiken’s value of collegiality, its culture features openness through a flat organizational structure, allowing for increased communications without several layers of management. Faculty and staff commonly describe USC Aiken as a “family” and praise 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. In addition, multiple cross-

functional committees operate on the principle of inclusiveness and diversity, ensuring all campus constituents have a voice in decision making processes. Human resources processes are evaluated annually through the administrative program review system in which a number of indicators, such as employee turnover rate, is monitored, and overall alignment of human resources with strategic needs is assessed in regular senior administration retreats.

5.2 *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 Director of the Library, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs 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, division and unit meetings are held regularly to promote communication and cooperation. The institution also provides support for annual retreats at the division/department level. The Chancellor holds a minimum of three campus-wide meetings each year to provide an overview of campus priorities. Consultants are often retained to evaluate best practices on campus. Recent reviews of marketing efforts and academic advisement have been conducted.

5.3 *How does your workforce performance management system, including feedback to and from individual members of the workforce 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.

5.4 *How do you accomplish effective succession planning? How do you manage effective career progression for your entire workforce throughout the organization?*

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

5.5 *How does your development and learning system for leaders address the following: development of personal leadership attributes; development of organizational knowledge; ethical practices; your core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishment of action plans?*

Senior administrators identify staff with the potential to progress to more responsible leadership roles within the institution. Each year employees are selected to participate in leadership programs such as

Leadership Aiken County and Leadership South Carolina. Ethics training is also offered periodically to faculty and staff through the Human Resources Office. The faculty governance process provides opportunities for faculty to gain leadership experience and knowledge of the institution. To facilitate the development of organizational knowledge for future leaders, less experienced faculty and staff are often called upon to participate on committees and task forces that are led by well-known and respected senior faculty and staff. This affords the opportunity for younger faculty and staff to expand their understanding of university processes and policies and to practice their leadership skills.

5.6 How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?

The requisite skills, competencies and staffing levels needed to fulfill departmental goals and outcomes are defined by unit directors in consultation with senior administrators, and must be justified based upon assessment data. Requests for additional faculty and staff are made annually as part of the academic and administrative program review process. Faculty capacity needs are determined by an examination of credit hour production, teaching loads, degrees awarded, local and regional economic indicators, and student learning outcomes. Workforce capability and capacity needs associated with strategic initiatives are discussed and identified by senior administrators in consultation with the Strategic Planning and Campus Budget Committees.

5.7 How do you recruit, hire, and retain new employees?

Job announcements and advertisements for faculty and staff positions are posted on the internet, in various media publications, and on discipline-based distribution lists. These announcements, which must be approved by the division's senior administrator, include criteria for the position in keeping with identified workforce capability and capacity needs. Search Committees must follow a prescribed process that includes documented applicant screening, telephone interviews, contacting references, and on-campus visits by short-listed candidates. To ensure legal and ethical guidelines are adhered to, all search committees meet with the Director of Human Resources, who serves as the Affirmative Action Officer. Background checks are conducted prior to appointment on all staff who will handle university assets. Candidates for positions are required to meet with department members with whom they will work; the search committee; the unit director, Department Chair or School Dean; Human Resource staff; vice chancellor of the division; and, in some cases, the Chancellor. Offer letters are prepared by the Human Resources office for staff and by the office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for faculty. Newly hired faculty and staff are provided opportunities to acclimate and develop organizational knowledge by participating in orientation sessions and by attending meetings at the department, college, school, and institutional levels. In addition, new faculty and staff are assigned mentors to answer questions and to provide guidance on institutional matters.

5.8 How does your workforce education, training, and development address your key organizational needs? 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 identified by supervisors and through employee requests. All employees may participate in workshops sponsored by the Human Resources Office on topics such as diversity and effective supervision (7.5-14). The Office of Academic Affairs arranges multiple faculty workshops each year about teaching and learning, instructional technology, and grant writing. Interested employees may receive tuition assistance for one free credited course a semester that may count toward a degree and the Aiken Partnership of the USC Educational Foundation provides travel funding for faculty and staff to attend professional conferences.

5.9 How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your workforce and leader training and development systems?

Workshops and training sessions typically include an evaluative survey that participants complete anonymously. Feedback includes indirect measures of the effectiveness of the sessions as well as suggestions from participants for improvement and future training needs. The results are used to amend instruction. Further, annual performance reviews offer opportunities for supervisors and employees to reflect upon performance changes as a result of training and development opportunities.

5.10 What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to obtain information on workforce well-being, satisfaction and motivation?

Focus groups with faculty and staff are conducted on an ongoing basis to discuss such issues as the university's image, mission, and values, and the role of athletics on campus. In 2011-12, USC Aiken started to participate in the Great Places to Work Survey conducted by the Chronicle for Higher Education. Directors, Department Chairs and School Deans communicate with faculty and staff regarding their concerns and well-being and monitor their satisfaction and motivation. Focus group research has suggested that internal motivations to provide high quality and personalized service to students and the community are hallmarks of faculty and staff at USC Aiken.

5.11 How do you use workforce satisfaction assessment findings to identify and determine priorities for improvement?

Data about faculty and staff satisfaction are 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 several years, issues such as teaching load, advising load, and salary inequities were identified through assessment as areas for improvement.

5.12 How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment? (Include your work-place 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 police are trained medical first responders, and 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. Periodic assessment of hazardous materials, lab procedures and lab safety equipment are carried out by USC Columbia staff with follow-up expectations for improvement. Recently, USC Aiken has implemented an emergency text messaging system and emergency notification sirens. Additionally, the USC Aiken Emergency Action Plan (EAP) provides guidelines for appropriate response actions to 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://web.usca.edu/alert/>.

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 membership 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 early intervention with problems that could adversely impact employees' wellness and/or job performance.

Category 6 – Process Management**6.1 *How do you determine, and what are your organization's core competencies, and how do they relate to your mission, competitive environment, and action plans?***

USC Aiken's core competencies, which are tied to its mission and its evolution as a comprehensive liberal arts institution, are captured in its vision statement. The curriculum is 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. The institution has particularly strong ties to the community. USC Aiken enriches the quality of life in the surrounding region through a variety of programs and events in the fine and performing arts, athletics, continuing education, distance learning, and community service.

6.2 *What are your organization's key work processes?*

The key work processes at USC Aiken are broadly divided into 1) curricular experiences in a) general education, and b) the major discipline; 2) co-curricular experiences or learning outside of the classroom; and 3) academic and institutional support processes.

6.3 *How do you incorporate input from students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, suppliers and partners for determining your key work 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 members 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 membership on 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, and serve as advisors for student organizations.

6.4 *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?*

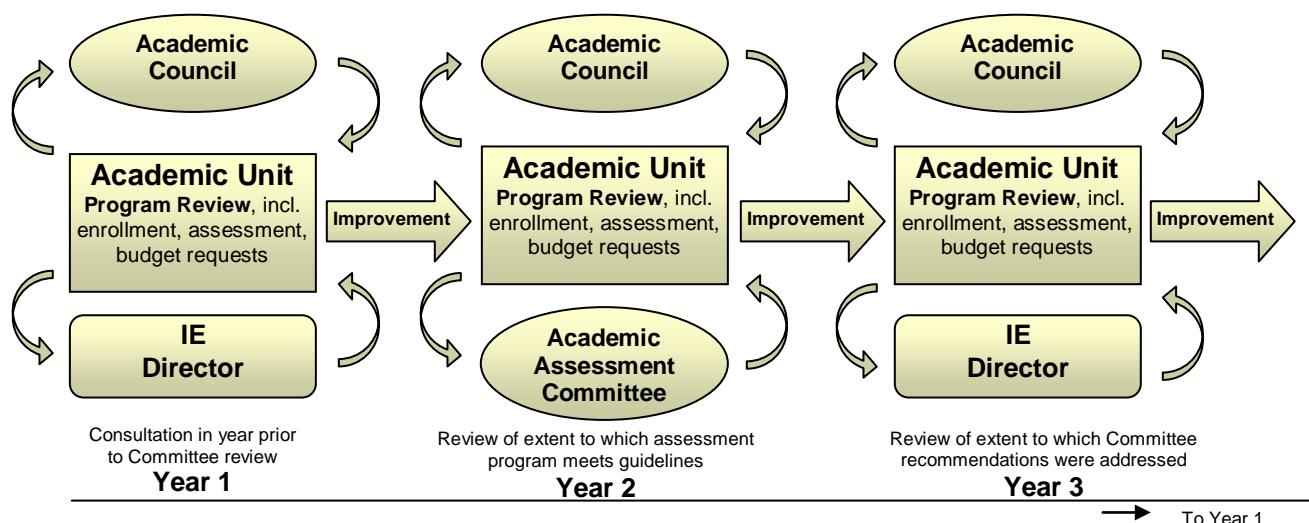
Minimum class sizes, targets for program enrollments, and degree production are used to reduce inefficiencies. Institutional policies for student probation and suspension establish a minimum for satisfactory academic progress, i.e. cycle time, as students pursue their degrees. The University takes advantage of new technology to improve cycle time in various other processes. For example, faculty members are required to submit grades online, students register for their courses online, library materials continue to migrate to internet-based resources as appropriate, documentation of assessment efforts is done via TracDat, and an increasing number of nursing, education, and business courses are being delivered online. Such transformations improve customer satisfaction by delivering services when students want them and also improve the speed of delivery.

6.5 *How do you systematically evaluate and improve your work processes?*

Annually, administrative units complete a report on outcomes of key measures relative to target performance levels. Action plans and funding needs to improve work processes are delineated based upon

assessment data. Academic departments also submit an annual review that includes a battery of common indicators such as faculty loads, credit and contact hours by discipline, enrollment counts, average class sizes, and number of graduates. Student evaluations of teaching are monitored, as are data from senior exit surveys and results of campus-wide surveys, broken out by discipline. Each program provides discipline-specific outcomes for student learning, evidence of the extent to which students have mastered these outcomes, and information on how the assessment results have been used to make program-level changes. These reports are reviewed annually by Academic Council, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. On a tri-annual rotational basis, academic program reviews are presented to the Academic Assessment Committee. The Committee examines the extent to which the department's assessment program meets institutional guidelines and makes specific recommendations to improve the unit's assessment process. Similar reviews are conducted by the Academic Services Committee of administrative units that provide academic support.

6.5-1 Three-Year Academic Assessment Review Cycle



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

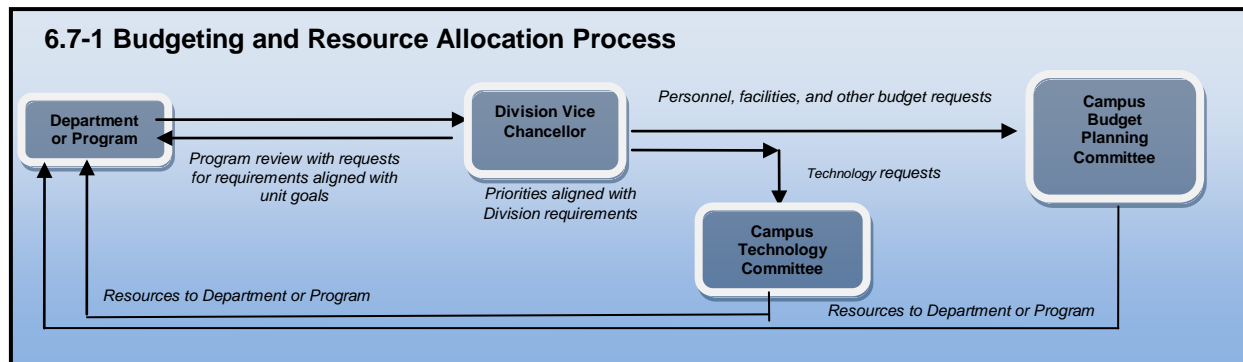
Support units determine metrics for measuring success of their processes, in consultation with senior administrators, stakeholders, and members of the shared governance structure. These measures are reported in annual program reviews as well as in periodic updates to campus-wide committees, such as the Enrollment Planning Team and the Strategic Planning Committee.

6.6-1 Key Support Processes and Performance Measures

Support Process	Performance Measures	Figures
Admissions	Number and quality of newly admitted students	7.1-20, 21
Advancement	Giving rates and amount of funds raised	7.2-15, 7.4-1
Advisement	Satisfaction with advising	7.2-4, 8, 9
Bookstore	Satisfaction with Services	7.2-13, 14
Business and Finance	Tuition & fees; revenue & expenditures per FTE	7.3-5, 6, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19
Campus Dining	Satisfaction with dining services	7.2-12
Financial Aid	Students on financial aid; award types & amounts	7.3-7 through 13
First Year Experience	Enrollment in FY seminar, learning outcomes	7.1-19; 7.5-1, 2, 3, 5
Housing	Satisfaction with residence life	7.2-10
Information Technology	Computer resources per student	7.5-32
Library	Holdings, circulation stats, and service satisfaction	7.5-34
Research Support	Number of grants awarded and amounts	7.3-24, 25, 26; 7.5-13, 28; 7.6-4
Student Services	Student satisfaction, time use	7.2-1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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?

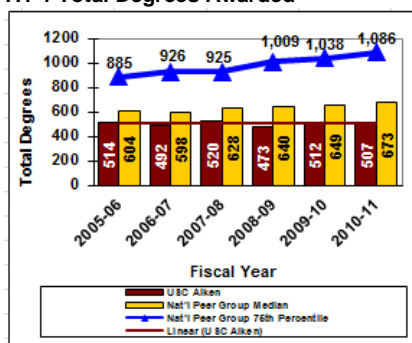
Budget requests associated with the need for additional personnel, new or upgraded facilities, equipment, and technology are submitted through an annual program review process. These requests are reviewed and prioritized by the senior administrator leading each division. The Campus Budget Committee, which includes all members of the senior administration and selected faculty and staff leaders, evaluates items on all prioritized lists of budget requests and makes recommendations for the allocation of financial resources within constraints of the anticipated university budget for the upcoming year. Requests for new technology are reviewed separately by the Campus Technology Committee. Requests for new technology are reviewed separately by the Campus Technology Committee.



Category 7 – Organizational Performance Results

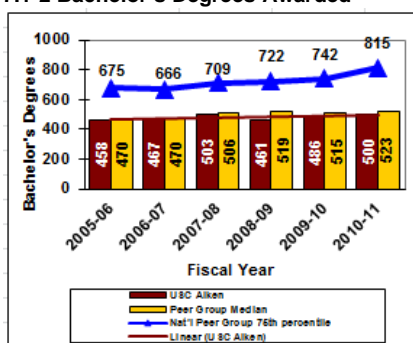
7.1 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on student learning, and improvements in student learning? How do your results compare to those of your competitors and comparable organizations?

7.1-1 Total Degrees Awarded



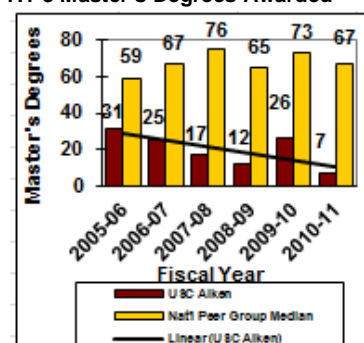
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.1-2 Bachelor's Degrees Awarded



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.1-3 Master's Degrees Awarded

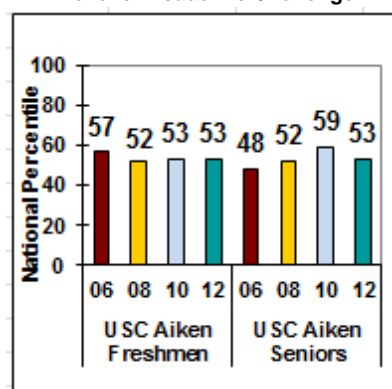


Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

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 been fairly flat ranging from a low of 473 in 2008-09 to 520 in 2007-08 (7.1-1). There was a small but steady increase in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded from 2005-06 to 2010-2011 (7.1-2). The number of master's degrees awarded shows a decreasing trend from 2005-06 to 2010-11 (7.1-3).

