

# A Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)

# Voluntary System of Accountability

- Designed to improve public understanding of how public colleges and universities operate.
- Provides consistent, comparable and transparent information on the characteristics of institutions and students, cost of attendance, student engagement with the learning process, and core educational outcomes.

# Spellings Commission

“Colleges and Universities must become more transparent about cost, price, and student success outcomes, and must willingly share this information with students and families”

# Spellings Commission

“Student achievement, which is inextricably connected to institutional success, must be measured by institutions on a ‘value added’ basis that takes into account students’ academic baseline when assessing results.”

# A Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)

Sponsored by

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# Goals

**Provide three (3) key sets of measures:**

- 1. Student / Parent Consumer Information**
- 2. Engagement Information – Student experiences and perceptions**
- 3. Student Learning Outcomes**

# The Standard Reporting Template has 5 pages

## Accountability University

Washington, DC • 202.478.6043 • [www.AccountabilityU.edu](http://www.AccountabilityU.edu)

NOTE: All data on "Accountability University" are fabricated.

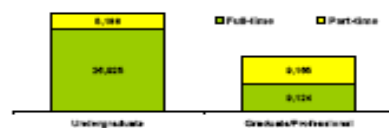
Text box for institutions to add description of campus (100 words)

NOTE: Most data in the first two pages of the template originate from existing data sources (Common Data Set, IPEDS)

### Student Characteristics (Fall 2006) [More](#)

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS 50,402

#### Student Level and Enrollment Status



#### UNDERGRADUATE PROFILE

Total 32,113

##### Gender

Women 17,158 53%  
Men 14,955 47%

##### Race/Ethnicity

African American / Black 1,483 5%  
American Indian / Alaskan Native 284 1%  
Asian / Pacific Islander 3,048 9%  
Hispanic 652 2%  
International 588 2%  
White 24,616 77%  
Race/Ethnicity Unknown 1,442 4%

##### Geographic Distribution

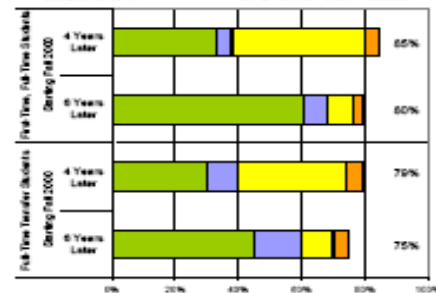
<institution's state> 22,950 71%  
Other US 8,575 27%  
Other Countries 588 2%

##### Age

Average Age 21  
Percent of Undergraduates Age 25 or Older 11%

### Undergraduate Success & Progress Rate [More](#)

■ Graduated from AU ■ Graduated at Another Institution  
■ Still Enrolled at AU ■ Still Enrolled at Another Institution



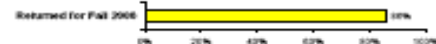
A 65% four-year success and progress rate means that 65% of students starting in Fall 2000 either graduated or are still enrolled at a higher education institution four years later.

Counts for the Fall 2000 entering class shown in the graph above.

- 4885 First-Time, Full-Time Students
- 2500 Full-Time Transfer Students

For Detailed Success & Progress Rate Tables [CLICK HERE](#)

#### Retention of Fall 2005 First-Time, Full-time Students



## COLLEGE PORTRAIT

A VOLUNTARY SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY (VSA™)

ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION IS THE BROAD RANGE OF DIVERSE INSTITUTIONS, EACH WITH ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE MISSION. COLLEGE STUDENTS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SELECT THE INSTITUTION THAT IS THE BEST MATCH FOR THEIR INTERESTS, ABILITIES, AND GOALS. WE CREDIT THIS OPPORTUNITY TO HELP STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW COLLEGES ARE ALIKE IN SOME WAYS, DIFFERENT IN OTHERS. THE ITEMS IN THE COLLEGE PORTRAIT WERE SELECTED BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MANY FOCUS GROUPS AS WELL AS EXPERTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION. WHILE THESE ITEMS WILL GIVE YOU VALUABLE INSIGHT INTO COLLEGE LIFE, THEY WILL NOT CAPTURE THE FULL RANGE AND RICHNESS OF THE EXPERIENCE. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO CHECK OUT COLLEGE WEBSITES AND VISIT CAMPUSES TO GET A MORE COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO YOU.

The template is referred to as the College Portrait.

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*Text box for institutions to add description of campus (100 words)*

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The pages are university branded.

Each VSA participating college and university will develop its own content for the banner on the first page of the VSA reporting template.

