

Board of Governors

State University System of Florida



2008 Accountability Report

March 1, 2009

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The State University System includes 10 universities and one liberal arts honors college, with sites in all 67 Florida counties. The System currently enrolls nearly 300,000 students and projects demand for another 50,000 during the next five years.

The Florida Constitution (Article IX, Section 7) creates the Board of Governors to operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system. The responsibilities of the Board also include defining the distinctive mission of each constituent university and its articulation with free public schools and community colleges, ensuring the well-planned coordination and operation of the system, and avoiding wasteful duplication of facilities and programs.

Since the early 1990s, the State University System has reported annually on specific performance accountability measures. In 2005, the Board of Governors adopted the State University System of Florida's Strategic Plan 2005-2013. The Board established specific, measurable goals for the State University System that focus on providing access, meeting the workforce needs of the state, and building world-class academic programs and research capacity, while defining and approving university missions that meet community needs and fulfill unique institutional responsibilities. This accountability system includes strategic System-wide goals and targets out through year 2012-13 and performance standards and measures.

As part of the "Forward by Design" initiatives adopted at the December 2007 Board of Governors meeting, the Board has been developing a process for aligning performance monitoring with individual institutions' goals, reflecting each university's distinctive contribution to the System. Appropriate and predictable funding will be essential to the success of that process, as well as to meaningful progress on the System-level measures included in this report.

At its June 2008 meeting, the Board began the process of reviewing the assumptions and conditions underlying the 2012-13 strategic planning goals set in 2005. Goals were initially developed based on economic and demographic projections, national competition, and other factors. The Board will continue to reevaluate those goals in the context of demographic, economic, and academic developments at the state and national levels.

Overview

The State University System awarded degrees to 68,423 students in 2007-08, an increase of 6% over the previous year. Nearly 50,000 of those were bachelor's degrees, which grew 5% over 2006-07. These graduates will comprise Florida's skilled and entrepreneurial workforce for the coming decades.

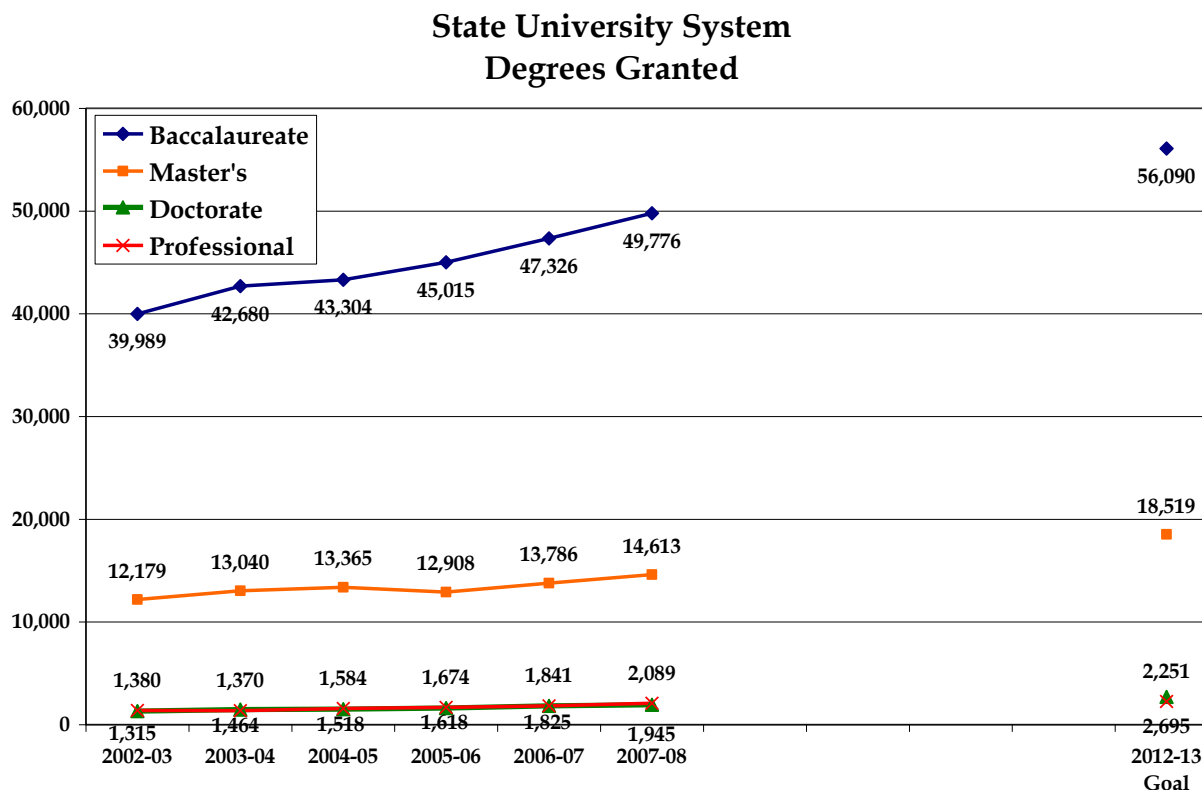
Nearly one-third of these undergraduate and graduate degrees were awarded in the critical needs areas of health and education, in science and engineering, and in other emerging technologies fields. About 20% more feed into other targeted high-wage/high-demand occupations. Many more graduates enter the workforce or go on to graduate studies from fields as varied as social sciences, social work, business, and performing arts.