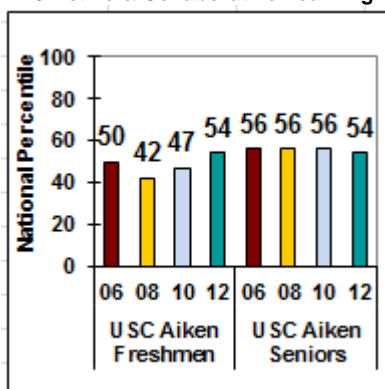
USC Aiken participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every two years and links results to strategic planning objectives. Response rates have increased from 32% in 2004 to 42% in 2012, well above the national response rate of 25%. Results compare USC Aiken to all 500+ public and private institutions participating in the survey each year. Findings indicate that USC Aiken is at the 53rd national percentile in level of academic challenge for freshmen and seniors (7.1-4); is at the 54th national percentile in active and collaborative learning for freshmen and seniors (7.1-5); and is at the 54th and 55th national percentile for enriching educational experiences for freshmen and seniors, respectively (7.1-6).

7.1-4 Level of Academic Challenge



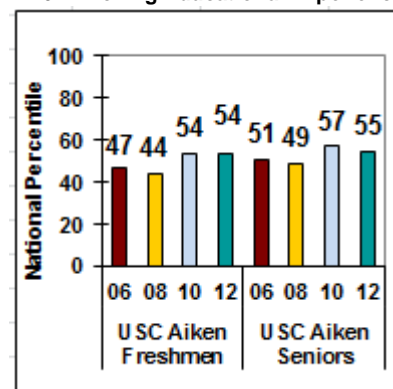
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.1-5 Active & Collaborative Learning



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.1-6 Enriching Educational Experience



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

Results from the NSSE indicate that the experiences students have at USC Aiken contribute to their educational and personal development to a greater extent than the experiences delivered by other institutions nationwide. Increases from 2006 were observed across the board in 2008, 2010 and 2012. Most notable is the finding that USC Aiken seniors reported that their university experience had helped on 13 out of 16 measures of educational and personal growth at significantly higher levels than reported

by their peers at other universities (7.1-7). This serves as an indirect value-added measure of student growth while attending USC Aiken.

7.1-7 Educational and Personal Growth (NSSE Results)

		2006				2008				2010				2012			
		USC Aiken		NSSE (National Group)		USC Aiken		NSSE (National Group)		USC Aiken		NSSE (National Group)		USC Aiken		NSSE (National Group)	
		Class	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b
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	3.30	3.12	*	.23	3.35	3.20	**	.20	3.30	3.19	*	.14	3.24	3.19		.07
	SR	3.41	3.24	*	.21	3.52	3.29	***	.29	3.49	3.27	***	.28	3.49	3.27	***	.27
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	FY	2.91	2.70	*	.22	2.92	2.80	*	.13	2.97	2.84	*	.14	2.81	2.86		-.05
	SR	3.33	3.02	***	.34	3.37	3.07	***	.32	3.38	3.08	***	.32	3.36	3.11	***	.27
c. Writing clearly and effectively	FY	3.36	2.95	***	.48	3.16	3.02	**	.16	3.30	3.05	***	.30	3.18	3.06	*	.14
	SR	3.42	3.07	***	.41	3.39	3.11	***	.33	3.45	3.13	***	.37	3.43	3.16	***	.31
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	FY	2.99	2.75	**	.25	2.94	2.85		.10	3.01	2.89	*	.14	2.87	2.90		-.03
	SR	3.28	2.96	***	.35	3.36	3.00	***	.40	3.41	3.02	***	.43	3.28	3.04	***	.25
e. Thinking critically and analytically	FY	3.38	3.16	**	.28	3.27	3.21		.07	3.36	3.25	*	.15	3.24	3.27		-.03
	SR	3.60	3.33	***	.36	3.54	3.36	***	.25	3.57	3.38	***	.25	3.55	3.40	***	.20
f. Analyzing quantitative problems	FY	3.11	2.85	**	.28	3.11	2.96	**	.17	3.15	2.99	**	.19	3.04	3.02		.02
	SR	3.33	3.02	***	.35	3.32	3.08	***	.27	3.30	3.11	**	.22	3.31	3.14	**	.19
g. Using computing and information technology	FY	3.27	2.99	**	.31	3.13	3.04		.10	3.16	3.05		.12	3.02	3.04		-.03
	SR	3.53	3.21	***	.39	3.42	3.22	***	.23	3.42	3.22	***	.23	3.33	3.21	*	.14
h. Working effectively with others	FY	3.16	2.92	**	.27	3.07	2.99		.10	3.18	3.03	**	.17	3.13	3.03		.12
	SR	3.40	3.14	**	.31	3.42	3.17	***	.29	3.49	3.19	***	.35	3.42	3.21	***	.25
i. Voting in local, state, or national elections	FY	2.08	1.92			2.27	2.24		.03	2.01	1.94		.07	2.06	1.91	*	.15
	SR	2.29	2.10	*	.19	2.49	2.11	***	.36	2.50	2.12	***	.36	2.37	1.97	***	.39
j. Learning effectively on your own	FY	3.11	2.85	**	.30	3.03	2.96		.09	3.05	2.95		.12	2.94	2.98		-.04
	SR	3.12	3.00			3.23	3.05	***	.21	3.31	3.07	***	.28	3.20	3.10		.11
k. Understanding yourself	FY	2.96	2.71	**	.26	2.91	2.81		.11	3.01	2.84	**	.18	2.75	2.86		-.11
	SR	2.94	2.78			3.00	2.83	***	.17	3.15	2.86	***	.29	2.99	2.89		.09
l. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	FY	2.87	2.57	***	.30	2.77	2.67		.10	2.95	2.69	***	.27	2.71	2.71		.01
	SR	2.79	2.57	*	.21	2.99	2.64	***	.35	3.02	2.69	***	.34	2.94	2.71	***	.23
m. Solving complex real-world problems	FY	2.86	2.58	***	.31	2.81	2.69	*	.14	2.97	2.72	***	.27	2.79	2.74		.06
	SR	2.94	2.72	*	.23	3.03	2.78	***	.27	3.05	2.83	***	.24	3.01	2.87	*	.15
n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	FY	2.77	2.59	*	.19	2.74	2.70		.04	2.90	2.73	**	.17	2.69	2.76		-.07
	SR	2.77	2.65			2.99	2.71	***	.28	3.06	2.77	***	.29	2.99	2.81	**	.18
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	FY	2.59	2.34	**	.26	2.51	2.47		.04	2.65	2.50	*	.15	2.52	2.51		.01
	SR	2.62	2.42	*	.20	2.74	2.48	***	.26	2.82	2.52	***	.29	2.84	2.54	***	.29
p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	FY	2.27	2.05	*	.20	2.21	2.15		.05	2.28	2.18		.09	2.27	2.16		.10
	SR	1.98	1.92			2.27	1.96	***	.29	2.23	2.00	**	.21	2.08	1.99		.08

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

^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.

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. These measures are most advanced in junior writing proficiency (7.1-8) where students' writing is evaluated in the areas of clarity of purpose, quality of thought, use of sources, organization of content, language and style, grammar and mechanics, and documentation.

7.1-8 Junior Writing Portfolio Ratings by Outcome Area (with 95% confidence intervals)

Academic Year	N	Assessed Outcome Area							Total
		Clarity of Purpose	Quality of thought	Use of sources	Organization of Content	Language and Style	Grammar & Mechanics	Documentation	
2006-07	437	3.52 (3.46-3.58)	3.48 (3.41-3.55)	3.17 (3.09-3.25)	3.41 (3.34-3.48)	3.25 (3.18-3.32)	3.13 (3.06-3.20)	N/A	3.32 (3.26-3.38)
2007-08	483	3.55 (3.49-3.61)	3.45 (3.39-3.51)	3.18 (3.11-3.25)	3.44 (3.38-3.50)	3.23 (3.17-3.29)	3.09 (3.03-3.15)	N/A	3.32 (3.27-3.37)
2008-09	498	3.54 (3.48-3.60)	3.46 (3.40-3.52)	3.10 (3.02-3.18)	3.36 (3.30-3.42)	3.19 (3.12-3.26)	3.13 (3.06-3.20)	N/A	3.29 (3.23-3.35)
2009-10	416	3.52 (3.45-3.59)	3.39 (3.31-3.47)	3.12 (3.05-3.19)	3.32 (3.25-3.39)	3.19 (3.12-3.26)	3.12 (3.06-3.18)	N/A	3.27 (3.21-3.33)
2010-11	436	3.52 (3.46-3.58)	3.37 (3.30-3.44)	3.15 (3.07-3.23)	3.35 (3.28-3.42)	3.13 (3.06-3.20)	3.05 (2.98-3.12)	3.1 (3.01-3.19)	3.24 (3.18-3.30)
2011-12	380	3.58 (3.4-3.76)	3.47 (3.28-3.66)	3.33 (3.11-3.55)	3.45 (3.19-3.71)	3.22 (3.02-3.42)	3.18 (2.97-3.42)	3.24 (3.0-3.48)	3.35 (3.26-3.44)

Source: USC Aiken: Institutional Effectiveness GEORGE database

Since 2010-11, the incorporation of source information into written manuscripts (i.e., use of sources) was assessed independent of referencing of sources (i.e., documentation). Data collected over the past academic year indicates a statistically significant improvement in all assessed outcome areas compared to 2010-11.

Another example of student outcome assessment is the area of learning a second language where students must show proficiency at the introductory level in terms of listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, writing skills, and knowledge of culture consistent with ACTFL standards for foreign language education (7.1-9).

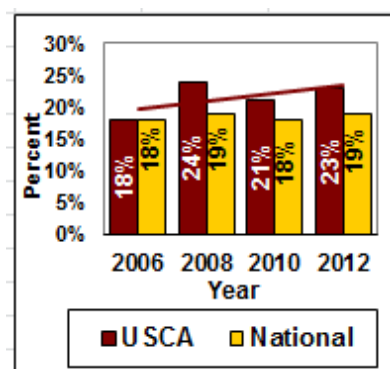
7.1-9 Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Ratings by Outcome Area (with 95% confidence intervals)

Academic Year	N	Assessed Outcome Area					
		Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Culture	Total
2005-06	465	3.78 (3.68-3.88)	3.59 (3.48-3.70)	3.64 (3.54-3.74)	3.55 (3.45-3.65)	3.30 (3.19-3.41)	3.56 (3.48-3.64)
2006-07	529	3.88 (3.80-3.96)	3.59 (3.51-3.67)	3.67 (3.58-3.76)	3.59 (3.51-3.67)	3.72 (3.63-3.81)	3.69 (3.62-3.76)
2007-08	475	3.49 (3.39-3.59)	3.44 (3.34-3.54)	3.57 (3.47-3.67)	3.41 (3.31-3.51)	3.17 (3.06-3.28)	3.42 (3.33-3.51)
2008-09	590	3.64 (3.55-3.73)	3.33 (3.25-3.41)	3.51 (3.43-3.59)	3.34 (3.26-3.42)	3.40 (3.31-3.49)	3.45 (3.38-3.52)
2009-10	684	3.57 (3.48-3.66)	3.37 (3.28-3.46)	3.48 (3.38-3.58)	3.35 (3.26-3.44)	3.42 (3.33-3.51)	3.44 (3.36-3.52)
2010-11	655	3.78 (3.69-3.87)	3.68 (3.60-3.76)	3.78 (3.70-3.86)	3.45 (3.37-3.53)	3.72 (3.63-3.81)	3.67 (3.60-3.74)
2011-12	645	3.88 (3.79-3.97)	3.64 (3.56-3.73)	3.85 (3.76-3.93)	3.60 (3.51-3.69)	3.74 (3.65-3.82)	3.74 (3.67-3.81)

Source: USC Aiken: Institutional Effectiveness GEORGE database

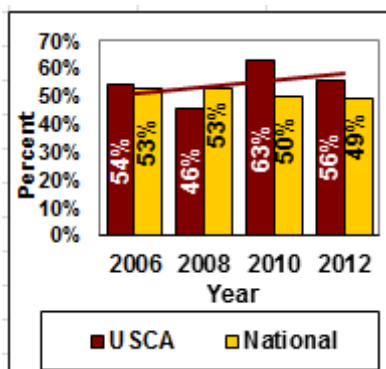
Although not apparent in the overall scores, the data indicate that new strategies are required in the areas of writing, particularly for the languages of German and French. In response to observed decreases in the cultural awareness ratings in 2007-08, the faculty slightly modified the curriculum. These changes seem to have been effective resulting in a significant improvement in the cultural awareness each year since the adopted changes.

7.1-10 Service Learning (NSSE)



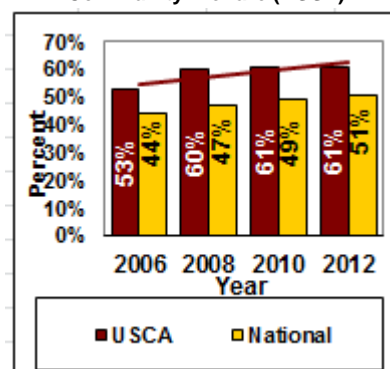
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.1-11 Experiential Learning (NSSE)



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.1-12 Personal Sensitivity for Community Welfare (NSSE)



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

In addition to measures of educational and personal growth, USC Aiken assesses the extent to which students become responsible and engaged members of their community. The percentage of seniors who reported on the NSSE that they had “often” or “very often” participated in a community based project as

part of a regular course (7.1-10) exceeds the national rate. The percentage of seniors who indicated that they had participated in some form of experiential learning while at USC Aiken (7.1-11) or who indicated that their experience at USC Aiken contributed to their knowledge, skills and appreciation for the welfare of their community (7.1-12) show a general increasing trend since 2006 and also exceeds the national rate.

Every two years alumni are surveyed. A majority of alumni surveyed in Spring 2011 identified their abilities in a range of learning outcomes and competencies as above average or outstanding compared to other college graduates (7.1-13). Most highly rated abilities were in broad areas critical for success after college such as working independently, following directions, working as a member of a team, and learning on their own. General education outcomes rated most highly were: thinking critically, persisting at difficult tasks, and understanding written information. General education outcomes least positively rated were “understanding and applying scientific principles”, “understanding and appreciating the arts”, and “speaking a foreign language.”

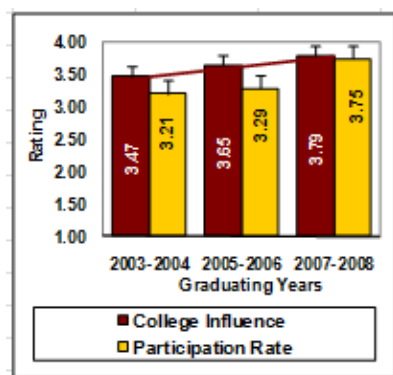
7.1-13 Alumni Rated Self-Assessment of Abilities 3-4 Years Following Graduation (scale 1-5)

Learning Outcome	2003-2004 Alumni			2005-2006 Alumni			2007-2008 Alumni		
	lower	Mean	upper	lower	Mean	upper	lower	Mean	upper
Learning on your own	4.02	4.12	4.21	4.12	4.25	4.38	4.06	4.25	4.44
Understanding the interaction between people and society	3.88	3.98	4.05	3.89	4.03	4.16	3.97	4.18	4.39
Thinking critically and analytically	3.88	3.99	4.09	4.00	4.14	4.28	3.97	4.18	4.39
Working independently	4.13	4.23	4.33	4.19	4.31	4.44	4.02	4.20	4.37
Planning and carrying out projects	3.88	3.98	4.07	3.94	4.08	4.22	3.92	4.13	4.33
Following directions	4.05	4.15	4.24	4.16	4.29	4.43	3.97	4.15	4.32
Understanding written information	3.92	4.01	4.10	3.97	4.11	4.25	3.92	4.11	4.29
Persisting at difficult tasks	3.87	3.97	4.07	3.99	4.13	4.27	3.85	4.05	4.28
Using computing and information technology	3.76	3.87	3.99	3.88	4.03	4.18	3.81	4.04	4.28
Working cooperatively as a member of a group or team	4.04	4.14	4.23	4.13	4.26	4.39	3.82	4.04	4.25
Understanding philosophies and cultures different from your own	3.49	3.61	3.72	3.56	3.71	3.86	3.80	4.02	4.24
Organizing your time effectively	3.91	4.02	4.13	3.94	4.09	4.25	3.80	4.02	4.23
Leading/guiding others	3.88	3.98	4.08	3.90	4.06	4.21	3.80	4.02	4.23
Writing effectively	3.72	3.82	3.93	3.82	3.96	4.10	3.83	4.02	4.21
Understanding graphs and charts	3.65	3.76	3.86	3.64	3.79	3.94	3.77	3.98	4.20
Using the library	3.55	3.67	3.80	3.60	3.75	3.91	3.66	3.89	4.12
Understanding your rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen	3.73	3.83	3.94	3.88	4.02	4.16	3.70	3.89	4.09
Understanding issues that affect you as a consumer	3.63	3.74	3.85	3.75	3.90	4.04	3.66	3.87	4.09
Caring for your own physical/mental health	3.79	3.90	4.01	3.80	3.95	4.11	3.63	3.86	4.09
Understanding and appreciating the arts	3.21	3.34	3.47	3.34	3.53	3.72	3.59	3.80	4.01
Speaking effectively	3.68	3.78	3.87	3.75	3.90	4.04	3.71	3.92	3.97
Understanding and applying scientific principles	3.23	3.34	3.46	3.36	3.53	3.70	3.37	3.60	3.83
Using mathematics	3.47	3.58	3.69	3.56	3.73	3.90	3.39	3.61	3.82
Speaking a second language	1.96	2.09	2.22	2.15	2.37	2.60	2.24	2.50	2.76

Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results; Note: The range between lower and upper represents the 95% confidence interval estimate.