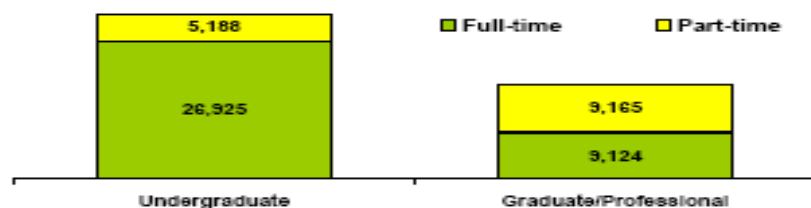
## Student Characteristics (Fall 2006)

[More](#)

### TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS

50,402

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### UNDERGRADUATE PROFILE

**Total** 32,113

#### Gender

Women	17,158	53%
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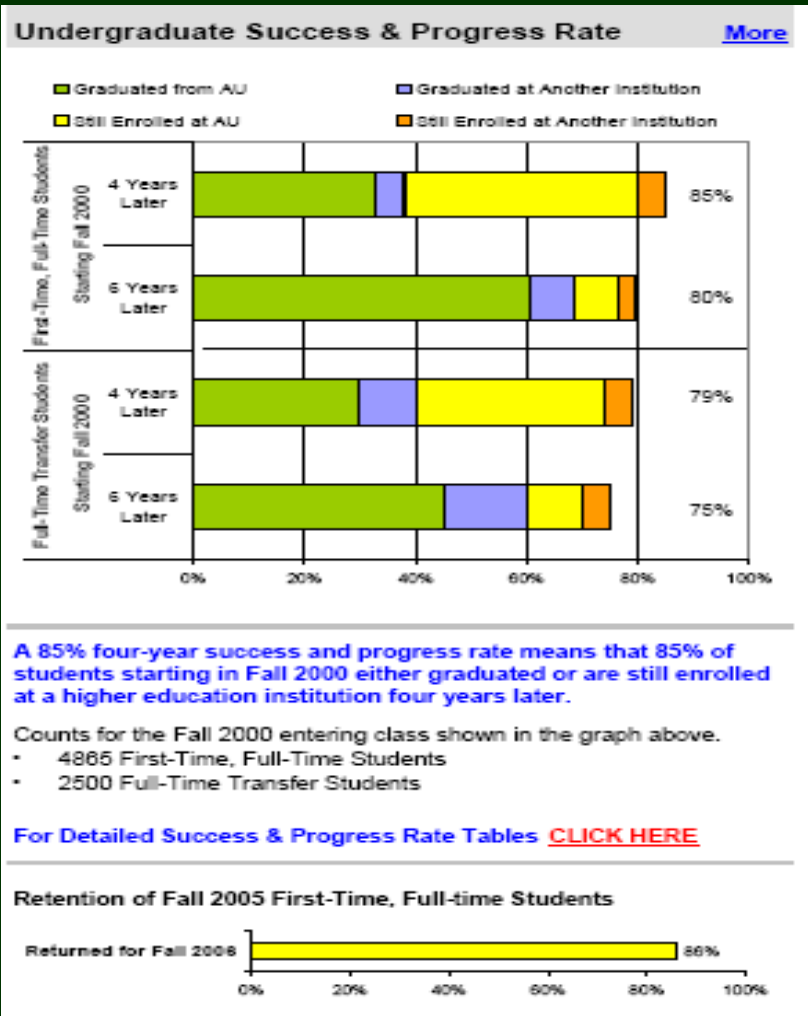
#### Age

Average Age	21
Percent of Undergraduates Age 25 or Older	11%

Standard IPEDS terminology is used for race and ethnicity reporting. International is used to replace the Non-Resident Alien category.

Data source: Common Data Set

IPEDS and Student Clearinghouse data are used to report continuing enrollments, graduations, and graduations for students once enrolled at your institution.



Data sources: IPEDS & Student Clearinghouse

**Typical Undergraduate Cost per Year without Financial Aid (Full-Time, In-State Students)**



The cost to attend AU varies based on the individual circumstances of students and may be reduced through grants and scholarships.

[CLICK HERE](#)  
To get a cost estimate for students like you!

**Financial Aid Awarded to Undergraduates**

**Overall Financial Aid**

• 93% of Fall 2005 full-time undergraduates received financial aid of some type (including loans); their average financial aid award for the year was \$12,162.

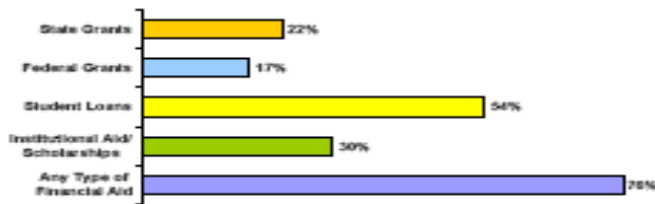
**Family Income-Based Aid**

• 70% of Fall 2005 full-time undergraduates received family income-based grants or scholarships; their average award for the year was \$7,596.