About 30% of all baccalaureate degrees were awarded to traditionally underrepresented minority students (i.e., African-American, Hispanic, and Native American). The State University System joined the national Access to Success initiative in 2007, focusing on reducing the gaps for underrepresented minority and low-income students in both university participation and graduation rates.

Graduation and retention rates improved slightly for both first-time-in-college (FTIC) and AA-transfer cohorts graduating by 2008. The State University System continues to perform above average compared with state universities nationally. In addition to maintaining relatively high FTIC graduation rates compared with others states, a number of Florida's state universities rank among the top with regard to closing the gaps between minority and majority students' graduation rates.

The State University System total research and development expenditures rose above \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 2008, with two-thirds of that from external sources. Those research dollars have a direct impact on spending and job creation in communities around the state, and the research efforts they support help create marketable innovations and start-up businesses.

DEGREES EARNED



Note: The goals shown above are those adopted by the Board of Governors in 2005. The Board's current mid-term reevaluation of System strategic planning goals may result in a change to those shown above.

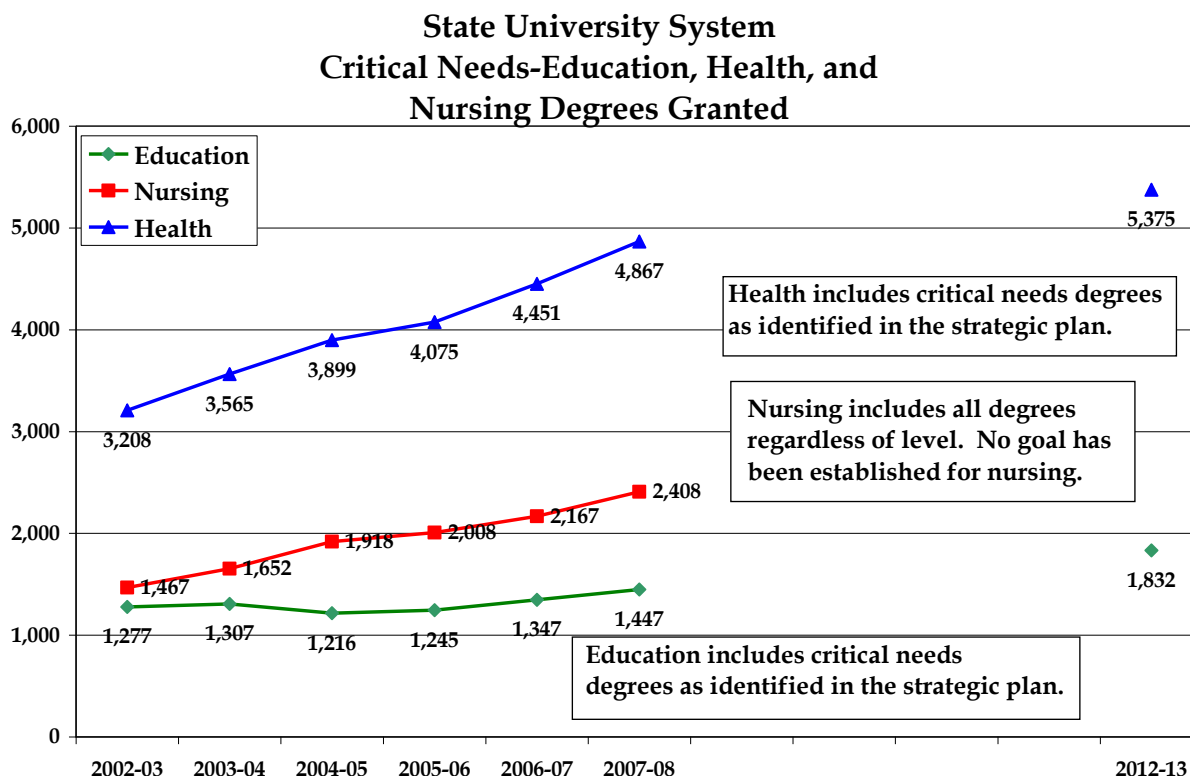
The number of degrees awarded to state university students has increased each of the last five years. In 2007-08, 68,423 undergraduate and graduate students received degrees in the SUS, a 6% increase from the prior year and 25% more than five years ago, 2002-03. The 49,776 bachelor's graduates from 2007-08 (an increase of 5% compared to 2006-07) will earn, on average, \$20,000 more per year than they would have without that degree, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The rapid growth in degrees awarded is the payoff of investments earlier in this decade in expanding the capacity of the university system. To reach the Board of Governor's goals for 2012-13, and to drive the state's future economic competitiveness in the longer term, the system would have to sustain the current rate of growth for many years.