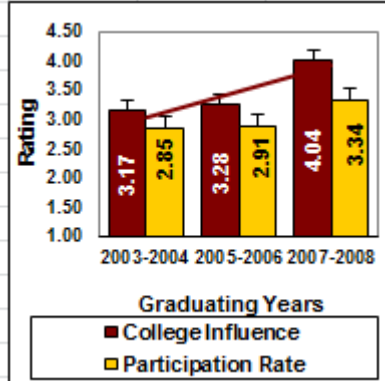
Alumni were also asked to rate the extent to which they were engaged in, and the extent to which their college experience influenced their participation in, career-related advanced education or training (7.1-14); lifelong learning or personal enrichment activities outside of the career area (7.1-15); and volunteer, public, or community service (7.1-16). In all cases, there has been a steady increase in both participation and the perceived influence of USC Aiken on these activities.

7.1-14 Advanced Education / Training



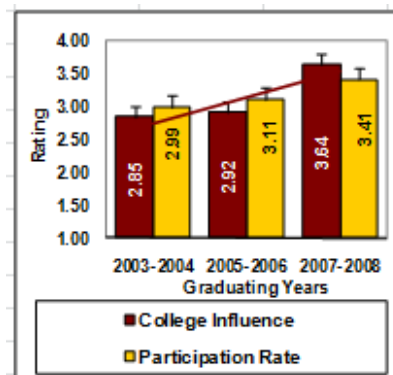
Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results;
Bars represent the 95% confidence interval

7.1-15 Lifelong Learning



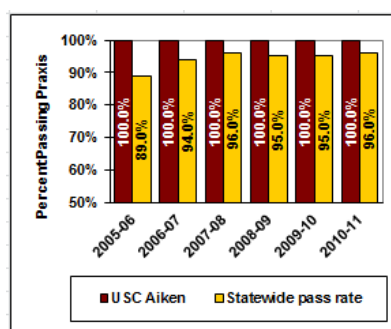
Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results;
Bars represent the 95% confidence interval

7.1-16 Community Service

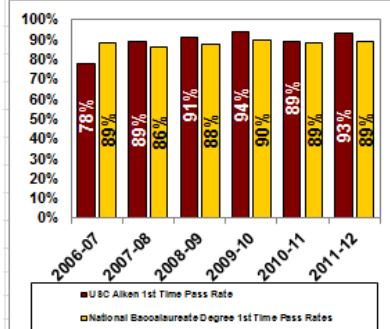


Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results;
Bars represent the 95% confidence interval

Praxis examination pass rates, of students who are aspiring to be teachers, are monitored closely by state and federal agencies as well as NCATE, the national accrediting body (7.1-17). Licensure exam pass rates for nursing degree graduates are also monitored by the state and accrediting bodies (7.1-18). In both areas, USC Aiken students exceed state-wide pass rates.

7.1-17 Education Praxis Pass Rate¹

Source: USC Aiken Institutional Effectiveness Reports

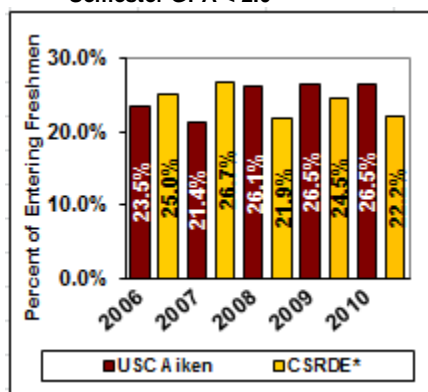
7.1-18 Nursing Licensure Pass Rate¹

Source: National Council of State Boards of Nursing

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 returned 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. A number of strategic steps have been taken to address this issue such as the First Pace program for provisionally admitted students, discipline-based first year seminar classes, and supplemental instruction. As a result, the percentage of entering full-time freshmen with a first semester GPA below 2.0 has fallen more in line with that of our national peers (7.1-19).

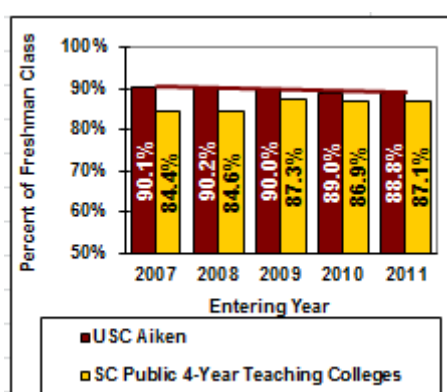
Academic inputs are still used as quality measures by various state and federal agencies, and have been shown to be linked closely to success in college. USC Aiken both regulates minimum levels of academic preparation through admission requirements and monitors the quality of the applicant pool. Admission requirements are keyed from the university mission and are set to both admit students who can be successful while providing access to an increasingly qualified and diverse range of students. A key strategic indicator is the percentage of high achieving entering freshmen who have an SAT score > 1100, a high school GPA > 3.0 or a high school rank in the top 30% (7.1-20). We also track the average SAT scores of entering freshmen and compare the data to that of other 4-year teaching institutions in South Carolina (7.1-21).

7.1-19 Full-time Freshmen with First Semester GPA < 2.0



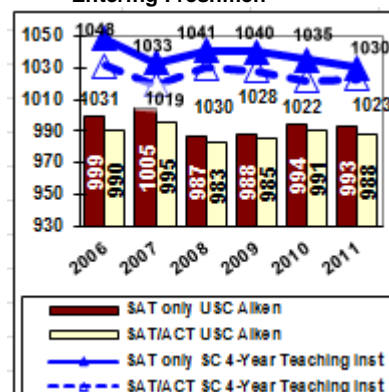
Source: Consortium for the Study of Retention Data Exchange

7.1-20 Freshmen who are High Achievers



Source: SC CHE, Performance Funding Indicator

7.1-21 Average SAT Scores of Entering Freshmen

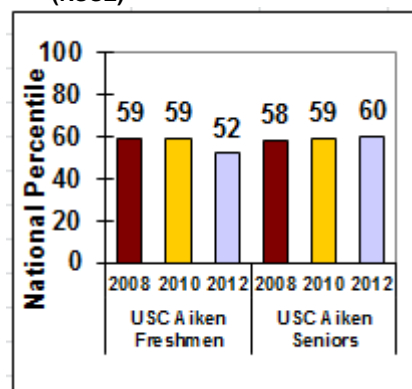


Source: SC CHE, CHEMIS

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?

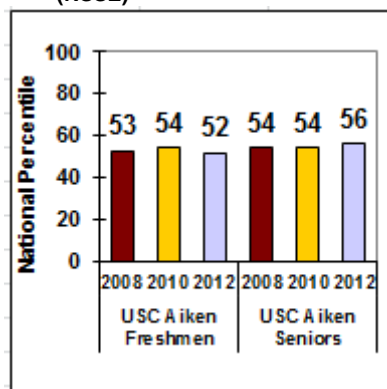
While educational outcomes and the quality of student learning are ultimately more important than satisfaction, USC Aiken recognizes the need to monitor stakeholder satisfaction and adjust services accordingly. The university employs a variety of methods to gauge student satisfaction. Benchmarked surveys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

7.2-1 Quality of College Experience (NSSE)



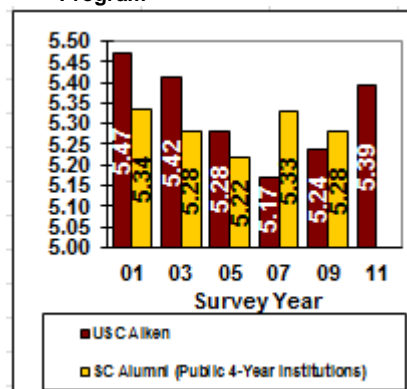
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.2-2 Satisfaction with College Choice (NSSE)



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.2-3 Alumni Satisfaction with Overall Program



Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results

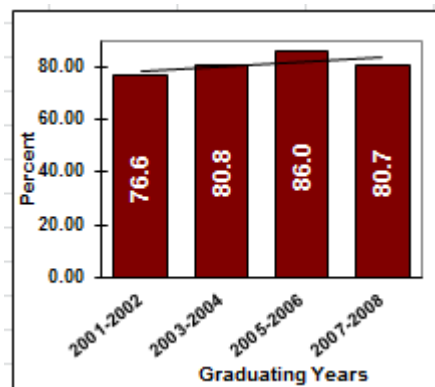
Students rate the quality of their college experience at USC Aiken more highly than do students at other institutions (7.2-1), and more USC Aiken students report they would attend the institution again than do their peers at other universities (7.2-2). Both of these indicators show USC Aiken outperforming other institutions around the country at statistically significant levels. The biannual alumni survey shows that USC Aiken alumni report satisfaction with their overall academic program (7.2-3). These levels of satisfaction declined from 2001 to 2007 but have since shown a steady incline.

7.2-4 Alumni Satisfaction by Functional Area: Percent Satisfied or Very Satisfied

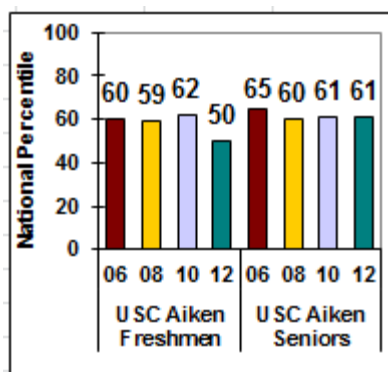
Functional Area	2003-2004 Alumni		2005-2006 Alumni		2007-2008 Alumni	
	Percent	Ranking	Percent	Ranking	Percent	Ranking
Your OVERALL academic program	87.2%	2	90.1%	2	94.6%	1
Level of academic challenge	88.0%	1	87.6%	4	89.3%	6
Instruction in your major	82.2%	6	92.3%	1	94.6%	2
Availability of faculty	85.0%	3	89.5%	3	90.9%	3
Your MAJOR program of study	84.1%	4	84.6%	6	90.9%	3
Campus facilities	83.0%	5	82.5%	10	87.3%	10
Interactions with administrators	78.2%	10	82.9%	9	82.1%	13
Your GENERAL EDUCATION program of study	75.9%	14	85.3%	5	85.5%	12
University communications	76.2%	13	84.6%	8	90.7%	5
Class scheduling	80.6%	7	81.7%	11	87.5%	9
INSTRUCTION in your general education program	78.9%	9	81.6%	12	89.1%	8
Student life	77.6%	11	84.6%	7	89.3%	7
Integration of computers/technology into course work	79.5%	8	75.7%	15	79.6%	15
Advising by faculty	76.5%	12	77.1%	14	81.8%	14
Extracurricular activities	72.2%	15	80.8%	13	85.7%	11
Opportunities for independent study/research	72.1%	16	75.2%	16	79.6%	15
Contact with other alumni	53.0%	17	66.0%	17	66.1%	17

Source: USC Aiken Biannual Alumni Survey Data 2007, 2009, and 2011)

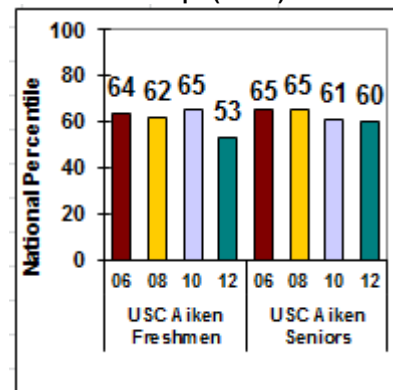
Based upon the most recently completed 2011 biannual alumni survey (7.2-4), approximately nine out of ten of bachelor's degree recipients were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall academic program (94.6%), instruction in their major (94.6%), availability of faculty (90.9%), the Major programs of study (90.9%), and university communications (90.7%). Alumni have, over the years, been consistently satisfied with academic areas. Those areas that have consistently been ranked the lowest such as opportunities for independent study/research and contact with other alumni have shown significant improvement since 2005 as a result of strategic initiatives associated with establishing a dynamic student centered environment.

7.2-5 Percent of Alumni who would choose USCA again

Source: USC Aiken Alumni Data

7.2-6 Satisfaction with the quality of Student-Faculty Relationships (NSSE)

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

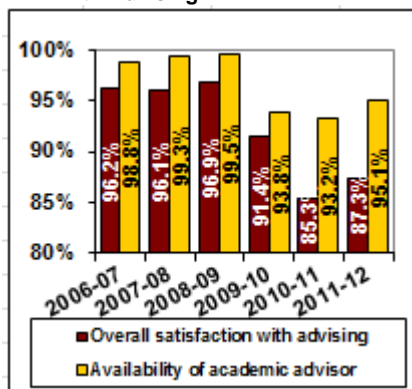
7.2-7 Satisfaction with the quality of Student-Administrators Relationships (NSSE)

Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey Results

Overall, alumni are satisfied with their choice of college. The percent of alumni who indicated that they would choose to attend USC Aiken if they could start college over has been in excess of 80% since the 2007 survey of 2003-2004 graduates (7.2-5). Compared to other schools across the nation, USC Aiken freshmen and seniors rate a higher satisfaction with the quality of their relationship with faculty (7.2-6) and administrators (7.2-7).

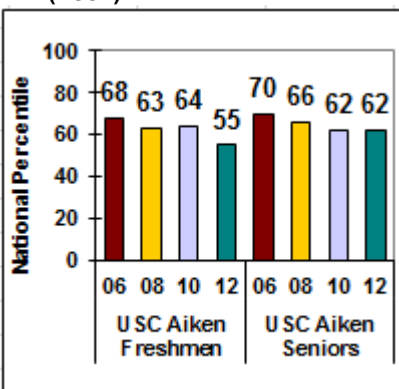
Students indicate high levels of satisfaction on the availability of faculty for academic advising and on the quality of advisement they receive (7.2-8), although there has been a decreasing trend in satisfaction since 2008. The rated quality of academic advisement places USC Aiken at the 64th and 62nd national percentile for freshmen and seniors based upon 2010 NSSE data (7.2-9).

7.2-8 Students Satisfied or Very Satisfied with Advising



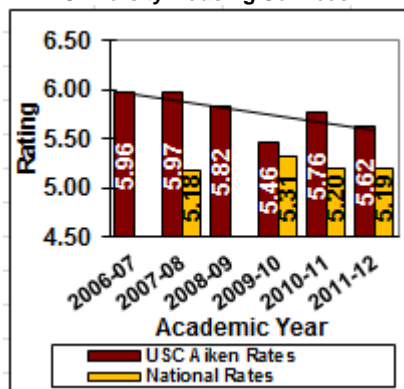
Source: USC Aiken Advising Survey

7.2-9 Quality of Academic Advisement (NSSE)



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.2-10 Satisfaction with the quality of University Housing Services



Source: USC Aiken Resident Assessment Survey

A satisfaction rating of overall services provided by University Housing was 5.62 in 2011-12 (7.2-10). In the 2007-08 academic year, the Association of College and University Housing Officers International / Educational Benchmarking Inc. – Resident Assessment Survey was adopted, allowing USC Aiken to determine its relative standing to other institutions across the nation. The 2011-12 data indicate higher ratings of satisfaction among USC Aiken students with the services provided by University Housing compared to national rates, despite what appears to be a steady decline in satisfaction over the past 5 years.