**Loans**

• 62% of Fall 2005 full-time undergraduates received loans (not including parent loans); their average loan amount for the year was \$5,922.

**Percent of Fall 2005 First-Time Students Receiving Each Type of Financial Aid**



NOTE: Students may receive aid from more than one source.

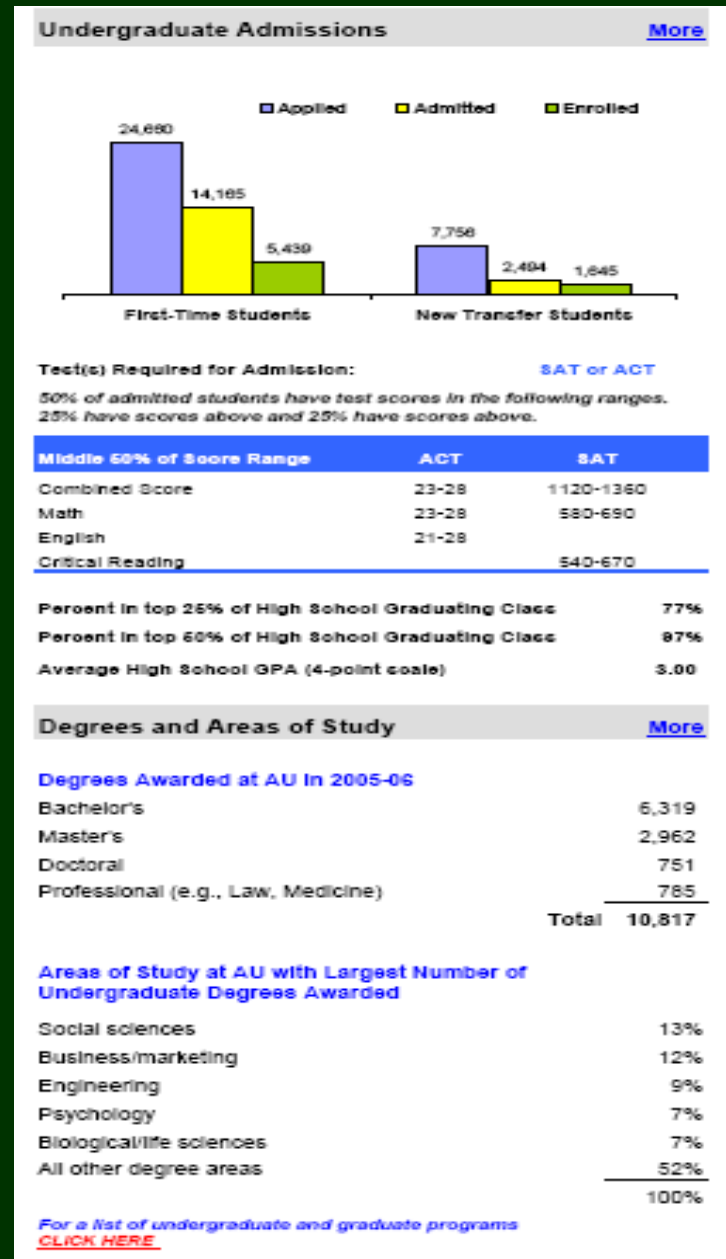
VSA requires making on-line information available to help families estimate their real costs.

VSA provides a net price estimator.



Already available information is packaged so it can be found in the same format from one campus to another. This will help address the complaint about lack of comparable information.

Data source: Common Data Set



## The AU Community

[More](#)

Institution Text Box (100 words) to highlight campus

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Study Abroad

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Housing Options

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Student Organizations

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Learning Communities

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Info for Adult Students

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Outreach

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Extension Programs

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Student Growth

**Institution Choice**  
e.g. Athletics

## Study at AU

[More](#)

### Classroom Environment

Students per Faculty	15 to 1
Undergraduate classes with fewer than 30 students	69%
Undergraduate classes with fewer than 50 students	84%

### Instructional Faculty

Total Full-time Instructional Faculty	1,991
% Women Faculty	31%
% Faculty from Minority Groups	13%
% Faculty with Highest Degree	69%

## Carnegie Classification of Institutional Characteristics

[More](#)

### Basic Type

Research University with very high research activity

## Student Housing

[More](#)

78% of new freshmen live on campus  
31% of all undergraduates live on campus

## Campus Safety

[More](#)

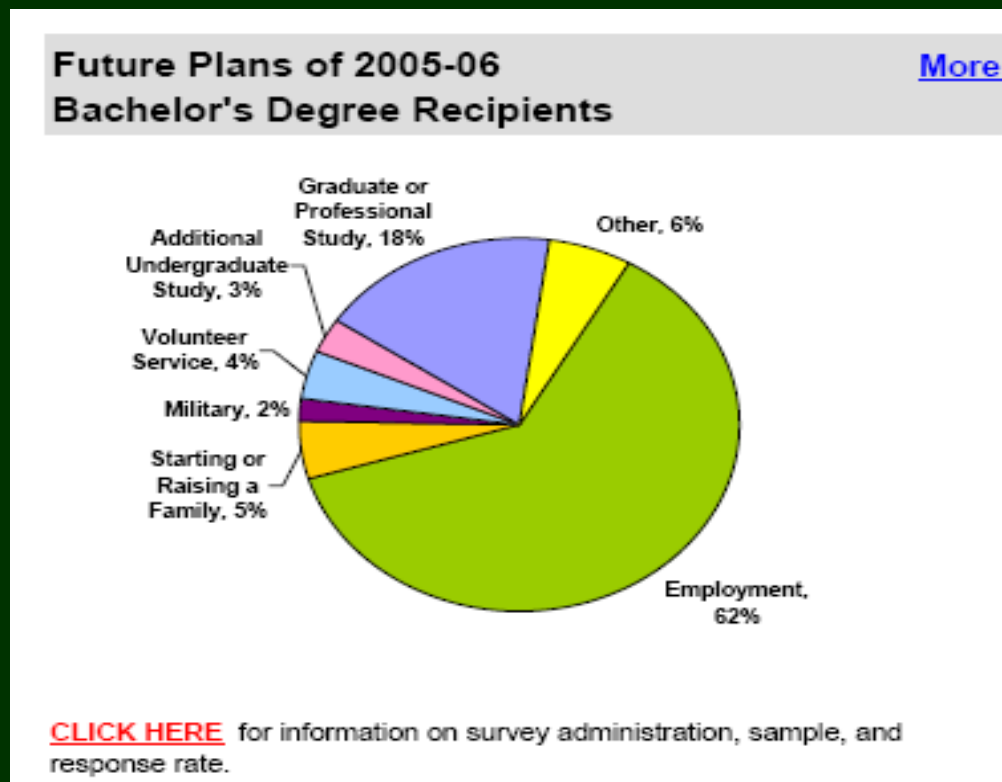
Institution Text Box (50 words)

[CLICK HERE](#) for Campus Crime Statistics Reports

Data source: Common Data Set

This page highlights aspects of the campus that will give prospective students a richer sense of the opportunities available. All 9 buttons are defined at an institution's option. There is also a space to briefly describe campus safety programs.

No nationally defined data source is available to inform parents and policy makers what happens to students after they graduate.



In lieu of that information, VSA requires administration of a single survey question about future plans of graduates.

# Student Engagement Survey Options

VSA requires administration of one of the following instruments once in every three years.



**CIRP – College Senior Survey**



**College Student Experiences  
Questionnaire**



**National Survey of Student  
Engagement**



**University of California  
Undergraduate Experiences  
Survey**

# Student Experiences and Perceptions

## The common domains:

1. Group Learning Experiences
2. Active Learning Experiences
3. Experiences with Diverse Groups of People and Ideas
4. Student Satisfaction
5. Institutional Commitment to Student Learning and Success
6. Student Interaction with Campus Faculty and Staff

# Learning Outcomes Test Options

VSA requires administration of one of the following instruments once in every three years.



College Assessment of  
Academic Proficiency



Collegiate Learning  
Assessment



Measure of Academic  
Proficiency and Progress

# Reporting Learning Outcomes

Learning Gains Between Freshman Year and Senior Year

## Critical Thinking

The increase in learning for critical thinking was *<what would be expected>* at an institution with students of similar academic abilities.

## Written Communication

The increase in learning for written communication was *<what would be expected>* at an institution with students of similar academic abilities.

### Average Institutional Scores

	Freshman Score	Senior Score
Critical Thinking	112	121
Written Communication	108	118

MAPP Score Range: 100 to 130

# VSA Reporting Schedule

<b>Item</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
<b>Common Data Set &amp; IPEDS Items</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Undergraduate Success Rates</b>	<b>Submit data to Clearing-house</b>	<b>Report on College Portrait template</b>	
<b>Future Plans for Grads Survey</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Student Engagement Items</b>		<b>X</b>	
<b>Learning Outcomes Items</b>			<b>X</b>

# What is required

- 1. Web development**
- 2. Participate with Student Clearing House**
- 3. Survey on Future Plans; annually**
- 4. Survey on Student Experience; every 3 years**
- 5. Survey on Learning Outcomes; every 3 years**

# USF Committee on VSA Participation

- Fall 2007.
- No objections to reporting of student/parent consumer information.
- Significant concerns regarding reporting of student learning outcomes data and standardized tests.