However, growth in bachelor's degrees awarded is likely to flatten out in the near future, reflecting prior years' enrollment patterns. Future growth in degrees awarded will depend on a renewed commitment to predictable and appropriate funding for enrollment growth on the one hand, and a relentless focus on graduation rates and efficiency on the other. The university system should plan for the success of the K-12 system and the Florida College System in expanding the pipeline of qualified students

coming into the state universities, as well as plan for the Florida College System to take on a larger share of Florida's demand for bachelor's degree access.

TARGETED PROGRAMS



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In addition to contributing economically, state university graduates will also enhance the state's quality of life. The System awards nearly 30% of its degrees in critical needs, science, engineering, and other emerging technology fields.

287 new doctors (up from 207 five years ago), 2,408 nursing graduates (up from 1,467), 159 physical therapists (up from 168), 72 dentists (down slightly from 80) and 642 pharmacists (up from 557) will contribute to Florida's health.

1,447 of the education graduates were in fields identified as critical shortage areas by the State Board of Education, including science education and special education teachers. In addition to awarding degrees in those targeted areas, the System fills a range of training and educational needs of the Florida educators. An analysis of new public school teachers in Florida found that more than 60% of them had at least enrolled

in courses in the State University System, and half had earned a degree in education and other fields from a state university.

285 new baccalaureate architects (up from 158), 26 urban planners (up from 11), and 552 civil engineers (up from 300) will shape the built environment.

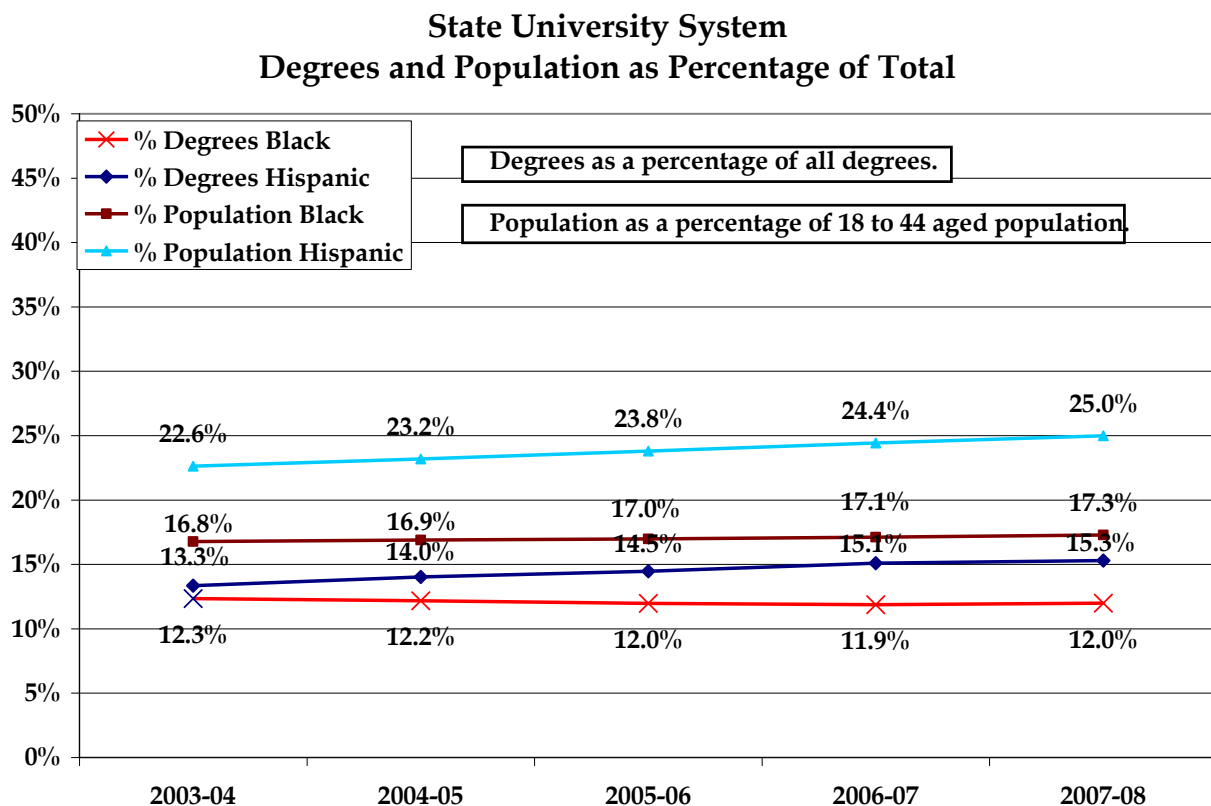
10,081 new science and engineering graduates (up from 8,236) will expand the frontiers of knowledge and technology. Their discoveries may cure disease or create whole new industries not yet imagined.

Yet, it is important that the system not focus too narrowly on the current set of “targeted” degree programs. Most of the state’s business, political, and community leaders are alumni of the State University System, including many with degrees in disciplines such as English, psychology, political science, or law. Significant contributions will be made, for example, by:

- 596 new social workers (up from 509) who will work with the Floridians who are most at risk;
- 1,788 new fine and performing artists (up from 1,398) who will give the state a cultural depth and texture valued by residents and visitors alike; and
- 10,993 new business graduates (up from 10,342) who will improve existing companies and start new ones.