Additional satisfaction surveys are conducted on a regular basis of athletes (7.2-11), dining services (7.2-12) and bookstore services (7.2-13 and 7.2-14).

7.2-11 Athlete Satisfaction

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

	2007		2009		2011	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Quality of athletics facilities	3.56	11	4.73	1	4.69	1
Access to training staff	4.3	3	4.34	7	4.67	2
Professionalism of training staff	4.46	1	4.4	4	4.64	3
Quality of academic experience	4.38	2	4.38	5	4.34	4
Support/coverage by the Sports Information Department	3.93	8	4.17	9	4.26	5
Support from administrative offices	3.71	10	4.17	10	4.21	6
Quality of care from the Student Health Center	4.29	4	4.47	3	4.18	7
Travel accommodations	3.87	9	4.35	6	4.15	8
Overall experience as a student athlete	4.15	6	4.54	2	4.08	9
Quality of care from Carolina Musculoskeletal Institute	4.23	5	4.31	8	3.9	10
Tutoring and academic support	4.05	7	4.13	11	3.87	11
Campus involvement with your sport	3.5	12	3.82	12	3.36	12

Source: USC Aiken Athlete Survey

The overall rating of satisfaction with dining services among USC Aiken residential students has exceeded the satisfaction ratings given by students from other institutions across the nation (7.2-12) over

the past few years until this past year; there has been a steady decline in students' satisfaction on most measures of dining services over the past 3 years.

7.2-12 Dining Services Satisfaction

Please indicate your satisfaction with the following areas: (7=Very Satisfied, 6=Moderately satisfied, 5= Slightly satisfied, 4- Neutral, 3= Slightly dissatisfied, 2= Moderately dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied)

Area	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Dining environment	5.82	1	5.60	1	5.46	1
Services provided by dining service staff	5.56	3	5.41	2	5.45	2
Cleanliness of dining area	5.67	2	5.38	3	5.30	3
Dining service hours	4.70	4	4.60	4	4.45	4
Variety of dining plan options	4.70	5	4.50	5	4.41	5
Value of the dining plan	4.64	6	4.48	6	4.24	6
Quality of food	4.52	7	4.35	7	3.76	7
Overall Satisfaction	5.10		4.90		4.72	
National Satisfaction Rate	4.78		4.80		4.74	

Source: USCA Resident Assessment Survey

On alternate years, students (7.2-13), and faculty/staff (7.2-14) are surveyed using the National Association of College Stores Customer Satisfaction Survey.

7.2-13 Student Satisfaction Survey of the Bookstore

Please indicate your satisfaction with the following areas: (7=Very Satisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied)

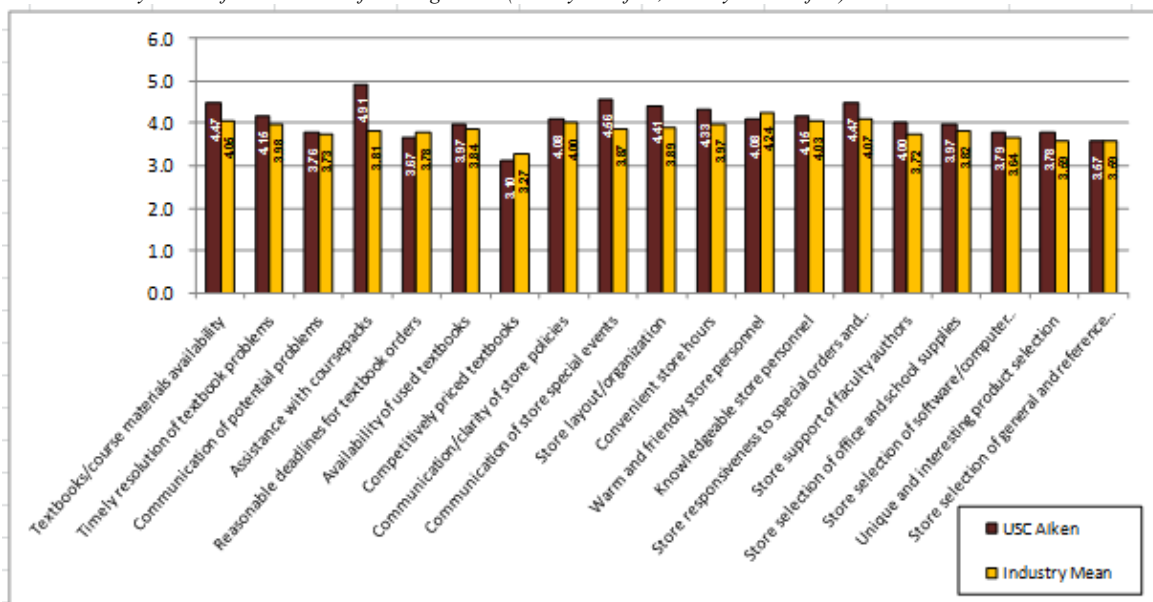
Area	2008-09		2010-2011	
	USC Aiken	Industry Mean	USC Aiken	Industry Mean
Textbooks available when classes start	4.21	3.91	4.05	3.96
Communication about arrival of textbooks	3.92	3.64	3.91	3.68
Convenience of selling back textbooks	3.59	3.48	--	--
Availability of used textbooks	3.50	3.41	3.25	3.24
Competitively priced textbooks	2.95	2.98	2.98	3.06
Fair prices when selling back textbooks	2.59	2.60	--	--
Convenient location	4.63	4.28	4.61	4.33
Pleasant shopping atmosphere	4.32	4.22	4.36	4.21
Ease of locating items	4.27	4.13	4.41	4.17
Helpful in-store signs	4.14	4.01	4.34	4.04
Attractive displays	4.27	4.08	--	--
Convenient parking	4.09	3.20	4.18	3.23
Speed of service during non-rush times	4.37	4.27	4.35	4.30
Knowledgeable bookstore staff	4.23	4.13	4.30	4.20
Adequate number of staff on hand	4.26	4.11	4.35	4.14
Resolution of problems	4.16	4.07	4.20	4.13
Responsiveness to special orders and requests	4.12	4.05	4.21	4.07
Convenient store hours	4.28	3.90	4.10	3.95
Warm and friendly bookstore staff	3.90	4.14	4.10	4.20
Speed of service during first week of classes	4.10	3.86	4.27	3.93
Refund/exchange policies	3.89	3.84	3.74	3.84
School supplies selection	4.38	4.17	4.33	4.15
General and reference books selection	4.20	3.96	4.11	4.01
Apparel/insignia items selection	4.16	4.05	4.29	4.06
Computer products and software selection	4.10	3.86	--	--
Communication about store special events	3.92	3.60	3.72	3.63
Good source for one stop shopping	3.85	3.75	4.00	3.80
Competitive prices overall	3.14	3.20	3.17	3.18
Store involvement in campus activities	3.65	3.62	--	--

Source: USCA Bookstore Satisfaction Survey

Ratings are compared to industry means on several dimensions. In 2010-11, the University bookstore's student ratings exceeded industry's standards on 20 of the 24 dimensions. The 2009-10 faculty and staff ratings of the services provided by the University bookstore exceeded 15 of the 19 industry standards evaluated. The most problematic areas were with the prices of textbooks and the store selection of general and reference books.

7.2-14 Faculty and Staff Satisfaction with Bookstore Services

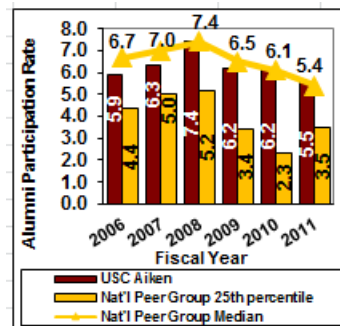
Please indicate your satisfaction with the following areas: (7=Very Satisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied)



Source: USCA Bookstore Satisfaction Survey

The rates at which alumni contribute to the institution following graduation are 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. Although contribution rates have shown a decline since 2008, the trend mirrors that of our National peer group. USC Aiken continues to exceed the National Peer Group median (7.2-15).

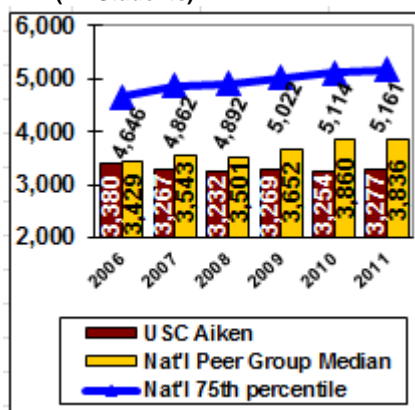
7.2-15 Alumni Participation Rate



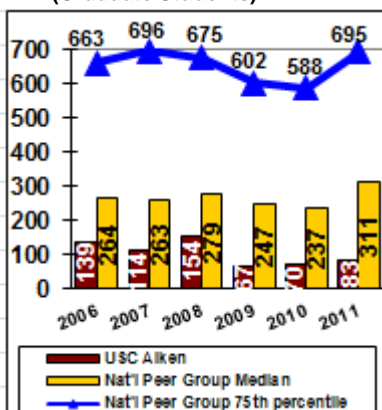
Source: Council for Aid to Education Benchmarking Tool

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

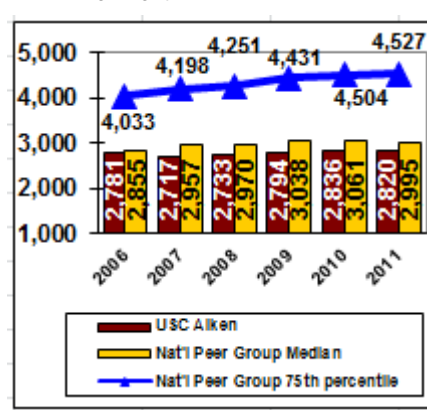
Revenue has become increasingly dependent on student enrollment and the tuition dollars these enrollments generate. Fall headcount (7.3-1, 7.3-2) and FTE enrollments (7.3-3) are used as a baseline to track the number of "customers" and as a proxy for expected revenue. Specific revenue calculations use annualized FTE for more precise measurements (7.3-4). Enrollments over the past six years have been reasonably stable around 3,300 students. Graduate enrollment has been much more variable with a range of 67 in 2009 to 154 in 2008. Continued fiscal health requires USC Aiken to maintain or increase student enrollment.

7.3-1 Fall Headcount
(All Students)

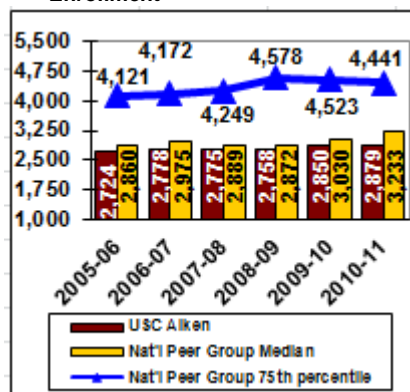
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-2 Fall Headcount
(Graduate Students)

Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-3 Fall Full-time Equivalent
Enrollment

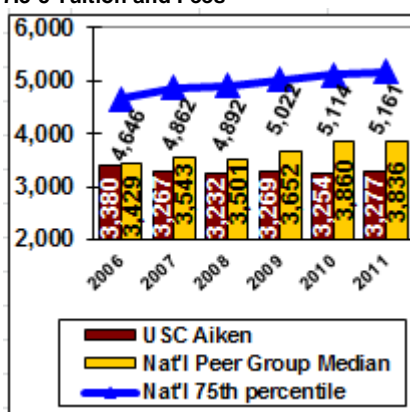
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-4 Annualized Full-time Equivalent
Enrollment

Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

Tuition and fees have risen as revenues from the state appropriations have fallen. Charges for tuition and fees for full-time undergraduates in 2006-07 were \$6,700; this amount has raised to \$8,750 in 2010-11, an increase of 31% (7.3-5). 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). 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. Student charges at USC Aiken are approximately 63% higher than those at Augusta State University, 15 miles away in Georgia; additional loss of students to that institution is expected.

7.3-5 Tuition and Fees



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

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

7.3-6 2011-12 Tuition and Fees of Competitors

Institution Name	Type	Tuition & Fees
Piedmont Technical College	2-Year	\$3,523
Aiken Technical College	2-Year	\$3,722
Midlands Technical College	2-Year	\$3,766
Augusta State University	4-Year	\$5,742
USC Beaufort	4-Year	\$8,158
USC Aiken	4-Year	\$8,750
Francis Marion University	4-Year	\$8,802
SC State University	4-Year	\$9,258
Lander University	4-Year	\$9,504
USC Upstate	4-Year	\$9,596
College of Charleston	4-Year	\$9,616
Coastal Carolina University	4-Year	\$9,760
USC Columbia	4-Year	\$10,168
The Citadel	4-Year	\$10,216
Clemson University	4-Year	\$12,304
Winthrop University	4-Year	\$12,656

Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

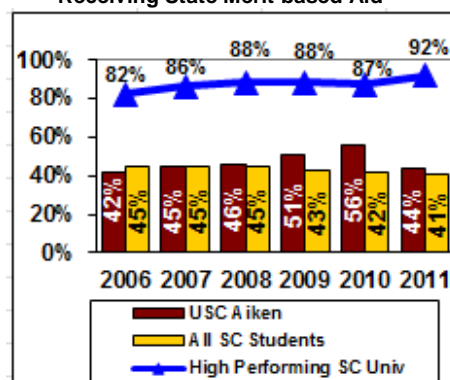
more than doubled the proportion of first-time full-time students who received merit-based scholarships from the state from 2001-02 to 2002-03, and in recent years, students receiving these scholarships has been around 80% (7.3-7). Over the past six years, the proportion of all students receiving merit-based aid has risen from 43% in Fall 2005 to 56% in Fall 2010 (7.3-8). 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 87% as much in state support (7.3-9).

7.3-7 Percent of First-time Full-time Students Receiving Financial Aid

		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total Aid	USC Aiken	90	94	95	96	96	94	96	96
	25th National Percentile	73	75	75	76	80	81	85	86
	Median	85	85	87	87	88	89	91	92
	75th National Percentile	91	93	94	93	94	95	96	95
Federal Grants	USC Aiken	34	36	32	31	34	38	43	47
	25th National Percentile	24	26	21	26	26	25	29	35
	Median	37	37	35	35	35	36	41	47
	75th National Percentile	46	45	42	41	44	43	50	52
State / Local Grants	USC Aiken	76	80	78	86	81	81	81	80
	25th National Percentile	26	27	20	24	25	26	26	30
	Median	38	38	35	38	40	40	39	43
	75th National Percentile	49	51	53	50	54	51	52	51
Institution Grants	USC Aiken	17	14	20	18	26	27	27	27
	25th National Percentile	20	22	24	26	26	27	26	30
	Median	31	39	34	38	42	40	42	49
	75th National Percentile	54	50	57	56	59	65	62	65
Student Loans	USC Aiken	40	51	52	51	53	54	58	60
	25th National Percentile	41	43	41	42	43	45	50	48
	Median	53	54	57	57	58	60	61	61
	75th National Percentile	66	66	67	65	71	70	73	73

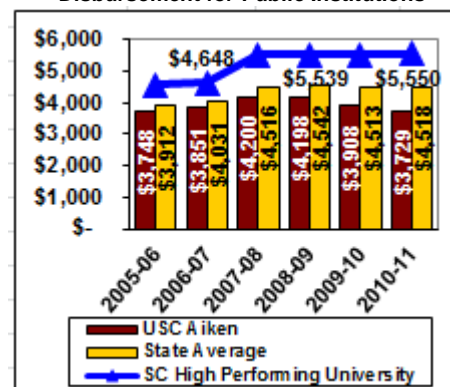
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-8 Percent of SC Undergraduates Receiving State Merit-based Aid



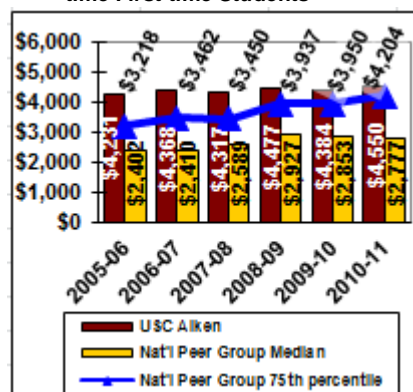
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-9 Average State Scholarship Disbursement for Public Institutions



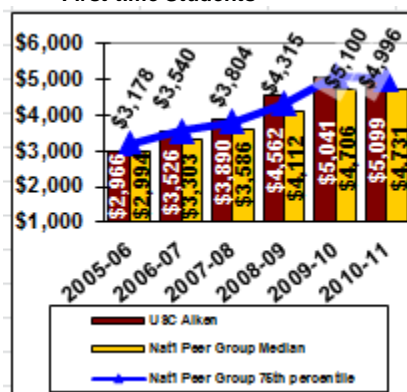
Source: SC CHE CHEMIS Data

7.3-10 Average State / Local Grant to Full-time First-time Students



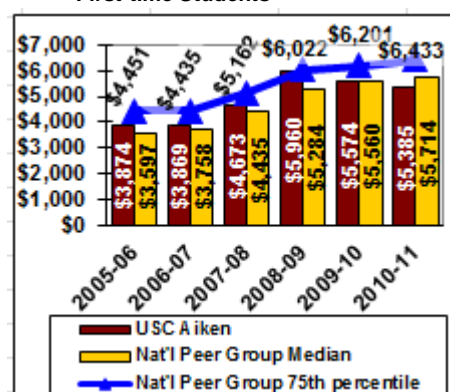
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-11 Average Federal Grant to Full-time First-time Students



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-12 Average Loan Amount to Full-time First-time Students



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

The average Federal or state/local scholarship given to USC Aiken students exceeds the 75th percentile of our National peer group (7.3-10, 7.3-11). For the last several years, the average loan amount given to full-time, first-time students has shown a decline such that it is now below the median of our National peer group by approximately 6% (7.3-12). Only 28% of first-time freshmen students receive institutional grants averaging \$3,314 (7.3-13).

