

2023 – 2028 Acceptability Thresholds & Definitions

Strategic Plan – Pillar 2 – Academic Transformation emphasizes enhancing support for our faculty, promoting the intellectual development of our students, and reinforcing our dedication to innovation, research, and scholarship within the academic enterprise.

- Promote the success of our faculty by creating an environment of excellence that supports and strengthens the University's academic enterprise.
- Strategically invest in our current and future faculty to attract and retain world-class faculty committed to teaching and research excellence.
- Amplify Clark Atlanta University's academic reputation and distinction through focused and dynamic academic planning.
- Leverage technology and online learning to create relevant and dynamic educational experiences which result in future ready credentials and increased revenue for the University.
- Provide students with access to the high-impact practices that shape a transformational undergraduate education.



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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THRESHOLDS AND DEFINITIONS

Achievement Criteria: The undergraduate first-year retention rates, undergraduate annual degree completion rates, undergraduate four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates, and graduate master’s and doctorate time-to-degree rates are critical measures that the University utilizes to evaluate student achievement. OPAR annually collects, analyzes, and reports student retention, graduation, and time-to-degree data to all constituents.

ACCEPTABILITY THRESHOLDS			
#	Key Student Completion Indicator	Strategic Alignment and Rationale	5 – Year Goal
1	First-year retention rates	Directly supports Student Transformation and Academic Transformation by improving persistence and early academic readiness; key pillars of the Destination 2028 plan. CAU already tracks first-year retention as a core performance metric.	75%
2	Six-year graduation rates	Aligns with <i>Academic Transformation</i> and <i>Institutional Transformation</i> by ensuring students matriculate through high-quality programs and achieve completion, a stated goal of the CAU strategic plan. It also influences accreditation, federal reporting, and resource allocation.	55%
3	Social mobility indicators, including Pell Grant recipient outcomes	Strongly tied to <i>Student Transformation</i> and CAU’s historic mission to educate African-American and economically diverse students. Destination 2028 emphasizes “transformative educational experiences” that expand opportunity and access.	55%
4	Graduate degree completion rates, disaggregated by academic level (master’s and doctoral)	Supports <i>Academic Transformation</i> and <i>Institutional Transformation</i> , reflecting CAU’s heritage as the first U.S. institution to award graduate degrees to African Americans. The strategic plan highlights strengthening graduate education as part of academic excellence initiatives.	5% year-over-year increase
5	Teacher Education licensure completion rates	Supports <i>Academic Transformation</i> by ensuring program quality and <i>Student Transformation</i> through preparing graduates for leadership in service professions—central to CAU’s mission and strategic goals for producing career-ready graduates.	Students completing GACE assessments will meet or exceed the Georgia’s 3-year average pass rate of 81% rate for Test 1 and Test 2

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KSCI	Definition (What It Is and How It Is Measured)
First-Year Retention Rate	<p>What it is: The percentage of first-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students who return for their second year at the same institution.</p> <p>How it is measured: Cohort = all first-time students entering in a fall term. Retained count = those who re-enroll the following fall.</p> <p>Formula: $(\text{Returning students} \div \text{Cohort size}) \times 100$. Disaggregated by school based on students' initial declared major.</p>
Six-Year Graduation Rate	<p>What it is: The percentage of first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates who earn a bachelor's degree within 150% of normal time (six years).</p> <p>How it is measured: Track each entering cohort over six years and count degree completers from the same institution.</p> <p>Formula: $(\text{Graduates within 6 years} \div \text{Cohort size}) \times 100$. Reported by school according to students' degree programs.</p>
Social Mobility Indicators (including Pell Grant recipients)	<p>What it is: Measures institutional effectiveness in supporting low-income student success and upward economic mobility. Focuses on outcomes for Pell Grant recipients.</p> <p>How it is measured: Includes Pell student retention rates, graduation rates (4/5/6-year), and post-graduation outcomes. Institutions may also track the percentage of Pell recipients enrolled as an access indicator.</p>
Graduate Degree Completion Rates (master's and doctoral)	<p>What it is: The percentage of graduate students who complete their master's or doctoral degree within an expected timeframe.</p> <p>How it is measured: Establish a cohort of new master's or doctoral students and track degree completions within program-appropriate limits (e.g., 2–3 years for master's, 5–7 years for doctoral).</p> <p>Formula: $(\text{Graduates within expected time} \div \text{Cohort size}) \times 100$.</p>
Teacher Education Licensure Completion Rates	<p>What it is: The percentage of teacher-preparation program completers who pass all required state licensure exams for certification.</p> <p>How it is measured: Identify all program completers and determine how many successfully pass all required state exams (content, pedagogy, etc.).</p> <p>Formula: $(\text{Candidates passing all licensure exams} \div \text{Total program completers}) \times 100$.</p>