MINORITY PARTICIPATION

The Board of Governors adopted accountability measures focused specifically on increasing the proportion of degrees awarded to underrepresented minority students. These measures reflect a recognition by the Board of the changing demographics in Florida. The K-12 system is now majority minority, and those minority students represent the majority of Florida's future workforce, as well. Increasing their access and success in baccalaureate and higher programs is essential to keeping Florida's economy strong and competitive.



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Minority students continue to graduate from SUS institutions in smaller numbers than expected given the diversity of the state. 12.0% of the system's graduates this year were black, compared to 17.3% of the state's 18-44 population. 15.3% of graduates were Hispanic, compared to 25.0% in the population base. It is unlikely at this point that the system will achieve the Board's 2012-13 goal of eliminating those gaps altogether.

It is important, however, that the system make progress in the right direction. The State University System has recently joined with a coalition of 20 states in the "Access to Success" initiative, which focuses in particular on the postsecondary participation and graduation of minority and low-income Floridians. This initiative will be the

framework within which the system works to improve and is held publicly accountable for the results.

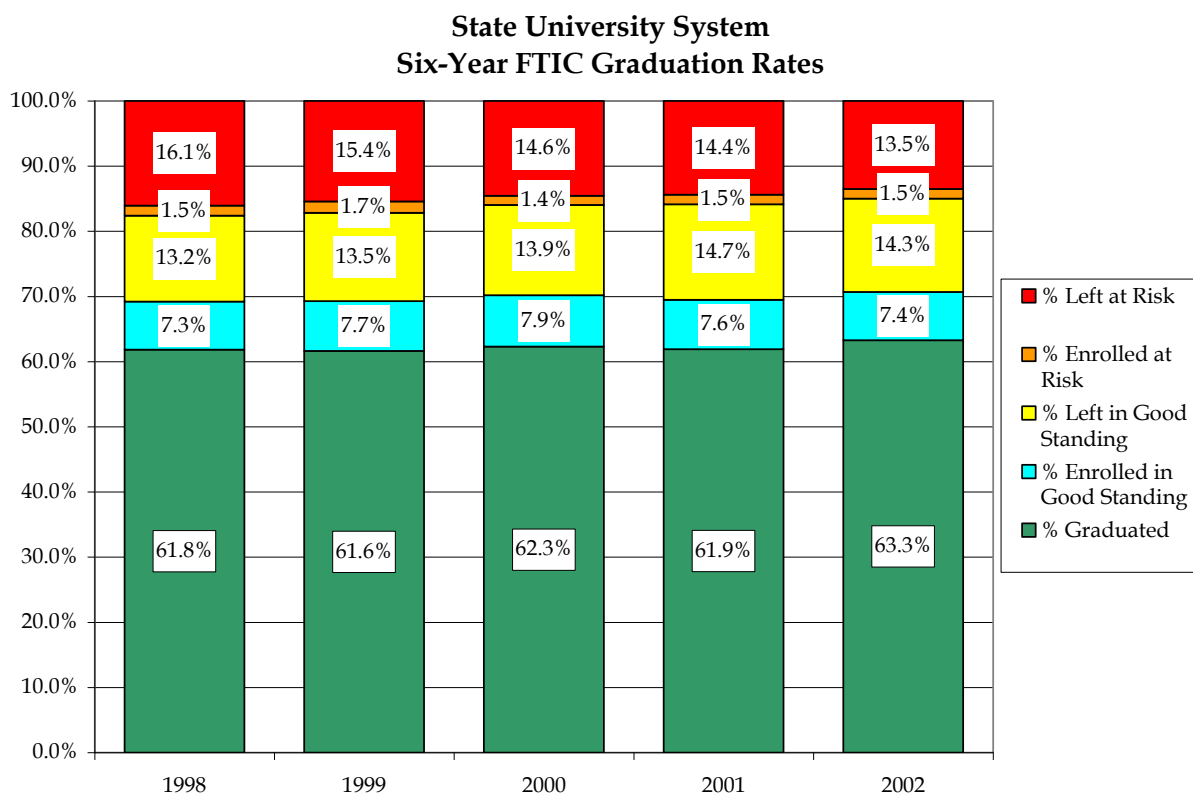
The state should also look to institutions within the system to continue and build on their national leadership in this area. Florida A&M University awards more degrees to black graduates every year than any other institution in the country. Florida State ranks fifth on the same measure. Florida International University is top in the country in the number of Hispanic students earning bachelor's degrees. In spite of these accomplishments, the system needs to build on its partnerships with the K-12 sector and the Florida College System to expand the pipeline of qualified students and supporting their success once they arrive.

Expanding need-based financial aid is a critical strategy to improve the odds for many underrepresented minority and low-income students currently graduating from the K-12 system and hoping to continue their education. More aid must be made available and what aid there is must be allocated as efficiently as possible to those who would not succeed without it. Recent research by staff of the Board of Governors and ENLACE Florida! has identified groups of students for whom the efficient and maximum allocation of need-based aid is particularly relevant.¹

¹ See BOG 2009 information briefs entitled “An Opportunity to Get More Aid to Florida Students,” and “Who Does Not Benefit From Federal and State Financial Aid Programs?”