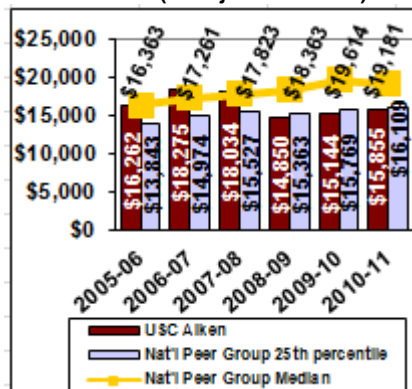
Total revenue from all sources per annualized FTE student has decreased from \$16,262 in 2005-06 to \$15,855 in 2010-11 (7.3-14). This places USC Aiken in the lowest quartile among our National peer group which has a median of \$19,181 per annualized FTE student. Increases in the higher education price index (HEPI) averaged 3.1% over the past 6 years, and when adjusting total revenue by HEPI, USC Aiken's total revenue per FTE decreased from \$13,297 in 2005-06 to \$11,078 in 2010-11 in constant fiscal year 2000 dollars (7.3-15); this represents approximately a 17% decrease in real revenue over the 6 year period. While tuition increases may appear high (7.3-16), they are below the median for our National peer group and the have not been enough to replace revenue lost from declines in state appropriations (7.3-17).

7.3-13 2010-11 Average Institutional Grant to First-Time Students Receiving Grants

Institution Name	Percent Receiving	Average Award
The Citadel	32	\$12,475
SC State University	29	\$10,424
Clemson University	41	\$6,793
College of Charleston	29	\$6,519
Coastal Carolina University	24	\$4,973
Winthrop University	38	\$4,953
Lander University	37	\$4,687
USC Columbia	58	\$3,999
USC Beaufort	22	\$3,601
USC Aiken	28	\$3,314
USC Upstate	42	\$3,232
Francis Marion University	25	\$2,333
Augusta State University	12	\$2,243
Piedmont Technical College	3	\$920
Aiken Technical College	7	\$813
Midlands Technical College	1	\$650

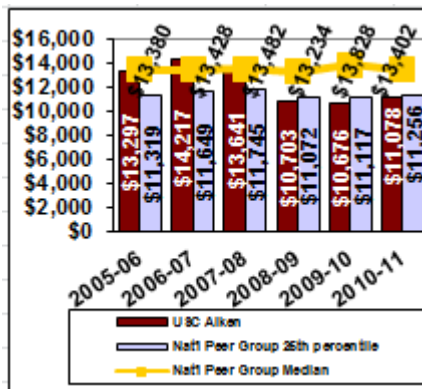
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-14 Total Revenue Per FTE Student (Unadjusted Dollars)



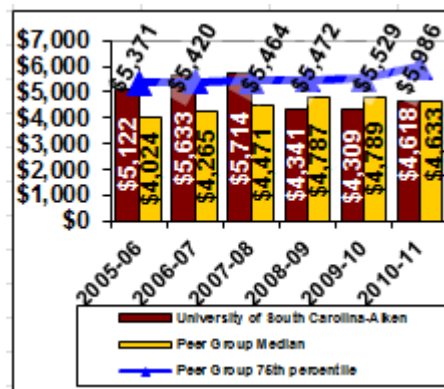
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-15 Total Revenue per FTE Student in FY2000 dollars



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

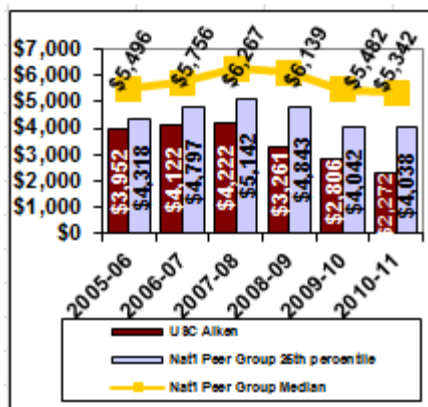
7.3-16 Tuition Revenue per FTE Student



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

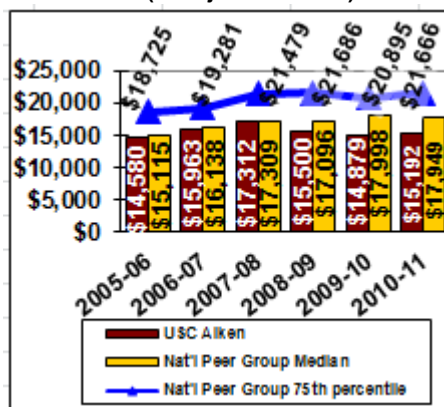
To monitor cost containment and institutional efficiency, the university closely scrutinizes the proportion of funds spent on institutional support for administrative services, management and long range planning, legal and fiscal operations, space management, employee personnel and records, logistical services such as purchasing and printing, and public relations and development. USC Aiken is well-positioned in the top quartile of the most efficient institutions in its national peer group (7.3-18 to 7.3-22) for expenditures per annualized FTE.

7.3-17 State Appropriations per FTE Student



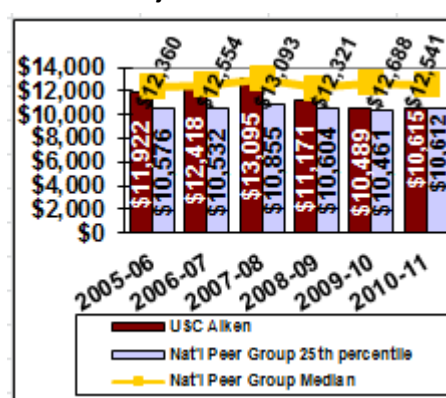
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-18 Total Expenditure per FTE Student (Unadjusted Dollars)



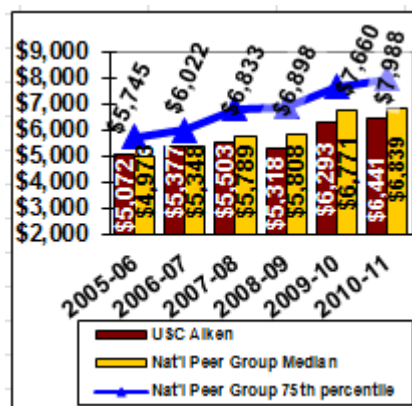
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-19 Total Expenditure per FTE Student – HEPI Adjusted to FY2000



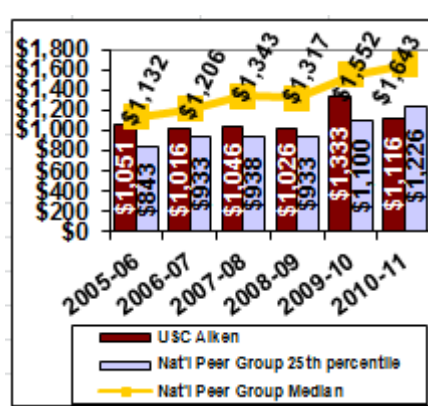
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-20 Instructional Expenditures per FTE



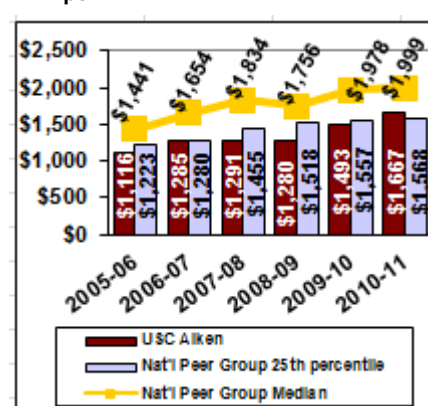
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-21 Academic Support Expenditures per FTE



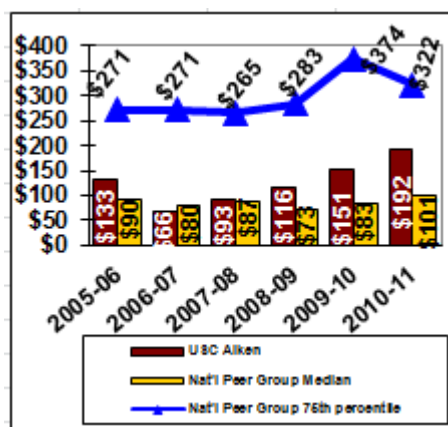
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-22 Institutional Support Expenditures per FTE



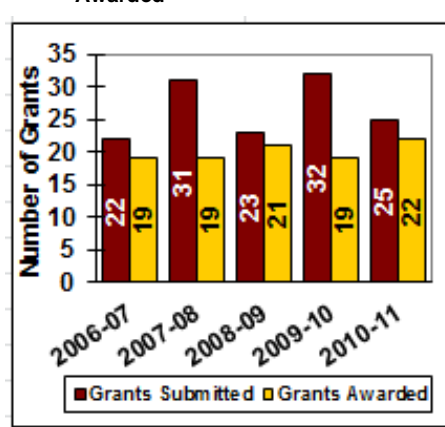
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-23 Research Expenditures Per FTE



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-24 Number of Grants Submitted & Awarded



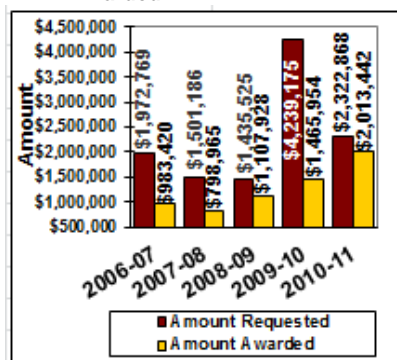
Source: USC Aiken Sponsored Program's Annual Review

Research expenditures per FTE at USC Aiken reflect grant activity and typically exceed the median of the University's national peer group. For 2010-11, research expenditures were 90% higher than that of the National peer group median (7.3-23). With appropriations in a significant decline, finding alternative sources of funding such as extramural grants (7.3-24) has become an important strategic objective. The number of grants submitted was 25 in 2010-11, with 22 being

awarded for an astonishing success rate of 88%. The 25 grants submitted reflected a requested amount of \$2,322,868 with 87% or \$2,013,442 being awarded 2010-11 (7.3-25). In 2010-11, these efforts provided \$1,271,784 toward research and \$216,327 toward educational training opportunities (7.3-26). Another

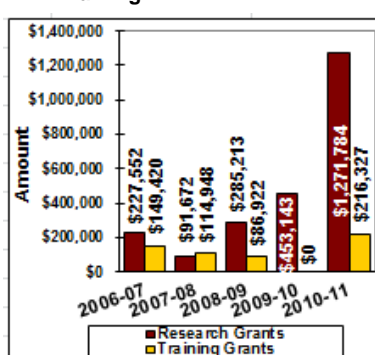
alternative means of funding for the institution is endowed chairs and professorships (7.3-27); in 2011-12, additional funding was provided via 3 endowed professorships and 18 endowed chairs.

7.3-25 Grant Funds Requested and Awarded



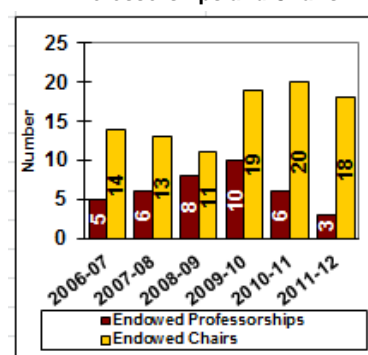
Source: USC Aiken Sponsored Program's Annual Review

7.3-26 Grant Amounts for Research and Training



Source: USC Aiken Sponsored Program's Annual Review

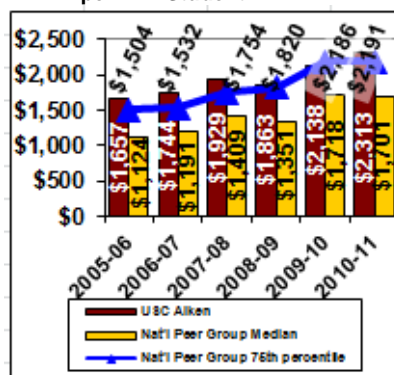
7.3-27 Number of Endowed Professorships and Chairs



Source: University Advancement Data

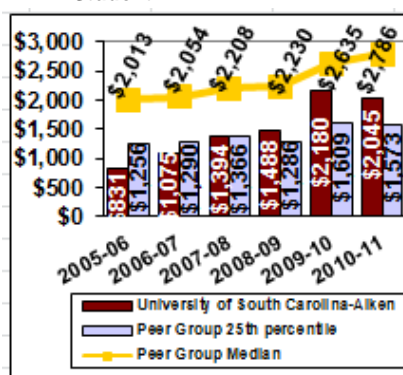
Expenditures related to student services and auxiliary functions are difficult to compare within the national peer group because of differences in accounting practices. In particular, some institutions include their athletics programs in auxiliary expenditures while others, including USC Aiken, budget expenditures for athletics in student services. Student services expenditures per FTE student have increased 40% over six years from \$1,657 per FTE student in 2005-06 to \$2,313 per FTE student in 2010-11 (7.3-28). Although auxiliary expenditures have increased relative to our Nation peer group, it is still well below the National median value (7.3-29). Expenditures per FTE student on operations and maintenance have increased 35% over six years from \$1,050 per FTE student in 2005-06 to \$1,415 per FTE student in 2010-11 (7.3-30).

7.3-28 Student Services Expenditures per FTE Student



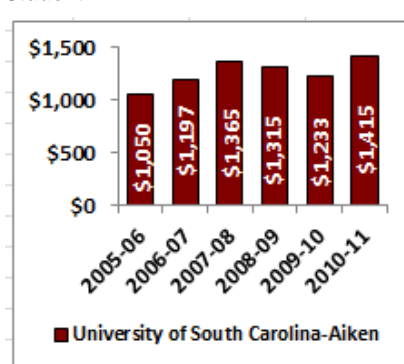
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.3-29 Auxiliary Expenditures per FTE Student



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

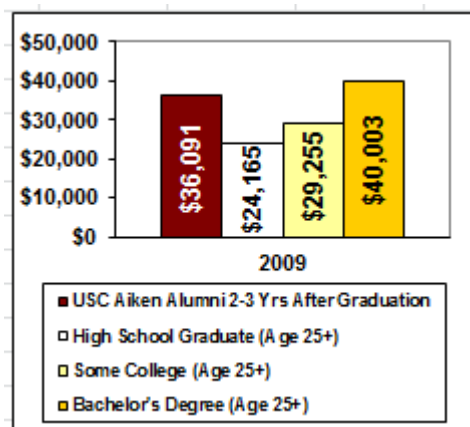
7.3-30 Operations Expenditures per FTE Student



Source: End of Fiscal Year Budgeted Expenditures

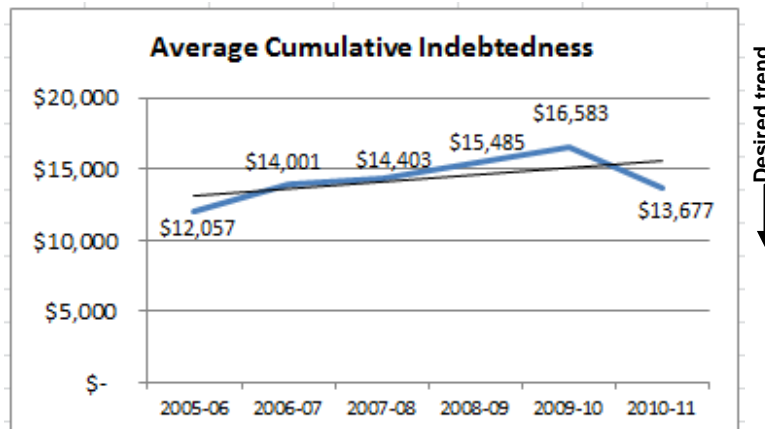
The most recent 2011 survey of USC Aiken graduates indicates that 2-3 years after graduation alumni earn an average of \$36,091 a year, which is approximately \$3,912 below the South Carolina's median salary for individuals in their age group but it is \$11,926 more per year than an individual in their age group with just a high school diploma (7.3-31). This earnings gap widens with age. According to the 2009 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the difference in annual earnings between an individual with a bachelor's degree and an individual with a high school diploma is \$15,838. 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; particularly when you consider that the average cumulative indebtedness of undergraduates who borrow to attend USC Aiken is only \$13,677 upon graduation (7.3-32) -- a debt load fully compensated in only 1.1 years based upon the additional salary earned as a result of having the degree.

7.3-31 Estimated Median Salaries by Level of Education



Source: Bi-Annual Alumni Survey Data

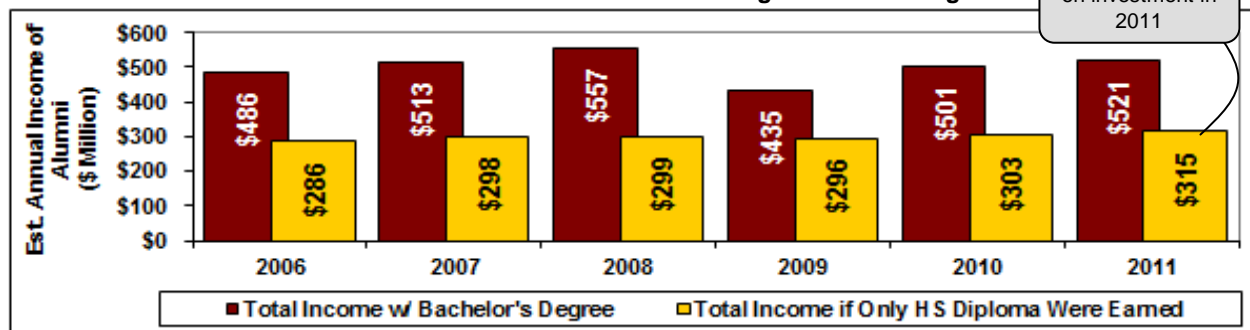
7.3-32 Undergraduate Borrower Average Cumulative Principal Indebtedness



Source: FFAWARD table and RAFAEL datamart

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 2011, there were 13,028 USC Aiken alumni. The additional combined annual earning power of these individuals represents an estimated \$206 million beyond what they would have earned if they only possessed a high school diploma. This amount increases with every class for a long term return on all stakeholders' investments in the institution (7.3-33).

7.3-33 Return on Investment: Graduates' Additional Annual Earnings Related to Degree



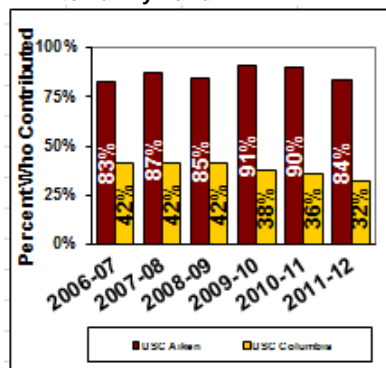
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Data; USC Aiken Institutional Effectiveness Data

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_lang=en&_ts=329318300713&_ds_name=ACS_2003_EST_G00_&_program=ACS

7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on workforce engagement, workforce satisfaction, the development of your workforce, including leaders, workforce retention, and workforce climate including workplace health, safety, and security?

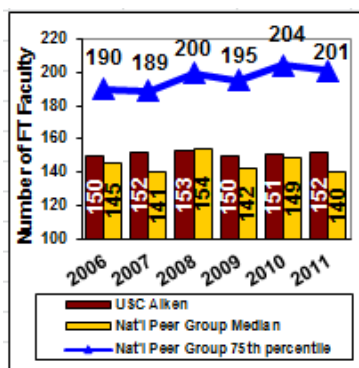
The extent to which USC Aiken integrates the value of collegiality into its institutional culture is evident in the level at which faculty and staff members give back to the university and in the overall satisfaction levels of employees. USC Aiken's Family Fund giving rate is the highest within the USC System (7.4-1). USC Aiken has set and continues to pursue strategic objectives to recruit and retain quality faculty (7.4-2) and staff (7.4-6). Ninety-nine percent of USC Aiken's full-time faculty members, excluding instructors and nursing faculty, hold terminal degrees in their disciplines; this level of education is the highest among all public four-year teaching institutions in South Carolina (7.4-3). 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.

7.4-1 Giving Rates of Faculty & Staff to Family Fund



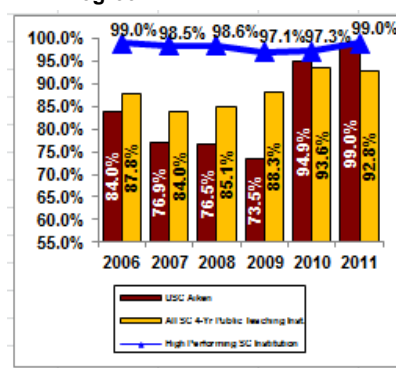
Source: USC Advancement Data

7.4-2 Number of Full-time Faculty



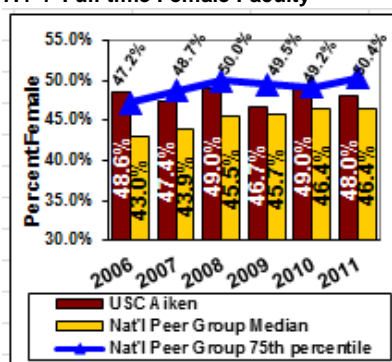
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-3 Full-time faculty with a Terminal Degree



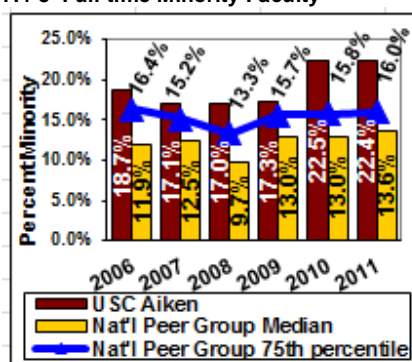
Source: End of Fiscal Year Budgeted Expenditures

7.4-4 Full-time Female Faculty



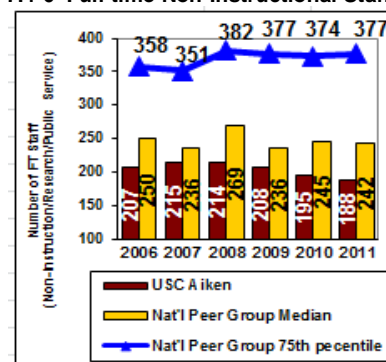
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-5 Full-time Minority Faculty



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

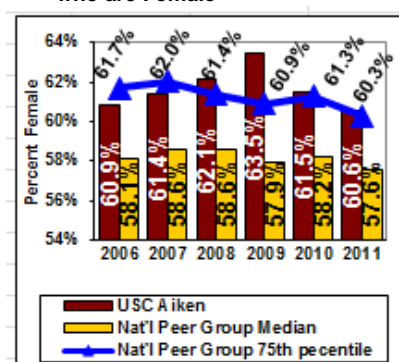
7.4-6 Full-time Non-Instructional Staff



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

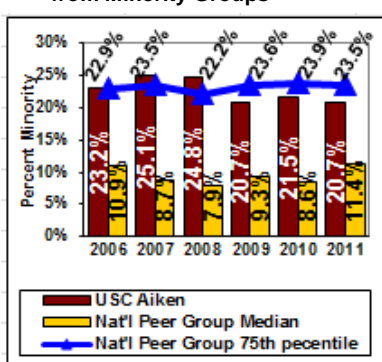
The university has also committed to recruit highly qualified faculty and staff who reflect the demographic composition of the student population (7.4-9; 7.4-10). While the realities of the academic labor market preclude achieving this goal in the short term, roughly 22% percent of full-time faculty have a racial or ethnic background from a minority group, a level that places USC Aiken well above the 75th percentile in its national peer group (7.4-5). At approximately 48%, the proportion of female faculty members is also above the median for the University's national peer group (7.4-4). The University holds a similar relative standing among its national peers for the proportion of female full-time staff (7.4-7) and staff from a minority racial or ethnic group (7.4-8).

7.4-7 Full-time Non-Instructional Staff who are Female



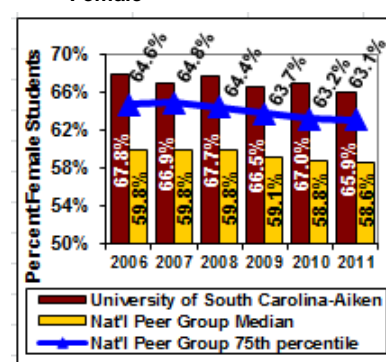
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-8 Full-time Non-Instructional Staff from Minority Groups



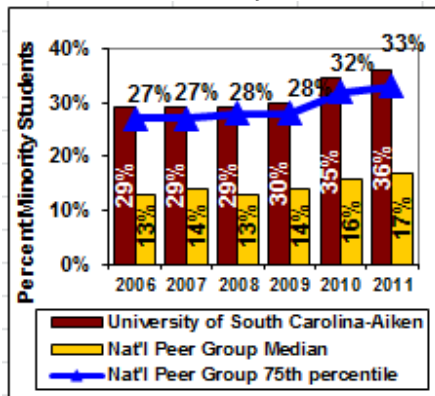
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-9 Percent of Students who are Female



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

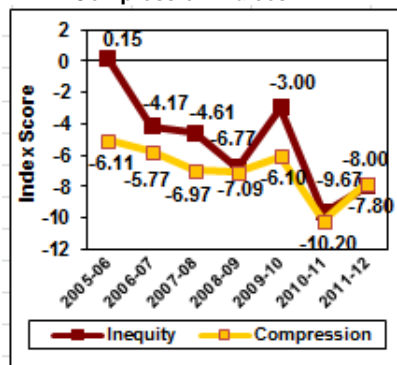
7.4-10 Percent of Minority Students



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

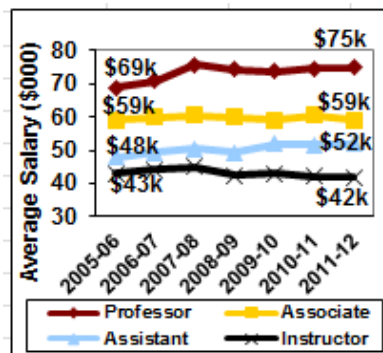
To recruit highly qualified faculty and staff, USC Aiken has made an effort to offer competitive faculty salaries and address salary inequities based upon regional data of time-in-rank adjusted average salaries for each discipline and professorial rank, while being sensitive to salary compression. The data indicate that the progress which had been made on this initiative has quickly eroded due to recent budgetary cutbacks in state appropriations. While there is wide variability in the indices' scores, on average, faculty salaries were approximately 9.7% below expectation in 2010-11 before compression adjustments, and 10.2% below expectation when compression adjustments (7.4-11) are considered. Average salaries for all faculty ranks, except the assistant professor and instructor ranks, have remained fairly level over the past couple of years (7.4-12).

7.4-11 Average Salary Inequity & Compression Indices



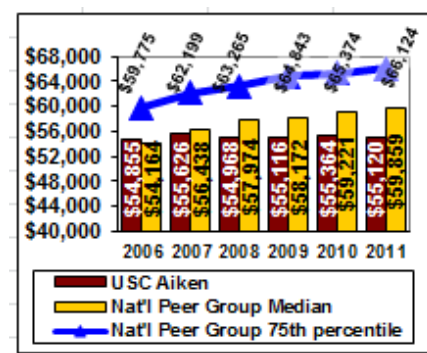
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-12 Average Faculty Salaries by Rank



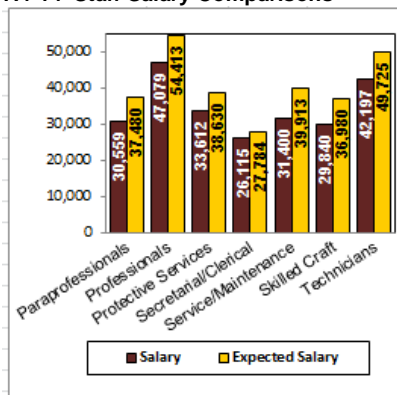
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-13 Average Faculty Salaries Equated to 9 Month Contracts



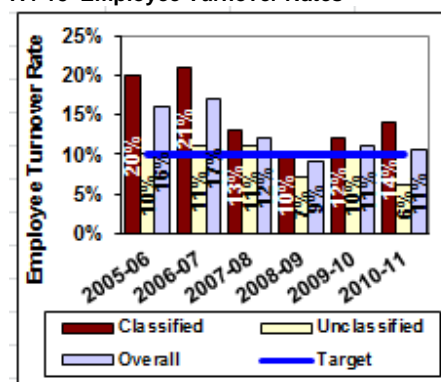
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-14 Staff Salary Comparisons



Source: USC Aiken Staff Salary Study

7.4-15 Employee Turnover Rates



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

Relative to the University's national peer group, USC Aiken's average faculty salary, equated to a 9 month contract, has fallen further below the median for each of the past five years (7.4-13). Within the state of South Carolina, USC Aiken ranks #8 in the state among public universities for faculty salaries (7.4-16). USC Aiken's classified staff

members have lower salaries than expected in all categories based upon an analysis of years of service and the State salary band system; the average salary inequity is 14.2% below expectation (7.4-14). The overall 11% rates of employee turnover in 2010-11 were slightly above the target of being under 10%; although the rate differs for unclassified (6%) as compared to classified (14%) (7.4-15).

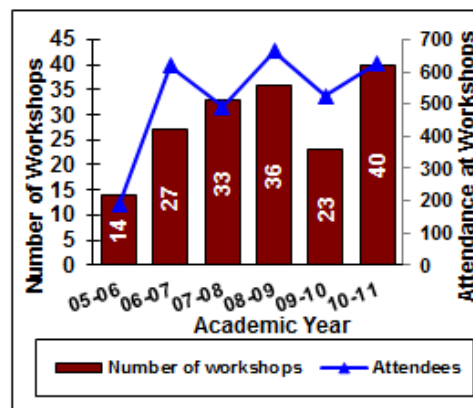
USC Aiken provides professional development opportunities for its faculty and staff (7.4-17) through a number of workshops offered by the Human Resources Office, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and Sponsored Programs, to name a few.