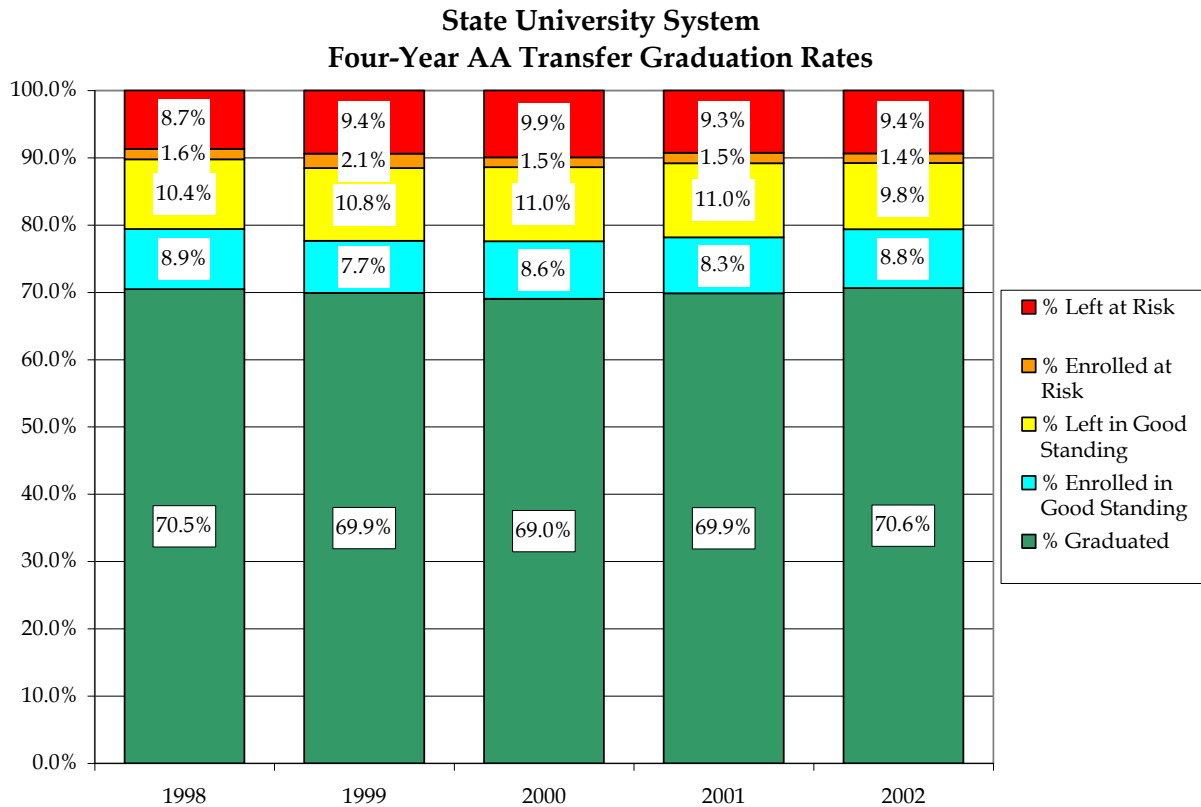
GRADUATION AND RETENTION RATES

Although Florida's six-year graduation rates are higher than the national average, there has been only a little improvement systemwide in the last few years. Of the 34,569 total freshmen who entered the State University System in fall 2002, 63.3% had graduated by spring 2008 – 1.4 percentage points higher than the previous year.



Another 7.2% of the 2002 cohort was still enrolled and in good academic standing; past experience indicates more than 90% of these students – who may have shifted to part-time attendance for financial or family reasons – will eventually graduate. 13.9% had left the system but had a GPA of at least 2.0, allowing them to continue their education elsewhere if they desire. This percentage has increased significantly during the last several years; further research is needed to determine whether students are not finding the program offerings they desire or whether they may be leaving for financial reasons.

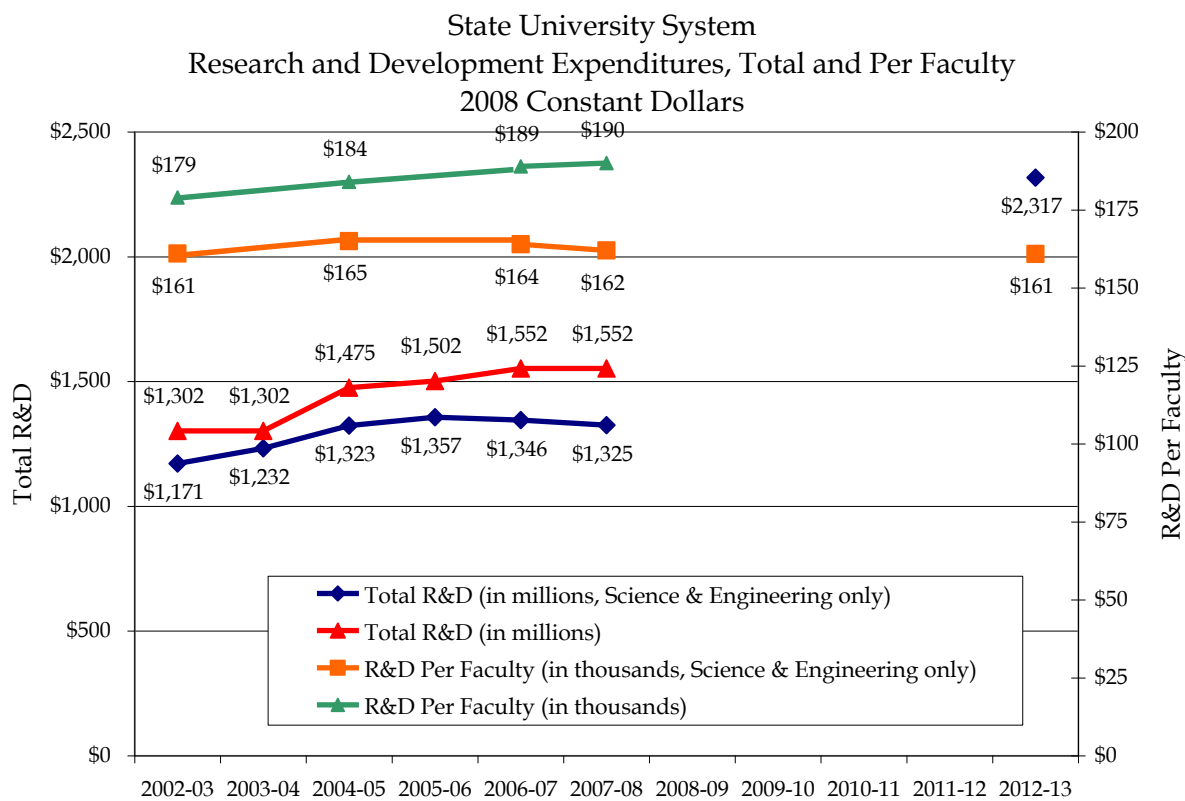
Among AA transfer students, 70.6% of the 11,976 total students in the cohort who entered in fall 2004 had graduated by spring 2008. Another 8.8% were still enrolled in good standing, 1.4% were still enrolled but with low grades, 9.8% had left the system in good standing, and 9.4% left with poor grades.



A substantial number of students do not fit in either the AA transfer or the first-time freshman category; these include transfers from institutions other than community colleges, transfers prior to the AA, and students who enter spring term. Expanding accountability efforts include many of these previously excluded students, as well.

The Access to Success initiative focuses in particular on graduation rate gaps for underrepresented minority and low-income students. Some state universities have demonstrated success in this area. At Florida State University, there is no gap between black and white students' graduation rates – an achievement recognized as outstanding by a 2008 report of Education Sector. That report also noted low black-white graduation rate gaps at the University of South Florida, the University of North Florida, and Florida International University.

RESEARCH



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Research expenditures are one shorthand measure of performance because the variety of research results achieved in the system is so difficult to quantify. The vast majority of research funding is based on competitive grants; the fact that a grant has been awarded means that a research project has been validated by a peer review process and that the institution has the faculty and facilities needed to convince a funding body that it is a good investment. Researchers who do not produce results generally have a harder time getting funding in the future.

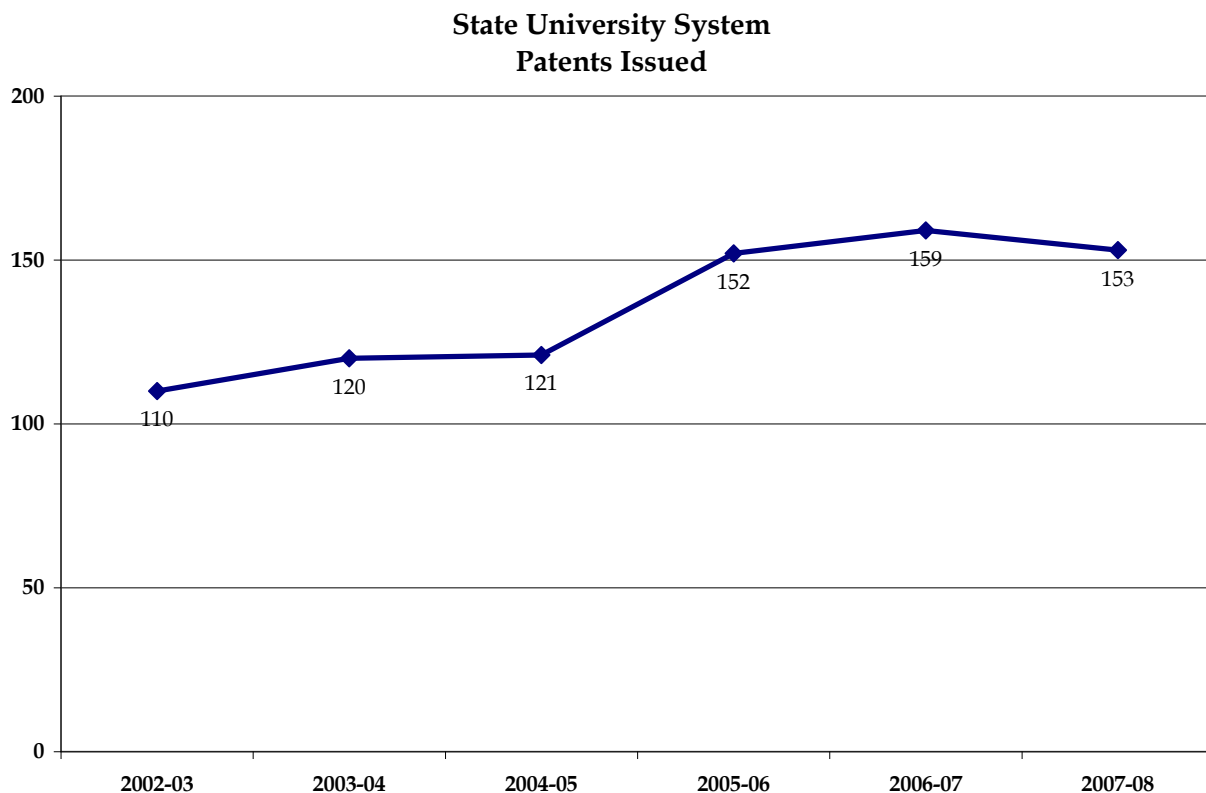
External research funds also represent a direct benefit for the state as money that is coming from an outside source to generate high-level jobs and economic activity here in Florida. According to estimates generated by IMPLAN economic impact modeling software, each \$1 million in research spending employs 19 people directly and another 19 indirectly, even without taking into consideration the potential business spinoffs or licensing revenues the research may eventually generate.

In FY 2008, the SUS generated \$1.55 billion in total research and development expenditures, of which \$1 billion came from external (federal and private) sources.

Most of that total research and development (\$1.35 billion of the total \$1.55 billion) was in science and engineering fields.

Faculty research productivity has risen. In 2008 dollars, total research expenditures per faculty member reached \$190,000 in 2007-08, up from \$179,000 in 2002-03 and up from \$189,000 in 2006-07. Science and engineering research expenditures per faculty member flattened out at \$162,000 per faculty member, just below the level reached in 2006-07.

PATENTS



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SUS institutions were awarded 153 patents in 2007-08, compared to 159 and 152 in the prior two years, respectively.

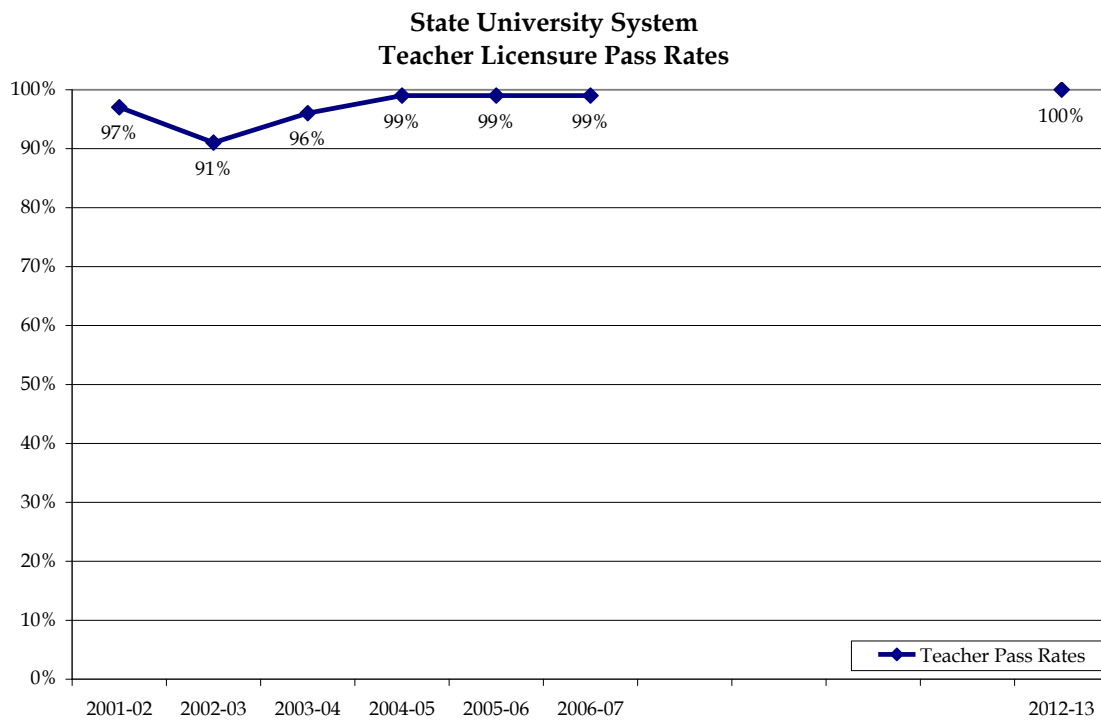
ACADEMIC LEARNING COMPACTS

The Board of Governors continues to emphasize the importance of student achievement in its strategic planning and accountability processes. Simultaneously, the Board has placed more emphasis on the devolution of authority to the universities, campus-level decision making, and institutional accountability. Accordingly, the Board has directed that all state universities develop “academic learning compacts” and related assessment processes for all baccalaureate degree programs.

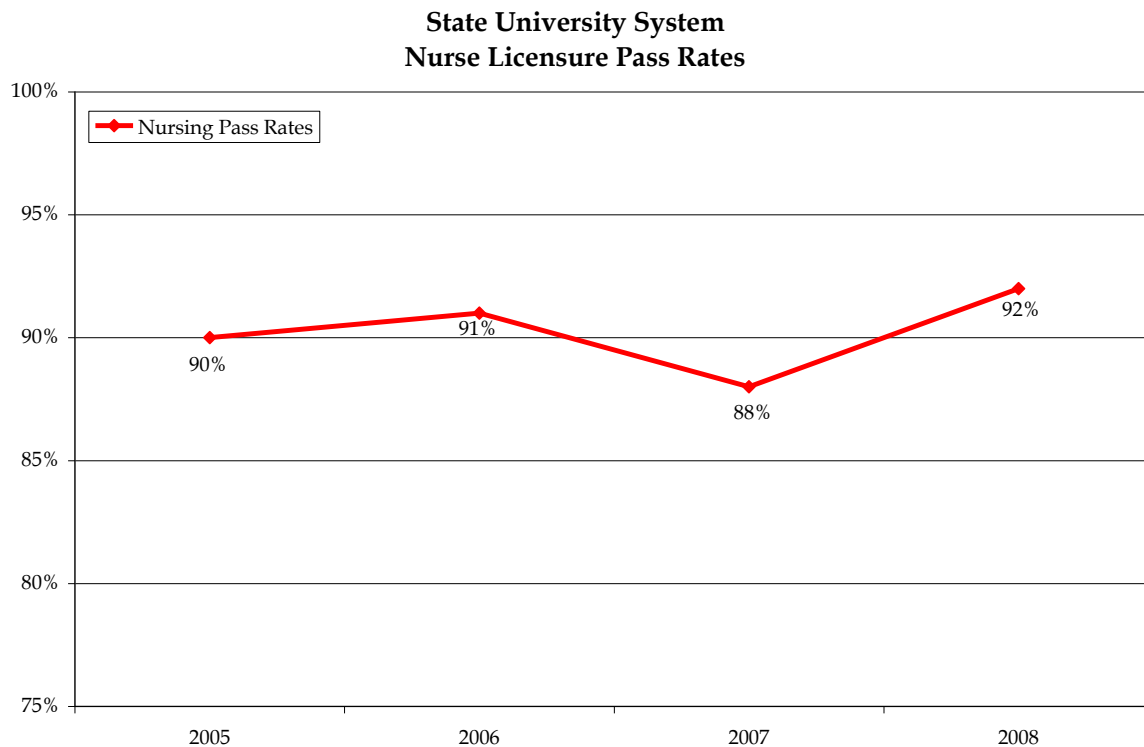
The State University System Academic Learning Compact and related assessments include the identification, for each baccalaureate degree program in the System, of what it is that students will have learned by the end of the program, and how that learning will be measured above and beyond course grades. An Academic Learning Compact focuses on content knowledge by discipline, communication skills, and critical thinking skills.

The Board of Governors now collects annual progress reports on Academic Learning Compacts to ensure that all baccalaureate degree programs are fulfilling requirements regarding the assessment of the core student learning expectations.

LICENSURE PASS RATES



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Only a few university programs lead directly to licensed professions; even in those cases, the timing and scope of the test and the availability of data from the testing agency make these difficult measures to evaluate. Where data are available, however, the record of SUS graduates is generally good.

SUMMARY

These accountability measures are a reflection of the State University System's contributions to the state's development, economic and otherwise. The measures track growth in undergraduate and graduate degrees. The measures focus in particular on degrees awarded to historically underrepresented students whose representation in the state's workforce is growing. The measures also focus on degrees awarded in programs leading to jobs of critical importance to Florida's economy and society today and to high-wage and high-skilled jobs that will be the foundation of Florida's economy of the future.

Other accountability measures address the efficiency of the process through which students earn these degrees (e.g., graduation and retention rates) and the quality of the programs in which they earn them (e.g., licensure pass rates, academic learning compacts).

In addition to tracking degrees, the Board's accountability measures reflect the importance of the State University System's contributions to research and development. University research brings \$1 billion dollars into the state and produces innovations that generate additional revenue as well as innovations that are the foundation of future scientific discovery.

The Board is continuing to review these measures and the assumptions used to set strategic goals and accountability benchmarks. Economic and demographic conditions have changed since these measures and goals were put in place. Although core measures, such as those focused on degrees awarded and research and development, continue to be primary interests, the changing academic and political landscapes may require modifications.