7.4-16 South Carolina Faculty Salaries, 2011-12

Institution	Full Prof.	Assoc. Prof.	Asst. Prof.	Instr.
U.S.C. - Columbia	\$116,432	\$80,429	\$72,050	\$45,273
Clemson University	\$107,977	\$79,077	\$70,249	\$54,305
The Citadel	\$86,419	\$69,802	\$57,535	\$44,993
Coastal Carolina University	\$84,168	\$70,535	\$58,234	\$46,112
College of Charleston	\$82,328	\$65,022	\$59,060	\$49,223
Francis Marion University	\$76,809	\$60,889	\$54,124	\$48,427
Winthrop University	\$76,326	\$64,619	\$54,538	\$44,092
U.S.C. - Aiken	\$73,872	\$58,548	\$52,034	\$41,727
South Carolina State Univ.	\$73,314	\$63,674	\$55,813	\$44,841
U.S.C. - Upstate	\$72,762	\$61,237	\$51,883	\$46,791
U.S.C. - Beaufort	\$72,519	\$59,589	\$54,118	\$46,986
Lander University	\$68,274	\$53,375	\$49,431	\$40,458

Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.4-17 Faculty & Staff Development Workshops

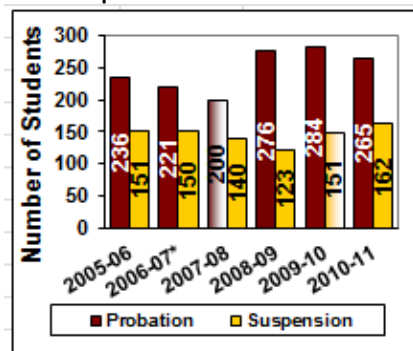


Source: USC Aiken Internal Data

7.5 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of organizational effectiveness/operational efficiency and work system 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; cycle time)?

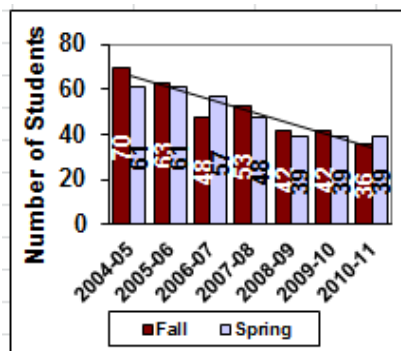
USC Aiken monitors a wide range of indicators to evaluate the success of its learning-centered processes. The number of students who have been suspended for academic reasons has ranged from a low of 123 in 2008-09 to 162 in 2010-11 (7.5-1). There has also been a dramatic increase in the number of students placed on probation over the past three years (7.5.1). The number of students who withdraw completely from the University has steadily declined over the years (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 (7.5-4). In an effort to decrease low grades, instructors notify the Academic Success Center of students who are in danger of receiving grades indicative of unsatisfactory performance. As a result, the Academic Success Center forwards an early warning letter to the student indicating the nature of the problem and available resources to assist the student. Scholarship retention rates are also indicative of the efficacy of learning centered processes (7.5-3).

7.5-1 Students on Probation or Suspension



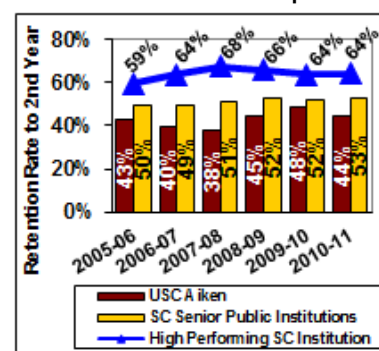
Source: USC Aiken Enrollment Services Division

7.5-2 Complete Withdrawals of USC Aiken Students



Source: USC Aiken Institutional Effectiveness unofftotals

7.5-3 Life Scholarship Retention Rates Freshman to Sophomore



Source: SC CHE, CHEMIS

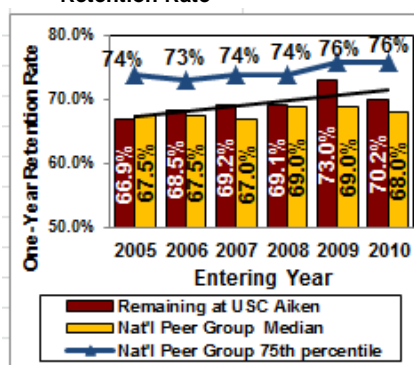
7.5-4 D,F and W Rates & Early Warnings

	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Total Course Grades Earned	13586	12238	13481	12440	13709	12067	13907	12530	14098	12439	14212	12416
Total Course Grades of D, F, and W	2383	2210	2271	2073	2203	2084	2365	2128	2362	2094	2302	2073
Proportion of Ds, Fs, and Ws	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.17
Early Warning Forms Submitted	401	342	240	240	236	254	436	326	344	34	284	260
Forms Proportional to Ds, Fs, and Ws	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.18	0.15	0.15	0.02	0.12	0.13

Source: Grade Totals and USC Aiken Academic Success Program Review

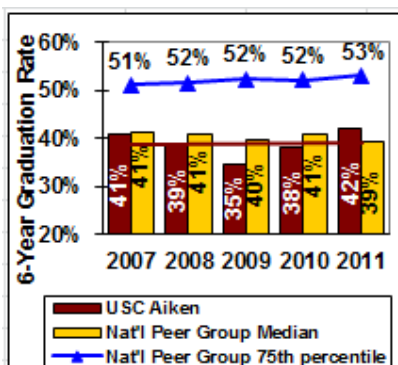
The one-year retention rate has shown a steady increase since 2004 when it was 59.9%. The percentage of students from 2010 to return in 2011 was 70.2% (7.5-5). In addition to degree attainment (7.1-1; 7.1-2; and 7.1-3), the proportion of students who earn degrees in a reasonable amount of time is a key indicator of institutional effectiveness (7.5-6). The six year graduation rate among baccalaureate degree seeking students entering as full-time freshmen was 42% in 2011, a rate above the median value for our National peer group (7.5-6).

7.5-5 Freshman to Sophomore Retention Rate



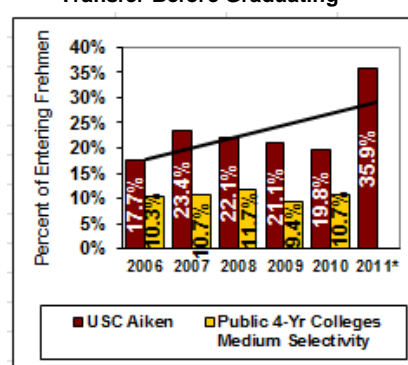
Source: Consortium for the Study of Retention Data Exchange

7.5-6 Six Year Graduation Rates



Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

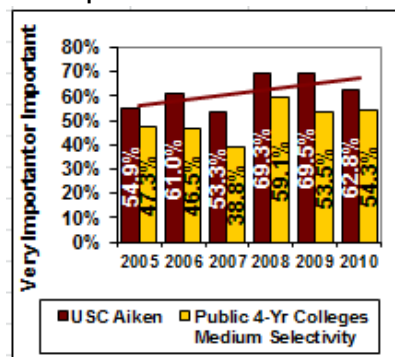
7.5-7 Entering Freshmen Who Plan to Transfer Before Graduating



Source: Freshman Survey

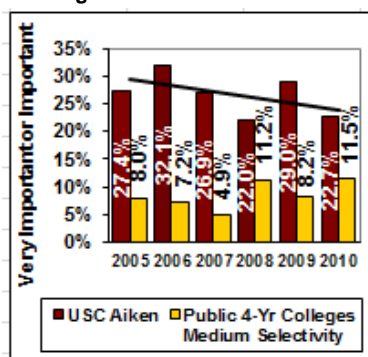
Various additional measures for stakeholder perceptions of the institution are collected on entry using the nationally benchmarked Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshmen Survey which is administered every second year. A similar in-house survey is used on alternating years when the CIRP is not administered. In 2011, a little fewer than 36% of entering freshmen indicated they plan to transfer to another institution before graduating, approximately three times the average percentage (10.7%) of students from similar institutions who plan to transfer (7.5-7). This is attributed to the fact that students can begin on the USC Aiken campus and then switch to another campus such as Columbia to complete their preferred degree programs. Entering freshmen are well aware of the academic reputation of USC Aiken -- almost 63% of entering freshmen cite the academic reputation of USC Aiken as a very important or important reason they chose USC Aiken (7.5-8), and freshmen are twice as likely to cite the institution's ranking in national magazines (7.5-9) than are students at other public 4 year colleges as the reason they selected USC Aiken. As an indicator of the organizational effectiveness, USC Aiken was again ranked number 1 among public baccalaureate colleges in the South by *US News and World Report*, marking the 8th time it has received the number one slot and the 14th consecutive year it has been in the top 3 rankings (7.5-10). Further, as an indicator of continuous improvement, the overall ranking of USC Aiken in the South regardless of public or private institutional status continues to improve (7.5-10).

7.5-8 Reasons Why Students Attend Institution: Good Academic Reputation



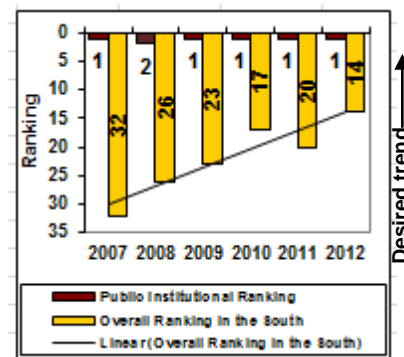
Source: CIRP Freshman Survey

7.5-9 Reasons Why Students Attend Institution: Ranking in National Magazine



Source: CIRP Freshman Survey

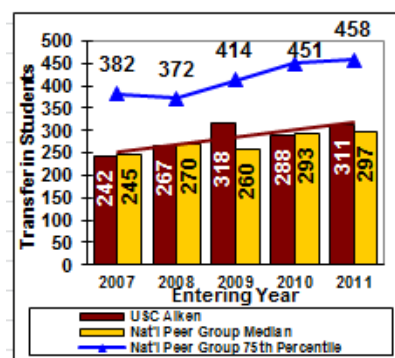
7.5-10 Ranking in National Magazine



Source: US News & World Report

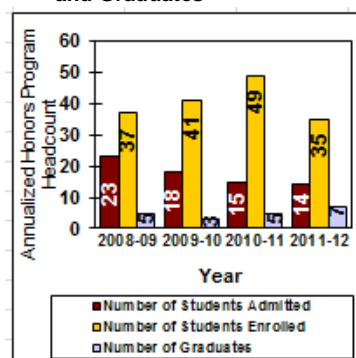
A further measure of the effectiveness of the institution is the number of students who transfer in to USC Aiken (7.5-11). This number has shown a small but steady increase from 2007-2011.

7.5-11 Number of Transfer in Students



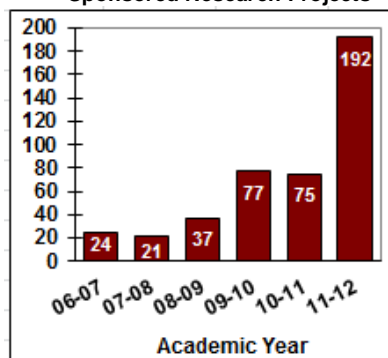
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.5-12 Honors Program Participants and Graduates



Source: Honors Program Annual Review

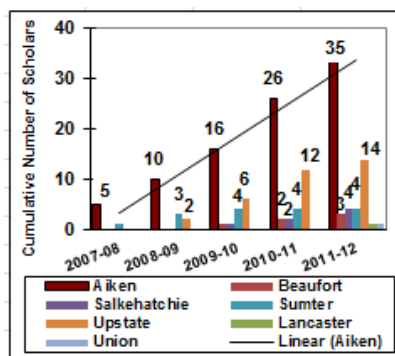
7.5-13 Number of Students Involved in Sponsored Research Projects



Source: Institutional Effectiveness Reports

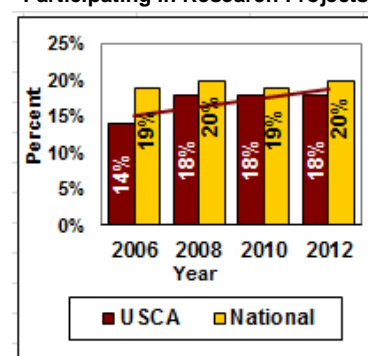
Several recent strategic initiatives have focused on improving student engagement; particularly in scholarly pursuits such as research, linked courses and learning communities, community service, and a revised Honors program (7.5-12). These initiatives have resulted in a recent increase in the number of students involved in sponsored research projects (7.5-13), and the highest number of Magellan Scholars within the USC System off the main campus (7.5-14).

7.5-14 Number of Magellan Scholars



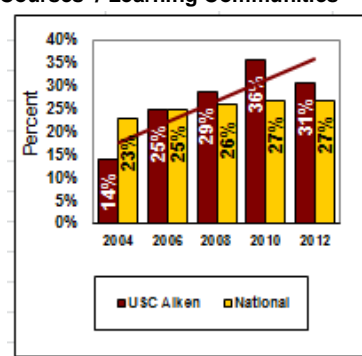
Source: Magellan Scholars' website

7.5-15 Percent of Seniors who Report Participating in Research Projects



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

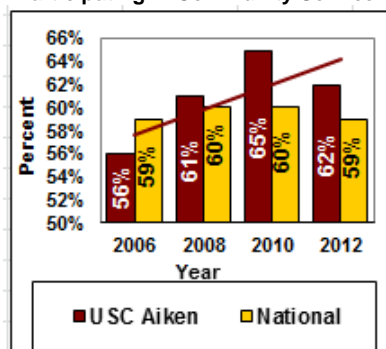
7.5-16 Participation In Linked Courses / Learning Communities



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

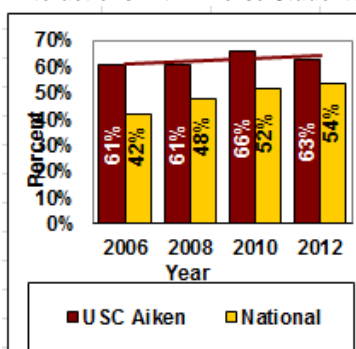
The number of graduating seniors who reported on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to have participated in research projects has shown an increase from 14% in 2006 to 18% in 2012 (7.5-15). Similarly the percent of seniors to report that they participated in linked courses or learning communities has increased -- in 2012 the rate (31%) exceeded the national rate of 27% (7.5-16). NSSE data also indicate success with initiatives to increase students' participation in community service (7.5-17) and interaction with a racially and ethnically diverse student population (7.5-18).

7.5-17 Percent of Seniors Who Report Participating in Community Service



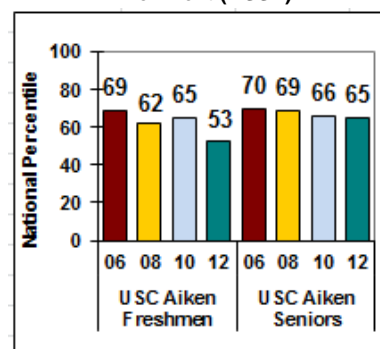
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.5-18 Percent of Seniors who Report Interactions with Diverse Students



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.5-19 Supportive Campus Environment (NSSE)



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 (7.5-20), placing USC Aiken in the 65th to 66th percentile nationally in terms of a supportive campus environment (7.5-19) and significantly above other institutions on all measures.

7.5-20 Academic and Social Support (NSSE)

		2008				2010				2012			
		USC Aiken	NSSE (Nat'l)			USC Aiken	NSSE (Nat'l)			USC Aiken	NSSE (Nat'l)		
Class		Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
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	3.34	3.14	***	.26	3.36	3.16	***	.26	3.27	3.20	***	.09
	SR	3.37	3.14	***	.30	3.46	3.16	***	.38	3.40	3.19	***	.28
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	FY	3.27	3.07	***	.25	3.31	3.10	***	.25	3.15	3.14	***	.01
	SR	3.23	2.93	***	.35	3.24	2.98	***	.31	3.25	3.01	***	.28
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	FY	2.87	2.70	**	.18	2.93	2.74	***	.20	2.76	2.77		-.01
	SR	2.83	2.50	***	.33	2.90	2.57	***	.33	2.80	2.61	**	.18
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	FY	2.48	2.27	***	.22	2.47	2.30	**	.17	2.35	2.32	***	.03
	SR	2.32	1.99	***	.35	2.34	2.04	***	.32	2.31	2.07	***	.24
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	FY	2.74	2.49	***	.27	2.80	2.54	***	.28	2.71	2.55	*	.16
	SR	2.64	2.23	***	.44	2.58	2.28	***	.32	2.67	2.30	***	.38
f. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	FY	3.00	2.84	**	.17	3.12	2.87	***	.27	3.08	2.88	***	.22
	SR	2.93	2.61	***	.33	2.88	2.66	***	.23	3.05	2.62	***	.42
g. Using computers in academic work	FY	3.41	3.31	*	.13	3.36	3.33		.03	3.25	3.31		-.08
	SR	3.55	3.46	*	.12	3.60	3.47	***	.18	3.57	3.45	**	.16

Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results ; ^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size;

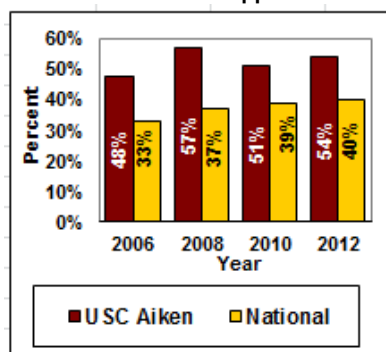
^b * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, (2-tailed); ^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation

The positive gap between the percent of USC Aiken seniors and seniors from other institutions across the nation who reported on the NSSE that their institution provided quite a bit or very much social support was 14% in 2012 (7.5-21).

Another measure of the organizational effectiveness is the extent to which graduates find employment. 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

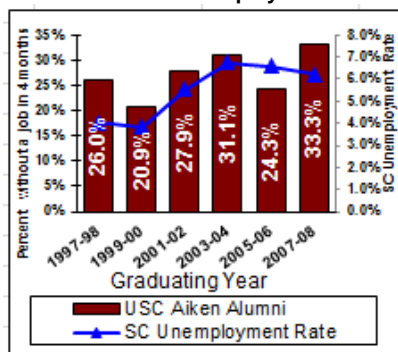
general is at or below rates for other institutions in the State. As expected, a major contributing factor is the South Carolina unemployment rate (7.5-22). Approximately 43% of the alumni surveyed in 2011 who graduated in 2007 and 2008 have found employment highly related to their majors (7.5-23) and the percent of graduating seniors who indicate that USC Aiken emphasized the skills and knowledge necessary to find employment has been within 1 percentage point of 85% from 2006 to 2010 (7.5-24).

7.5-21 Percent of Seniors Who Report a lot of Social Support



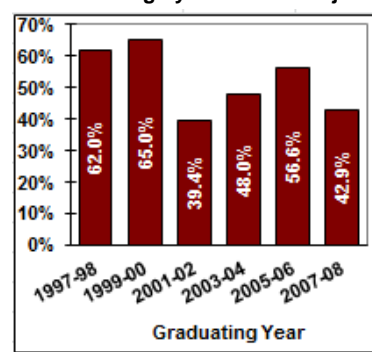
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.5-22 Graduates Taking 4 Months or More to Find Employment



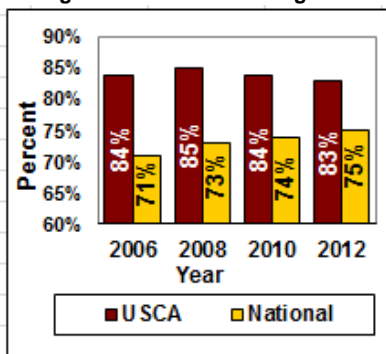
Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey

7.5-23 Percent of Graduates with a Job Highly Related to Major



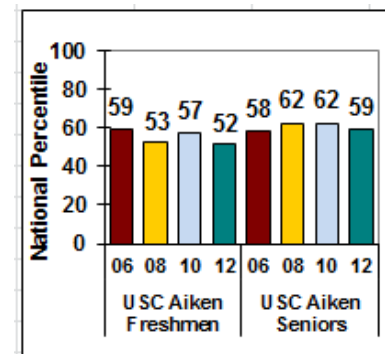
Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey

7.5-24 Percent of Seniors to Report Gaining Job Skills & Knowledge



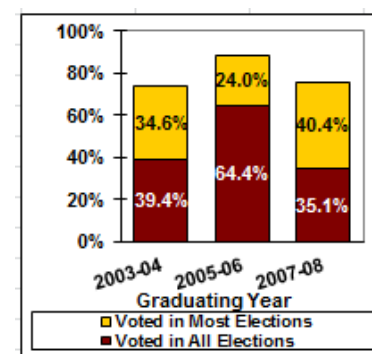
Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.5-25 Principled Citizenship (NSSE)



Source: USC Aiken NSSE Results

7.5-26 Alumni Voting Behavior

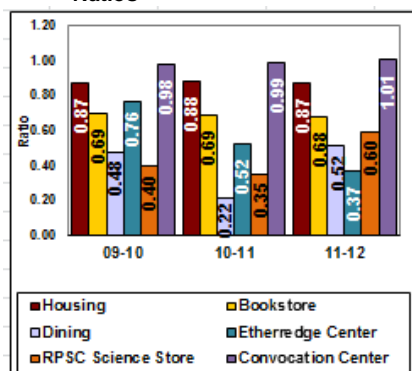


Source: USC Aiken Alumni Survey

USC Aiken emphasizes the development of a well educated and responsible citizenry. The extent to which the institution is effective in achieving this goal is captured in measures of principled citizenship among its students (7.5-25) and voting behavior of its alumni (7.5-26).

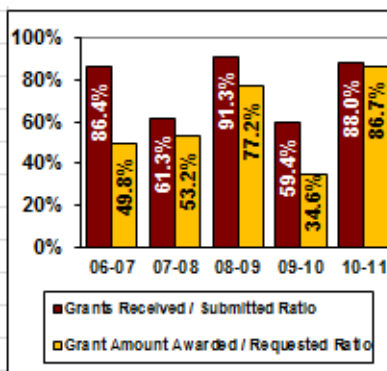
The efficiency of most operations is monitored by examining expenditures per FTE student. Auxiliary areas are expected to be self-sufficient or to generate a net income. To ensure this, ratios of revenue to expenditure for units such as housing, dining services, the Ruth Patrick Science Center Store, Etheredge Center, Convocation Center, and the bookstore (7.5-27) are routinely examined. Data indicate that in all auxiliary enterprises, revenues exceeded expenditures in 2011-12 with the exception of the Convocation Center. The effectiveness of grant writing activities is evaluated by monitoring the ratio of submissions to successful awards and amount awarded to amount requested on an annual basis. These ratios were in a decline in recent years due in part to changes in criteria used by agencies to award grants, but in 2009-2010, the ratio was sitting at 59.4% (7.5-28). To contain costs and to ensure efficient use of limited resources, utilities usage and expenditures are also monitored (7.5-29). Significant energy savings have been attained over the past couple of years.

7.5-27 Auxiliary Revenue / Expenditure Ratios



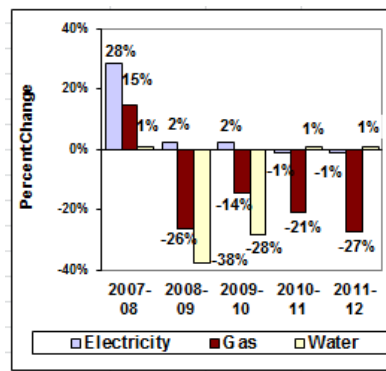
Source: USC Accounting Intranet Year End Data

7.5-28 Grant Writing Success Ratio



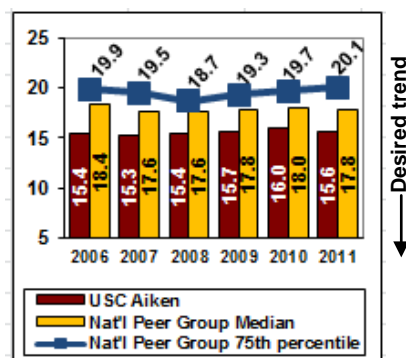
Source: USC Aiken Sponsored Research Data

7.5-29 Utility Costs

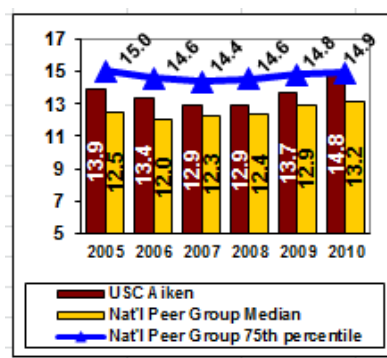


Source: USC Accounting Intranet Year End Data

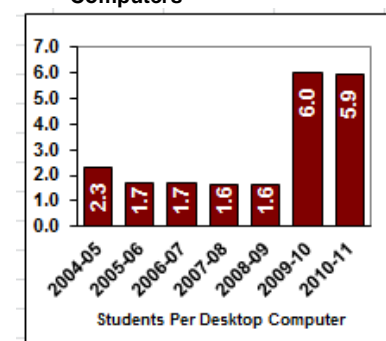
7.5-30 Student-Faculty Ratio

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

7.5-31 Student-Staff Ratio

Calculated as Annualized FTE Students per FTE Staff
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.5-32 Ratio of Students to Desktop Computers



Source: USC Aiken Computer Services Division data

7.5-33 Classroom Utilization

2010-11 Utilization Table	Sq. Ft. per Stu. Station)	Avg. Room Hrs of Instruction Per Week	Station Utilization	SC Space Factor Calculation
SC Guidelines	22.00	30.00	60%	1.22
USC-Beaufort	20.34	16.44	44%	2.82
Francis Marion	18.81	14.82	60%	2.13
Citadel	19.46	15.45	57%	2.19
Winthrop	19.35	27.43	63%	1.13
SC State	18.39	18.75	40%	2.48
Lander	20.14	24.22	66%	1.25
USC-Columbia	16.98	37.38	41%	1.10
USC-Aiken	21.81	31.17	58%	1.21
USC-Upstate	18.11	23.20	49%	1.60
Coastal Carolina	17.24	41.87	48%	0.86
Clemson	17.33	28.28	48%	1.27
Col. of Charleston	18.20	25.89	68%	1.03
Average	18.85	25.41	53%	1.59

Source: SC CHE Statistical Abstract Data

median of 13.2 students per staff member at peer institutions (7.5-31). This indicates that relative to our peers, USC Aiken staff members carry a heavier student load. The ratio of students to desktop computers was at 5.9 students per computer in 2010-11 (7.5-32). USC Aiken makes effective use of its classroom

The availability and effective use of resources to meet stake holders' needs is carefully monitored through several measures. USC Aiken's student-faculty ratio, a metric also commonly used as a measure of academic quality, has ranged between 15.3 and 16 students per faculty member in recent years, consistently positioning USC Aiken below the median value of our National peer group – a lower ratio is indicative of more potential student contact with faculty (7.5-30). On the staff side, USC Aiken had 14.8 students per staff member compared to a

space with an average of 13.7 hours of instruction per week per room which represents a 58% utilization rate (7.5-33) and its library collections (7.5-34).

7.5-34 Library Collection Additions & Deletions

End of Year Holdings								Level 1 Expend. (Books & Per.)
Year	Books, serials	E-books	Microform units	Audiovisual units	Databases	Serial subscriptions	Electronic subscriptions	
2003-2004	193,134	--	120,801	242	--	--	--	\$368,278
2004-2005	133,452	--	68,398	989	--	--	--	\$422,337
2005-2006	156,750	--	61,009	898	33	603	--	\$376,126
2006-2007	217,902	--	75,616	3,340	36	1,661	996	\$365,974
2007-2008	219,572	3,727	76,276	3,455	50	1,328	620	\$386,581
2008-2009	221,988	5,986	77,341	3,772	114	438	256	\$350,491
2009-2010	197,366	15,392	78,816	4,022	127	424	232	\$455,784
2010-2011	223,192	65,014	80,128	4,011	129	120	228	\$453,465

Source: SC State Library Academic Library Statistics

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; and d.) organizational citizenship in support of your key communities?

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 periodically releases progress reports (7.6-1).

7.6-1 Strategic Planning Reports

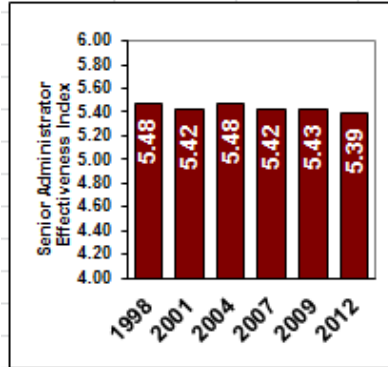
Date	Report Title	Web Location
2008	Strategic Plan 2008-09	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/StrategicPlanFall2008.pdf
2008	Strategic Plan Action Report 2008	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Plan%20Action%20Report%20-%20May%202008.pdf
2009	Strategic Plan 2009-2014	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Plan%202009-14.pdf
2009	Strategic Maps 2009-2014	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Map.pdf
2009	Strategic Initiatives 2009-2014	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Initiatives.pdf
2009	Strategic Assessment Plans 2009-2014	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Assessment%20Plan.pdf
2010	Strategic Plan Action Report 2010	http://ie.usca.edu/assessment/StrategicPlan/docs/Strategic%20Plan%20Action%20Report%20September%202010.pdf

Source: USC Aiken Strategic Planning Committee Web Site

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 Etheredge Center for performing arts. USC Aiken's expenditures on these and other public service activities per FTE student place the University well above the 75th percentile of its peers nationally (7.6-3). The institution has also been successful in writing and procuring service oriented grants (7.6-4); in 2010-11, more than one half million dollars (\$525,331) in service oriented grant monies was procured representing 26% of the all grants. Crime rates on campus at USC Aiken remain below the state average, although these are increasing with more students living on campus (7.6-5). In 2009-10 there were 6 lost time accidents and 11 workman

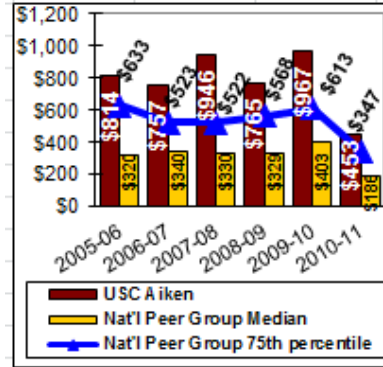
comp claims (7.6-7). USC Aiken's internal audits and the USC Internal Audit Department have found no significant violations or citations of legal, ethical, regulatory, or fiscal responsibilities for the past 20 years. All programs are regularly reviewed for compliance with assessment standards (7.6-6) and the accreditation of USC Aiken and its programs has been fully affirmed or reaffirmed (7.6-9).

7.6-2 Summarized 360 Senior Administrator Evaluations



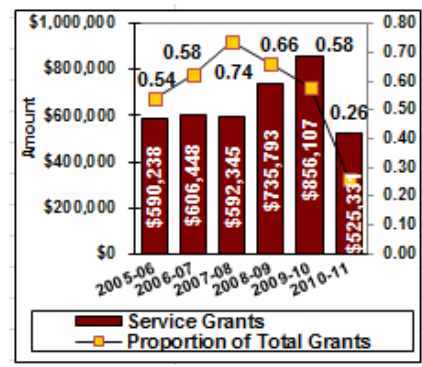
Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness

7.6-3 Public Service Expenditure per FTE Student



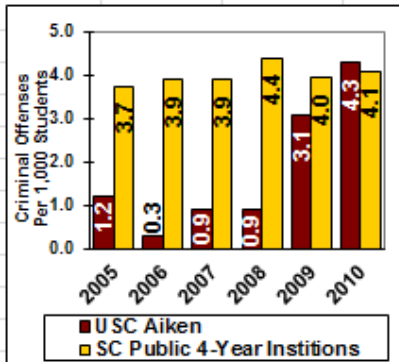
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System

7.6-4 Service Grants



Source: USC Aiken Sponsored Programs Data

7.6-5 Criminal Offenses on Campus per 1,000 Students



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

7.6-6 Evaluation of Academic Assessment Activities

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Number of Majors Reviewed by Assessment Committee	6	5	8	5	8
<i>Ratings of 1(low) -4 (high) of compliance with Assessment Guidelines</i>					
Goals	2.2	2.8	3.3	3.3	3.4
Objectives	2.2	3.4	*	*	*
Measurement	2.3	3.4	3.0	3.5	3.3
Findings	2.1	3.6	2.9	2.8	2.8
Use of Results	2.1	3.4	2.5	2.1	2.8

Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness; * Goals & Objectives combined as Goals/Outcomes in 2009

7.6-7 USC Aiken Safety Statistics

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Work Related Injury & Illness	10	1	5	6	8	4
Worker's Comp Claims	14	6	7	14	15	10

Source: USC Aiken Environmental Health and Safety Division

7.6-8 Institutional and Program Accreditations

Institutional Component	Accreditor	Acronym	Status
USC Aiken (Regional Accreditation)	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools	SACS	Fully Accredited
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
Dept of Visual & Performing Arts - Music Education Program	National Association of Schools of Music	NASM	Fully Accredited
Children's Center	National Association for the Education of Young Children	NAEYC	Fully Accredited

Source: USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness