

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

**Proposed
Enrollment Management Plan**

2007 – 2012

**PARTIAL DRAFT
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Executive Summary

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What is an Enrollment Management Plan?

An enrollment management plan is a strategic plan that connects enrollment goals to the institution's overall mission and goals. The concept of enrollment management includes the recruitment of new students, the retention of continuing students and the graduation of all students.

An effective enrollment management plan should be based on careful analysis of both past enrollment trends and the projected market of prospective students. Enrollment goals should reflect the institution's aspirations within a framework of realistic targets based on the best available data. Like any good strategic plan, it must go beyond simply listing strategies to identify responsible parties and an implementation timeline. It is critical that enrollment management strategies be comprehensive in approach. This means that complex enrollment challenges can rarely be addressed effectively by just one office or division of the university. All units must have a stake in achieving the institution's goals and the roles of each unit should be clearly identified and coordinated.

This enrollment management plan provides both analysis and recommended strategies. Since the discussion concerning enrollment management has just begun at UALR, it is offered to the campus community as a starting point for dialogue and action.

Purpose of an Enrollment Management Plan

As competition for student tuition dollars increases, institutions of higher education are finding their revenue streams to be much less predictable. Whereas budget officers might have assumed a steady and reliable growth in enrollment in the past, now they do so at great risk to the institution. Nevertheless universities must project some figure for tuition based on the best information available. When the projections are wrong, effective resource management is much more difficult.

While reliable estimates are vital to budgeting, it is not enough to predict enrollment if enrollment is not meeting expectations and institutional goals. Institutions must also have means to influence enrollment both quantitatively and qualitatively.

There are three fundamental reasons for universities to develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan:

1. To increase the predictability of student enrollment by stabilizing enrollment trends. This contributes to both a reliable annual budget and more effective long-term resource management.
2. To build enrollment towards the capacity of the institution. Universities have a fiduciary responsibility to employ their resources fully and efficiently. If higher education institutions are to maintain the public trust and avoid dramatic personnel reductions or reorganizations, they must take care to operate as close to capacity as possible.
3. To establish enrollment objectives that serve institutional goals and missions. All universities strive to serve students well, but most have more specific missions based on their history, location, aspiration and social responsibilities.

Institutional Enrollment Management Goals

The following enrollment management goals are based on the university's strategic plan and clarifications from the Office of the Provost.

1. Increase enrollment of college-prepared students
2. Increase enrollment to approach institutional capacity
3. Increase enrollment of freshman students, including traditional freshmen
4. Improve retention rates overall to meet or exceed the average of peer institutions
5. Improve completion (graduation) rates to meet or exceed the average of peer institutions
6. Maintain demographically appropriate levels of minority student enrollment including an increase in the number of Hispanic students attending UALR
7. Improve minority retention and completion rates to match rates for the UALR student body at large
8. Ensure that transfer students are matriculated at UALR with the highest level of support we can offer
9. Maintain currently strong levels of graduate student enrollment growth; phase in increased doctoral level enrollment after undergraduate lower level enrollment begins to increase.

Analysis of Current UALR Enrollment Trends

This section is divided into five subsections: enrollment trends for the UALR student body as a whole, freshmen enrollment trends, retention, graduation and minority student enrollment trends. Discussion and analysis follow.

General trends in enrollment at UALR

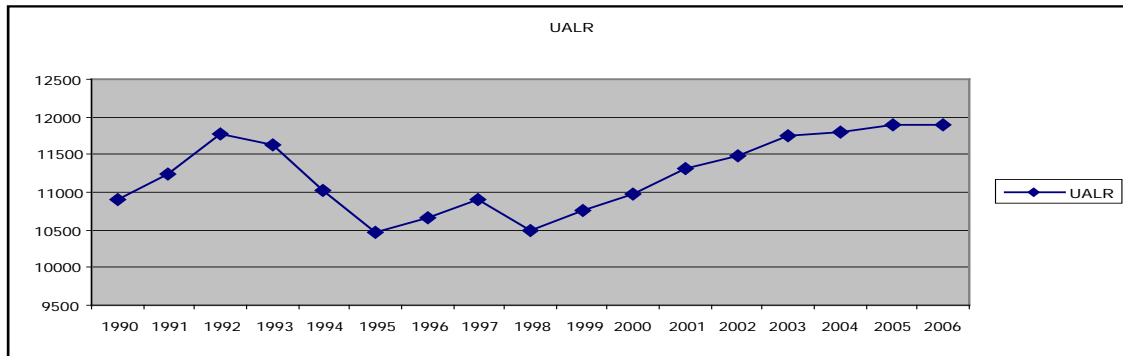
Overall enrollment at UALR has varied by approximately 1,500 students over the last seventeen years dipping to a low of 10,471 in 1995 and rising steadily since 1998 to 11,905 in 2006. UALR enrollment did not surpass its previous peak of 11,771 in 1992 until 2004 when it reached 11,806. While UALR enrollment is increasing, it appears to be leveling off. A logarithmic regression analysis from 1998 projects a growth of 250 students over the next five years. However, that trend is based on the assumption of no changes in current conditions and UALR has already changed those conditions by instituting new admission requirements.

Table 1: UALR Enrollment from 1990 to 2006 (fall census)

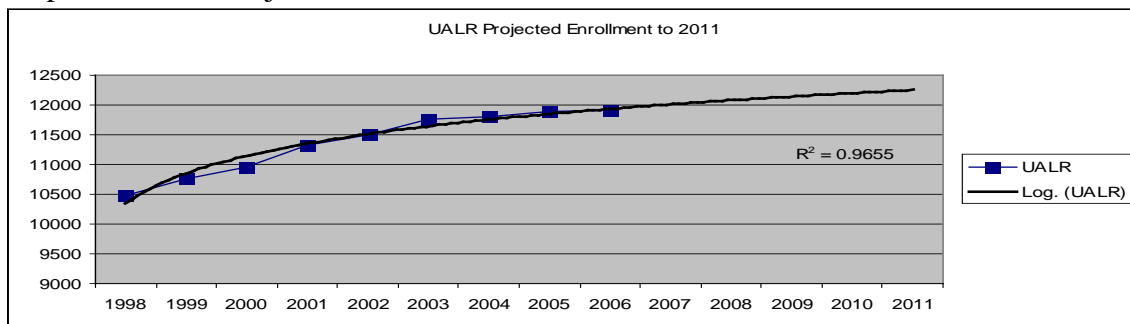
1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
10,902	11,253	11,771	11,622	11,014	10,471	10,663	10,907	10,487
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
10,766	10,967	11,318	11,491	11,757	11,806	11,896	11,905	

Source: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Graph 1: UALR Enrollment Trend from 1990 to 2006



Graph 2: UALR Projected Enrollment to 2011



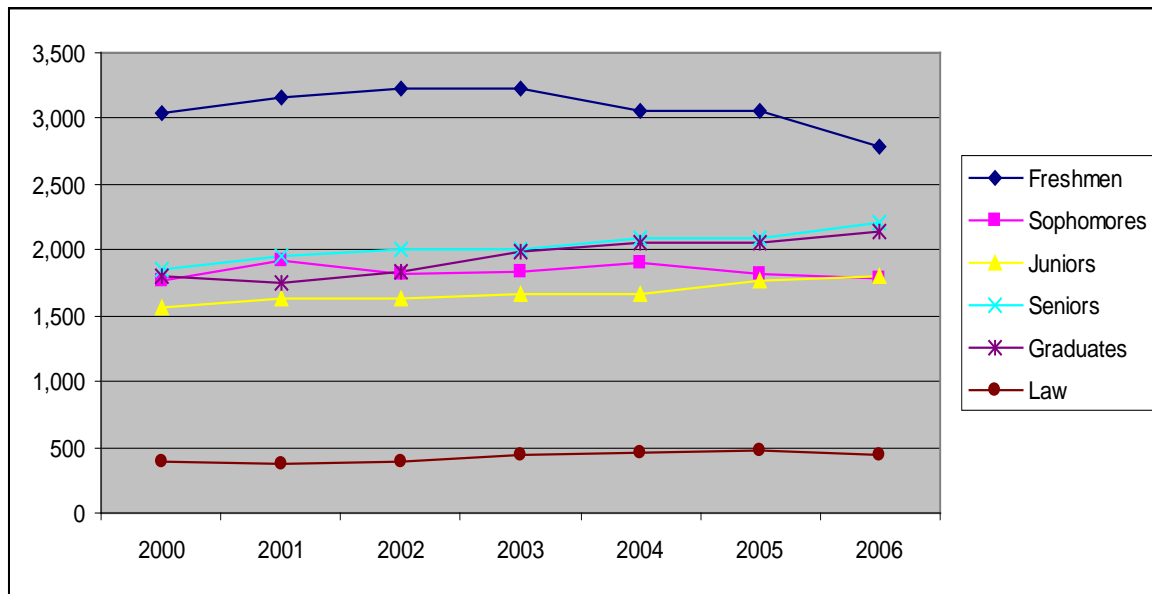
Breaking out enrollment by class level over the last seven years shows that freshman enrollment has dropped off sharply while junior and senior enrollment has steadily increased. Sophomore enrollment has fluctuated, but remained essentially level. Undergraduate enrollment overall sharply increased in 2001, but has remained level since then with a growth rate of six percent. Graduate enrollment has increased by almost twenty percent over the last seven years while the law school enrollment has increased sixteen percent in the same period.

Table 2: UALR Enrollment by Class Level from Fall 2000 to Fall 2006

Classification	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
First-time Freshmen	919	795	853	777	841	832	663
Continuing Freshmen	2,116	2,359	2,374	2,445	2,218	2,232	2,118
All Freshmen	3,035	3,154	3,227	3,222	3,059	3,064	2,781
Sophomores	1,761	1,928	1,816	1,840	1,908	1,826	1,783
Juniors	1,562	1,631	1,637	1,665	1,666	1,761	1,795
Seniors	1,851	1,953	2,004	2,013	2,087	2,090	2,210
Unclassified Pre-baccalaureates	2	0	0	26	0	3	0
Post-baccalaureates	503	456	508	514	514	540	583
High school students	71	62	69	50	49	65	173
Total Undergraduates	8,785	9,184	9,261	9,330	9,283	9,349	9,325
Master's	1,438	1,288	1,322	1,394	1,482	1,428	1,549
Specialist	30	48	68	83	77	84	58
Doctorate	190	214	220	239	240	239	257
Unclassified Graduates	139	208	224	268	258	312	270
Total Graduates	1,797	1,758	1,834	1,984	2,057	2,063	2,134
Law	385	376	396	443	466	484	446
Total First Professionals	385	376	396	443	466	484	446
Grand Totals	10,967	11,318	11,491	11,757	11,806	11,896	11,905

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graph 3: UALR Class Level Enrollment Trends from Fall 2000 to Fall 2006



While common wisdom suggests that a growing percentage of our student body is attending the university part-time, the opposite is actually the case. The number of part-time students has increased in the last six years, but the number of full-time students has increased more making the percentage of part-time students decrease slightly from 44 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2006. Nevertheless, UALR still retains a high number of part-time students overall.

Table 3: UALR Enrollment by Attendance Status

Attendance Status	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Full-Time	6,138	6,328	6,479	6,759	6,822	6,861	6,867
	56%	56%	56%	57%	58%	58%	58%
Part-Time	4,829	4,990	5,012	4,998	4,924	5,035	5,038
	44%	44%	44%	43%	42%	42%	42%
TOTAL	10,967	11,318	11,491	11,757	11,806	11,896	11,905

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Financial Aid

Student financial aid levels have risen steadily since 2001 in total amount, in number of recipients and in percentage of UALR student body receiving financial aid. While common wisdom suggests that students today are receiving more of their financial aid in the form of loans than in the past, this is only marginally true. The percentage of loan-based financial aid has increased from 67% in 2001 to 68.5% in 2005. The number of loan recipients as a percentage of total recipients has increased four percent from 46% in

2001 to 50% in 2005, while grant and scholarship recipients have declined four percent from 52% in 2001 to 48% in 2005.

Nevertheless, the percentage of the UALR student body that is receiving some form of financial aid remains very high at nearly 60% in the 2005/2006 academic year. It is also the case that there is significant overlap between those who receive grants and scholarships and those who receive loans. Furthermore, the dollar amount received in the form of loans compared to grants is three to one, suggesting that UALR students, on the whole, face significant debt burdens as they matriculate through their education.

Table 4: UALR Students on Financial Aid

Financial Aid Type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Loans (all types)	6,059	6,326	6,921	7,247	7,339	Pending
Grants & Scholarships	6,842	6,577	6,839	6,538	7,091	Pending
Work Study	162	255	209	173	235	Pending
Tuition Waivers/Remissions	50	51	60	751	39	Pending
Total Recipients*	13,113	13,209	14,029	14,708	14,704	Pending
Total Unduplicated Recipients	7,930	8,260	8,589	8,961	9,074	Pending
% Student Body Receiving Aid	53.2%	54.8%	56.5%	58.7%	58.9%	Pending
Loan Aid Amount	\$38,209,309	\$39,565,244	\$44,267,700	\$47,585,858	\$49,467,572	Pending
G&S Aid Amount	\$14,988,658	\$15,254,566	\$16,341,576	\$17,228,289	\$17,452,620	Pending
Work Study Amount	\$254,271	\$343,259	\$281,163	\$320,058	\$357,791	Pending
TW&R Amount	\$275,074	\$267,994	\$399,278	\$424,463	\$247,126	Pending
Total Aid Amount	\$57,023,412	\$59,235,383	\$64,978,905	\$69,833,232	\$72,184,327	Pending

*Total recipients equal more than total student body because students may have more than one type of financial aid.

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Freshman Enrollment Trends

As shown in table 2 and graph 3, freshman enrollment at UALR is declining. Furthermore, the nature of UALR's freshmen class is changing. The number of freshmen who are attending college for the first time (as opposed to transferring in with college credits from another institution) is declining both in number and as a percentage of all freshmen. In 2000 30 percent of all freshmen were first-time enrollees while in 2006 that figure drops to 24 percent. On the other hand, the number of freshmen attending UALR full-time has increased by eight percent since 2000 to a high of 71%. This is significantly higher than the student body as a whole where full-time students make up only 58% and have risen only 2 percentage points in the last seven years. This might suggest that UALR freshmen come in with enough support to attend full-time, but subsequently find that they must scale back attendance in order to spend more time at work.

The number of enrolled freshmen who are both first-time and full-time students has fluctuated over the last six years, but remains a relatively small percentage of the whole

freshmen student body. This has significant implications for tracking retention and graduation rates (see next two subsections) because both national and peer institution comparison figures are based on this population. The first-time, full-time freshmen student body approximates what we would typically call “traditional freshmen.” The average age of this group in the 2006 cohort is 18.8, the average age of all freshmen in the 2006 cohort is 24.1.

Table 5: UALR Freshmen Enrollment Trends

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
All Freshmen	3,035	3,154	3,227	3,222	3,059	3,064	2,781
First-Time	919	795	853	777	841	832	663
	30%	25%	26%	24%	27%	27%	24%
Full-Time	1,913	1,887	2,124	2,169	2,148	2,118	1,967
	63%	60%	66%	67%	70%	69%	71%
First-Full	827	706	736	691	816	721	577
	27%	22%	23%	21%	27%	24%	21%
Avg. Age-FF*	19.0	18.8	19.6	19.5	19.0	18.7	18.8
Avg. Age-All Fr	23.7	24.2	24.3	24.7	24.4	24.3	24.1
Average ACT [†]	19.3	19.3	19.2	19.0	19.5	19.5	19.6

*First-time freshmen, both full and part-time

†First-time, full-time freshmen

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Developmental Needs

The number of freshmen who come to UALR needing developmental course work as increased in every category over the last ten years. The percentage of freshmen needing math remediation has fluctuated, but remains the highest of the three remediation categories at 52% in 2006. Meanwhile, math remediation percentages have steadily decreased to an average of 33.5% in 2006 for all other Arkansas four-year institutions. Thus UALR has been moving in the opposite direction of the state in terms of its students’ need for math remediation.

English (composition) and reading remediation percentages have increased significantly, 17% and 15.9% respectively, over the last ten years to 41.5% who needed English remediation in 2006 and 37.1% who needed reading remediation. It appears to have spiked in 1999 and remained around the 40% level since then. The averages for other Arkansas four-year institutions in these categories have remained steady over the last ten years at roughly 23% and 22% respectively (see tables 6a through 6c). Again, UALR has been moving in a different direction from the rest of the state in English and reading remediation. This is a very significant issue impacting recruitment and retention at UALR. Even though the *average* ACT score has not changed significantly over the last seven years, it is clear that a larger percentage of our entering freshmen are scoring below average in the remediation categories. It is also clear that UALR is admitting a disproportionate percentage of freshmen who need remediation in comparison to the other Arkansas four-year institutions.

Table 6a: UALR Entering Freshmen Requiring Math Remediation: 1997-2006

	Number of First-Time Freshmen	Number Tested	Number Requiring Remediation	Percent Requiring Remediation	Arkansas Avg. % Requiring Remediation
1997	978	978	457	46.7%	41.9%
1998	1,047	898	439	48.9%	40.0%
1999	1,256	939	633	67.4%	38.6%
2000	919	919	507	55.2%	38.0%
2001	795	795	425	53.5%	40.9%
2002	853	853	502	58.9%	40.3%
2003	777	777	461	59.3%	39.9%
2004	841	841	478	56.8%	38.8%
2005	832	832	436	52.4%	36.0%
2006	663	663	345	52.0%	33.5%

Table 6b: UALR Entering Freshmen Requiring English Remediation: 1997-2006

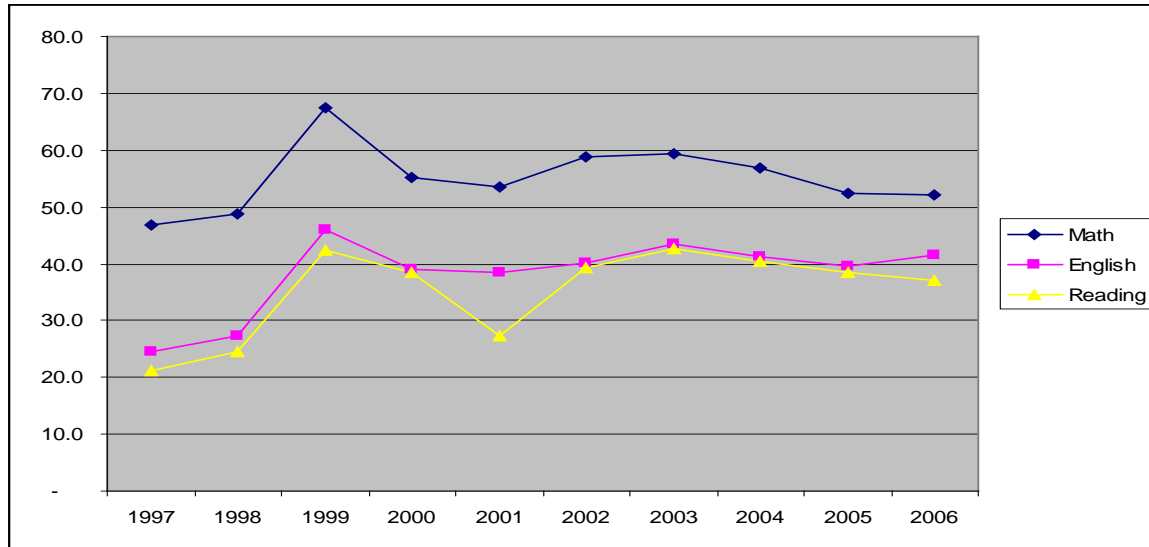
	Number of First-Time Freshmen	Number Tested	Number Requiring Remediation	Percent Requiring Remediation	Arkansas Avg. % Requiring Remediation
1997	978	978	240	24.5%	24.6%
1998	1,047	1,047	244	27.2%	23.3%
1999	1,256	1,260	435	46.1%	23.5%
2000	919	919	358	39.0%	23.5%
2001	795	795	306	38.5%	23.8%
2002	853	853	343	40.2%	23.9%
2003	777	777	339	43.6%	23.9%
2004	841	841	347	41.3%	24.2%
2005	832	832	329	39.5%	23.0%
2006	663	663	275	41.5%	22.5%

Table 6c: UALR Entering Freshmen Requiring Reading Remediation: 1997-2006

	Number of First-Time Freshmen	Number Tested	Number Requiring Remediation	Percent Requiring Remediation	Arkansas Avg. % Requiring Remediation
1997	978	978	207	21.2%	20.7%
1998	1,047	1,047	220	24.5%	19.8%
1999	1,256	1,260	401	42.5%	21.6%
2000	919	919	353	38.4%	20.5%
2001	795	795	218	27.4%	22.1%
2002	853	853	336	39.4%	22.5%
2003	777	777	331	42.6%	22.6%
2004	841	841	341	40.5%	22.6%
2005	832	832	320	38.5%	21.6%
2006	663	663	246	37.1%	21.0%

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graph 4: Math, English and Reading Remediation Trends at UALR



Retention Rates

The one-year retention rates at UALR have declined for every class level (freshmen through junior) over the last three years. Consistently, the highest drop out rate occurs after the freshman year, and retention gradually increases at upper class levels for those remaining. It is important to note the significant difference between the retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen and the retention rate for all freshmen. In 2005 the retention rate for all freshmen was 20% lower than the subpopulation of first-time, full-time freshmen. This has several important implications. Since first-time, full-time freshmen make up only about 20 percent of the total freshman class at this point, we can't count on the official retention numbers (those we turn in to the federal Department of Education) to accurately reflect what is happening with freshman retention. *We are now losing over half of our freshmen before they reach their second year.* While it is important to remember that students may be coming back after a "stop-out" period, the falling retention rates still suggest that now, more than ever, freshman retention programs are critical. Another problem point is at the junior level. Even though juniors have the highest retention rate, that rate has declined significantly in the last three years by over six percent. Something is happening in the junior year to cause a retention problem that needs to be investigated and addressed.

Table 7: UALR One-Year Retention Rates by Class Level

	2003 Cohort	2004 Cohort	2005 Cohort	2006 Cohort
FFF Freshmen	67.9	69.0	67.3	Pending
All Freshmen	50.5	51.5	47.1	Pending
Sophomores	64.3	63.9	62.6	Pending
Juniors	70.6	66.8	64.1	Pending
Total Fr.-Ju.	59.3	57.7	54.4	Pending

Note: FFF = First-time, full-time freshmen

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Retention rates are reported to three different agencies: Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE), and the U.S. Department of Education. Due to different measurement parameters and requirements, the retention numbers vary by several percentage points. Comparing UALR one-year freshmen retention rates (first-time, full-time freshmen) to peer institutions, we use two sets of peer institutions. One is defined by CSRDE, and the other is defined by the UALR strategic planning document *Fast Forward*. Tables 8 and 9 below show comparative data for each group.

Starting with the seven years of CSRDE retention data, it is interesting to note that while the group average has remained pretty steady at around 66%, UALR retention rates have been erratic in that same time period (Table 8 and Graph 4) fluctuating from a high of 70.9 to a low of 55.6. In fact, it would be difficult to identify a reliable trend line from the UALR retention data. Retention declined considerably from 2000 to 2003, but it bounced back up for the 2004 cohort. Currently it is three percentage points below the peer group average. Keeping in mind that these retention rates are for only 20% of our freshmen class in any given year, we can still see from the descriptive statistics that UALR has been below the peer average since 2002 whereas prior to that time we were mostly above the average.

Table 8: 1st Year Retention Rates for Comparable Institutions: 1998 to 2005 (CSRDE)

Institution	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Cleveland State University	60.0	60.0	66.0	63.0	59.0	59.0	59.5	
Idaho State University	56.0	57.7	60.7	54.7	57.3	55.3	56.7	
Portland State University	62.8	64.5	68.9	66.4	65.0	65.3	64.9	
Univ. of Arkansas at Little Rock	67.3	63.7	70.9	68.1	64.7	55.6	63.9	
University of Colorado at Denver	67.5	70.3	68.3	68.1	65.9	73.1	71.2	
Univ. of Massachusetts—Boston	67.4	69.5	69.1	69.6	69.7	70.7	71.2	
University of Missouri—St. Louis	68.8	64.7	66.7	67.4	74.4	68.2	72.5	
University of New Orleans	68.0	65.0	61.0	68.0	67.0	67.0	19.1	
University of South Dakota	71.5	69.2	69.3	70.6	69.1	68.3	68.9	
University of Texas at El Paso	70.0	69.7	68.1	69.2	71.1	66.6	68.5	
Wichita State University	68.4	66.9	66.5	72.8	69.6	67.6	69.0	
Peer Group Average (see Note 3)	66.0	65.7	66.5	67.0	66.8	66.1	66.9	

Note 1: Comparable Institutions as defined by CSRDE.

Note 2: Years 1998 – 2005 represent cohorts of first-time, full-time freshmen. Percentages represent those in cohort retained to the following year.

Note 3: Peer group average excludes UALR; it also excludes the University of New Orleans for 2004 and 2005 since that university was dramatically affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Source: CSRDE

Graph 5: One Year Retention Rates for UALR and Peer Group (CSRDE data)

Table 9: 1st Year Retention Rates for Comparable Institutions: 2002 to 2004 (*Fast Forward*)

Institution	2002	2003	2004
Boise State University	59	63	61
Cleveland State University	59	59	60
Georgia State University	NA	83	80
Portland State University	67	66	67
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	64	64	61
University of Central Oklahoma	64	62	64
University of Colorado at Denver	66	69	72
University of Massachusetts—Boston	70	71	71
University of Memphis	75	74	71
University of Missouri—St. Louis	NA	68	72
University of Nebraska at Omaha	73	75	75
University of New Orleans	NA	67	19
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	76	77	79
University of Southern Maine	70	68	67
Wichita State University	71	67	69
Peer Group Average (excluding UALR & UNO)	68.2	69.4	69.8

Source: The Educational Trust/UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graduation Rates

The national standard for measuring undergraduate graduation success at universities and colleges is the six-year graduation rate. This measure tracks freshman cohorts through six years at a single institution and then counts the members of that cohort who have graduated on or before the end of the sixth year as a percentage of the original cohort. This model is based on the assumption that the majority of students at an institution will start as freshmen and matriculate continuously at the same institution until graduation. For better or worse, this model has become outmoded for most metropolitan universities such as UALR, where the majority of students are not traditional and most do not start out as first-time, full-time freshmen. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education is working on a graduation success formula that takes into account the high degree of student mobility at the college level by tracking students across institutions. That will be a helpful development for measuring against internal and statewide baselines, but for national and regional comparisons, we are likely to be limited to the freshman cohort method for some time.

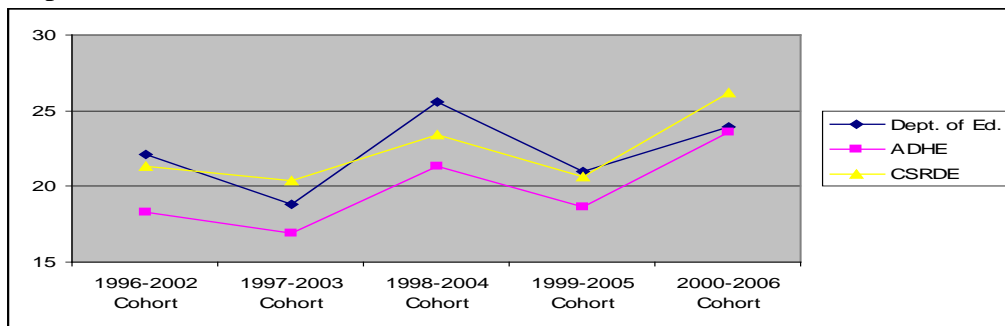
As with retention rates, UALR submits different sets of graduation figures to the same three agencies: The U.S. Department of Education, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) and the Consortium of Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE). Here too, the rates differ slightly due to different methodologies. This creates potential for some confusion and unreliable conclusions. For instance, based on the ADHE and CSRDE data, we are at a high point of a five year trend, but based on the Department of Education figures, we are just ahead of the median. What we can say based on all of the graduation data is that the rates have zigzagged over the last five years but appear to be rising slightly overall. The graduation rates in table 10 are for first-time, full-time freshmen at UALR in the years 1996 to 2000 as reported to three agencies.

Table 10: UALR 6-Year Graduation Rates from 2002 to 2006

Agency	1996-2002 Cohort	1997-2003 Cohort	1998-2004 Cohort	1999-2005 Cohort	2000-2006 Cohort
Dept. of Ed.	22.1	18.79	25.55	20.94	23.9
ADHE	18.3	16.9	21.3	18.6	23.6
CSRDE	21.3	20.4	23.4	20.6	26.2

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graph 6: UALR 6-Year Graduation Rate 5-Year Trends



There aren't enough entries to perform reliable trend analysis at this time, but in comparison to our peer institutions as defined in *Fast Forward* UALR consistently ranks at or near the bottom each year. The figures used in table 11 are based on the federal parameters.

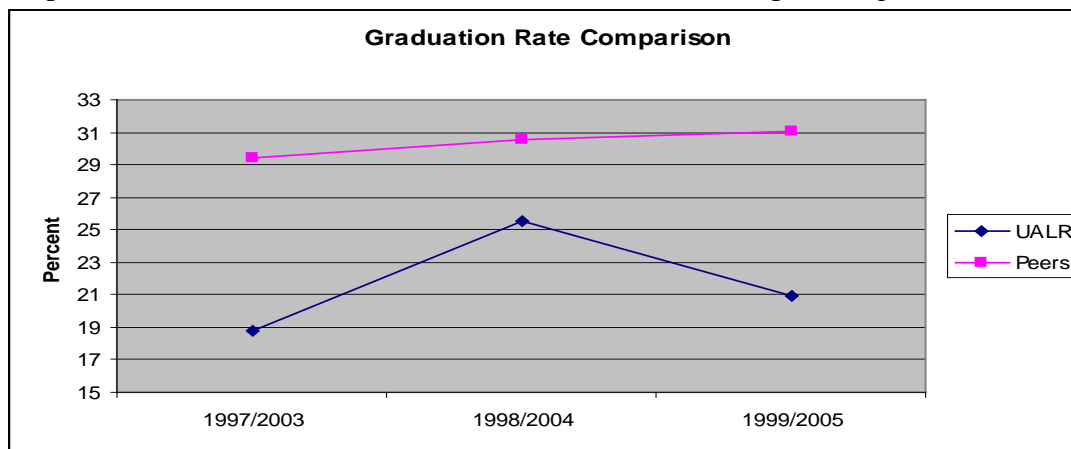
Table 11: 6-Year Graduation Rates for Comparable Institutions

Institution Name	1997/2003	1998/2004	1999/2005	2000/2006
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	49.05	46.61	48.75	Pending
University of Missouri—St. Louis	38.43	44.89	42.86	Pending
University of Colorado at Denver	39.18	38.83	41.84	Pending
Georgia State University	32.11	40.64	40.24	Pending
University of Nebraska at Omaha	36.37	37.65	38.32	Pending
Wichita State University	33.71	37.29	37.15	Pending
University of Massachusetts—Boston	34.15	27.98	35.02	Pending
University of Central Oklahoma	27.53	33.65	34.77	Pending
Portland State University	33.24	33.88	34.71	Pending
University of Southern Maine	33.16	29.40	33.99	Pending
University of Memphis	33.29	35.68	33.50	Pending
Boise State University	34.03	30.18	31.74	Pending
Cleveland State University	27.06	27.03	29.58	Pending
University of New Orleans	23.55	24.53	23.87	Pending
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	18.79	25.55	20.94	23.9
Peer Group Average	29.40	30.53	31.03	Pending

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

This comparison also indicates that UALR ranks not only at or near the bottom, but well below the peer institution average (See graph 6).

Graph 7: 6-Year Graduation Rates for UALR and Peer Group Average (OIR)



Clearly, even with the limitations on graduation data, UALR needs to address this issue with dedicated effort. Since graduation figures are biased towards traditional students who we might expect to graduate at higher rates (we already know they are retained at higher rates), the comprehensive graduate rate (for all students) at UALR may be significantly lower than our already low current rate of 23.9%.

Minority Student Recruitment, Retention and Graduation

In terms of availability based on Arkansas High School graduation figures and regional census data, UALR is recruiting minority students at or above availability in all categories except for Hispanic students. Furthermore, while African American student enrollment has remained essentially level over the last six years, enrollment in the other minority categories has steadily increased both in real numbers and as a percentage of the total since 2000 (See tables 12 through 14).

Table 12: UALR Minority Student Enrollment % Compared to Census Benchmarks

	UALR 06	AR HS 06*	MSA**	Pulaski	State
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.08	1.68	1.00	1.3	1.00
African American	28.50	20.72	19.20	30.00	15.70
Hispanic	2.01	4.20	1.90	2.40	4.70
Native American	.72	.58	.40	.40	.70

*Arkansas minority high school graduates as percentage of total high school graduates for the AY 2005/2006

**Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by U.S. Census Bureau

Sources: UALR Student Body Defined, Educational and Student Services Division; Arkansas Department of Education; U.S. Government Census 2000

Graph 8: Minority Populations in Arkansas

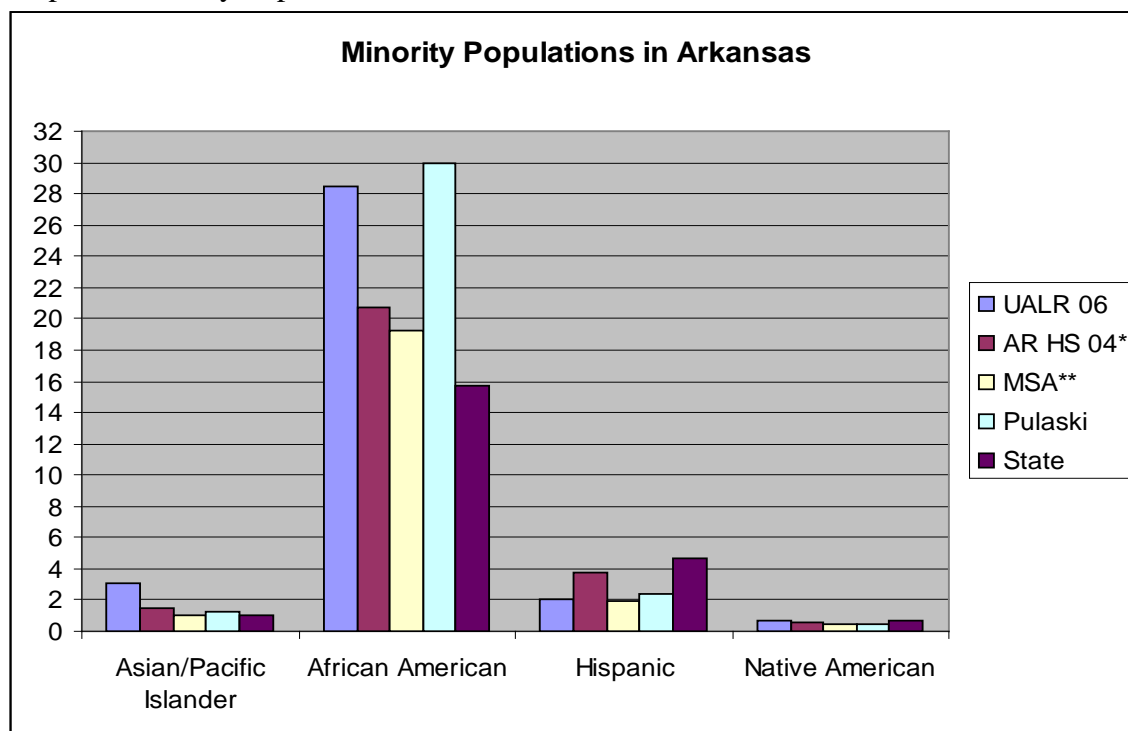


Table 13: Number of minority students enrolled at UALR through 2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	2899	3288	3412	3426	3453	3476	3410
Hispanic	185	205	229	239	232	235	241
Asian/PI	333	370	357	369	343	325	369
Native Am.	57	72	64	80	76	83	87

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graph 9: UALR Minority Student Enrollment

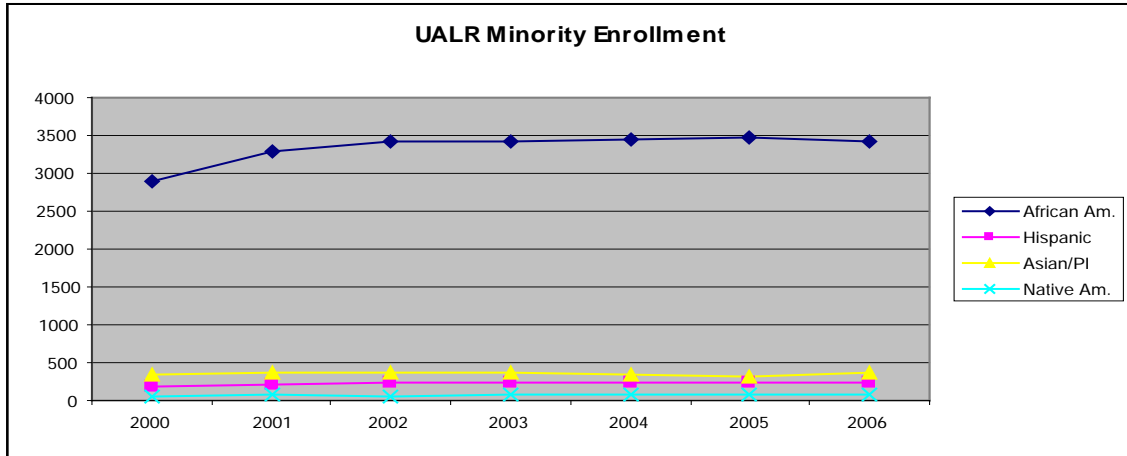
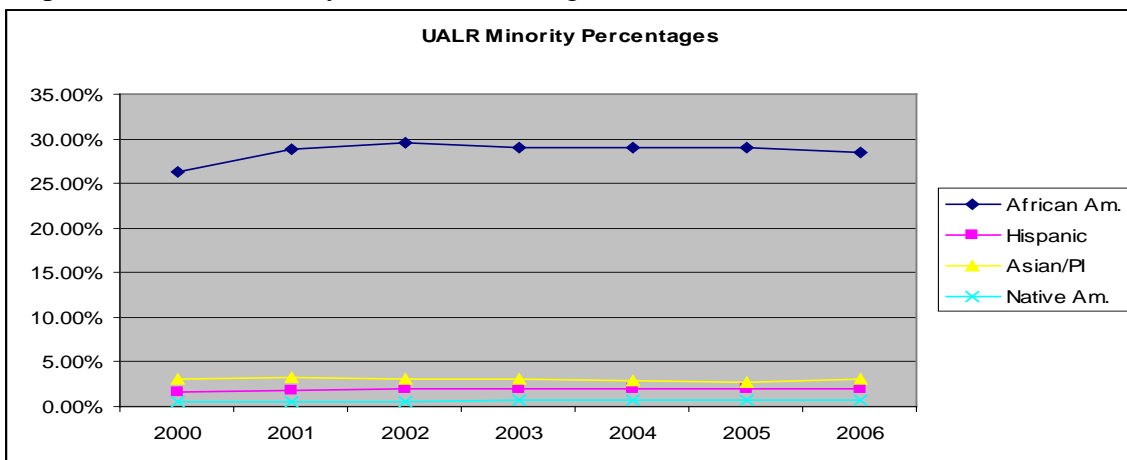


Table 14: Minority enrollment at UALR as percentage of total enrollment

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	26.3%	28.8%	29.6%	29.1%	29.1%	29.1%	28.5%
Hispanic	1.68%	1.79%	1.98%	2.03%	1.96%	1.97%	2.0%
Asian/PI	3.02%	3.2%	3.1%	3.13%	2.89%	2.72%	3.1%
Native Am.	.52%	.63%	.55%	.68%	.64%	.69%	.73%

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Graph 10: UALR Minority Student Percentages



Retention figures, however, are another story. While the overall one-year retention rate for UALR students has gone down 7% since the year 2000, the one year retention rate for African American students has gone down 20% in the same period. The retention rate for the other minority categories is variable and since the actual numbers in these categories are low, statistical trend analysis is unreliable (see tables 15 and 16).

Table 15: First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Cohorts by Race from 2000 to 2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	329	265	272	273	301	296	227
Hispanic	19	18	16	13	19	22	21
Asian/PI	17	11	10	13	15	17	8
Native Am.	7	4	2	4	7	5	4
White	422	393	419	373	412	403	335
All FFF*	828	709	739	691	761	762	605

*First-time, full-time freshmen. Total is larger than sum of categories because "other" category is not shown.
Source: UALR Cohort Database (OIR)

Table 16: Percentage of Cohort returning 2nd and 3rd year

	2000 Cohort		2001 Cohort		2002 Cohort		2003 Cohort		2004 Cohort	
	01	02	02	03	03	04	04	05	05	06
African Am.	71.7	52.9	68.6	44.7	60.1	40.2	58.2	38.1	51.3	28.3
Hispanic	52.6	52.6	77.8	72.2	81.3	37.5	92.3	61.5	78.9	57.8
Asian/Pac.Is.	100	100	81.8	72.7	80.0	60.0	76.9	61.5	56.3	50.0
Native Am.	71.4	85.7	-*	-	-	-	-	-	66.7	16.7
White	69.9	54.3	66.8	50.1	65.7	50.8	57.4	44.5	65.6	50.5
All FFF	70.9	55.3	68.1	48.9	64.7	46.9	55.6	42.5	60.2	41.3

* CSRDE does not provide retention rates for cohorts of 5 or less.
Source: CSRDE

As low as UALR's six-year graduation rates are, the rates for African Americans and Hispanics are even lower. Compared to white cohorts at UALR in particular, the difference is on average 6.5% lower for African Americans and 10.3% for Hispanics. For the 1999-2005 cohort, UALR had the lowest graduation rate for African Americans in the state of Arkansas, and was at the median for the Hispanic graduation rate. Among the fifteen peer institutions identified in *Fast Forward*, UALR is third from the bottom for African American and Hispanic graduation rates (1999-2005 cohort, see tables 17 and 18). Graduation rates in the other minority categories are highly variable and difficult to compare due to their low cohort numbers (see tables 17 through 19). We must also keep in mind that these rates are for first-time, full-time freshmen cohorts only, so the comprehensive graduation rates are undoubtedly lower yet.

Table 17: UALR Minority Graduation Rates

	1997-2003 Cohort	1998-2004 Cohort	1999-2005 Cohort	2000-2006 Cohort
African Am.	14.59	19.16	17.30	16.9
Hispanic	9.09	15.38	15.38	21.0
Asian/Pac.Is.	22.73	27.78	50.00	64.7
Native Am.	0.00	0.00	50.00	28.5
White	20.87	27.27	22.53	25.9
All FFF	18.79	25.55	20.94	23.9

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research/Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS)

Table 18: Minority Graduation Rates—Arkansas 4-Year Institutions (1999-2005 Cohort)

Arkansas 4-Year Institutions	Af.Am.	Hisp.	Asian	Am.In.	White	Total
University of Arkansas/Fayetteville	46.74	54.55	65.45	38.18	57.57	56.42
Southern Arkansas University	44.70	57.14	100.00	50.00	51.60	50.27
University of Central Arkansas	31.82	50.00	60.00	18.75	41.54	40.31
Arkansas State University/Jonesboro	25.54	12.50	44.44	0.00	42.17	39.12
Arkansas Tech University	22.64	0.00	22.22	31.25	36.65	35.45
University of Arkansas at Monticello	23.88	25.00	50.00	0.00	36.34	32.41
Henderson State University	28.38	57.14	50.00	25.00	32.82	32.09
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	30.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.50	30.34
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith	30.00	13.33	39.29	7.14	22.25	22.55
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	17.30	15.38	50.00	50.00	22.53	20.94

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research/Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS)

Table 19: Minority Graduation Rates—Peer Institutions (1999-2005 Cohort)

Peer Institutions	Af.Am.	Hisp.	Asian	Am.In.	White	Total
Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte	49.04	56.41	46.73	66.67	48.06	48.75
University of Missouri—St. Louis	21.67	66.67	53.85	0.00	44.58	42.86
University of Colorado at Denver	27.78	31.71	46.59	22.22	45.85	41.84
Georgia State University	39.51	0.00	53.23	33.33	38.32	40.24
University of Nebraska at Omaha	18.06	40.35	35.29	12.50	39.25	38.32
Wichita State University	19.15	33.90	48.54	33.33	38.46	37.15
University of Massachusetts—Boston	35.00	14.29	50.43	0.00	33.80	35.02
University of Central Oklahoma	28.81	25.00	37.93	24.71	33.13	34.77
Portland State University	26.67	34.29	38.76	13.33	32.53	34.71
University of Southern Maine	0.00	25.00	46.67	14.29	34.36	33.99
University of Memphis	25.71	27.59	50.00	0.00	36.96	33.50
Boise State University	25.00	33.33	28.57	16.67	31.97	31.74
Cleveland State University	17.39	27.27	37.93	33.33	32.07	29.58
University of New Orleans	16.92	20.00	26.96	20.00	29.12	23.87
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	17.30	15.38	50.00	50.00	22.53	20.94

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research/Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS)

It is clear that while UALR attracts sufficient numbers of minority students in all categories except Hispanic, it does a very poor job of retaining and graduating these populations. It would be very helpful to know the level of college preparation across these groups in terms of college preparatory courses taken in high school, particularly in comparison to white students who have higher graduation rates. If the preparation levels were similar, we would know that remediation was not the key issue. If minority preparation levels were significantly lower, we would know that remediation and academic support could make a difference. The Arkansas Department of Education does not currently provide this information, nor is it easily accessed through transcripts as demonstrated by the extraordinary effort it took this campus to evaluate the potential impact of implementing modest admission standards. The closest indicator we have of preparation levels is the ACT score for entering freshmen across minority categories. These results indicate that entering African American freshmen have consistently lower ACT scores than all other racial categories. This suggests that African American students probably do enter UALR with lower preparation levels than the rest of the student body and some combination of remediation and college success programming would likely make a difference (see table 20).

Table 20: Average Minority Composite ACT Scores at UALR

	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	16	16	17	17
Hispanic	19	20	20	21
Asian/Pac.Is.	22	19	21	23
Native Am.	23	23	19	21
White	21	22	21	21
All First Time Fr.	19	19	19	20

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research

Note: average is calculated for all first time freshmen in each category—includes both full and part-time students.

We can also compare the percentages of entering minority freshmen who require developmental course work to the student body at large. These percentages are highly correlated to the ACT data, indicating that African American students are at the greatest risk academically. The differential between African American students and white students needing remediation is dramatic at around 40% in all categories. The differential between African American freshmen and the freshmen student body as a whole is significant at between 23% and 25% in all categories.

Table 21a: Entering Minority Freshmen Requiring Math Remediation: 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	83.2	82.7	84.5	76.5	76.0
Hispanic	63.6	68.8	39.1	52.2	31.8
Asian/Pac.Is.	45.5	46.2	33.3	23.8	0.0
Native Am.	100.0	60.0	42.9	40.0	25.0
White	44.7	44.5	40.0	37.5	38.4
All First Time Fr.	59.3	59.8	57.3	53.1	52.0

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research—Web

Table 21b: Entering Minority Freshmen Requiring English Remediation: 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	61.7	67.8	71.4	62.5	67.9
Hispanic	45.5	56.3	30.4	39.1	36.4
Asian/Pac.Is.	27.3	15.4	33.3	38.1	12.5
Native Am.	50.0	20.0	14.3	40.0	25.0
White	25.7	27.2	21.2	22.7	25.0
All First Time Fr.	40.2	43.6	41.3	39.5	41.5

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research—Web

Table 21c: Entering Minority Freshmen Requiring Reading Remediation: 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African Am.	67.1	66.8	70.5	64.4	60.2
Hispanic	27.3	37.5	26.1	30.4	18.2
Asian/Pac.Is.	27.3	46.2	40.0	42.9	25.0
Native Am.	50.0	20.0	14.3	40.0	25.0
White	20.9	25.3	20.7	19.3	23.7
All First Time Fr.	39.4	42.6	40.5	38.5	37.1

Source: UALR Office of Institutional Research—Web

In summary, it appears that UALR should direct concerted effort in recruiting more Hispanic students while maintaining strong efforts for all minority categories. However, recruitment is clearly not enough. Special effort must be taken to retain and graduate minority students in all categories, but particularly for African American and Hispanic students where the discrepancies are consistently the greatest (See strategies by goal section: goal 7).

Institutional Capacity

Currently, institutional capacity is measured primarily in terms of available seats as defined by the capacity limits placed on each course that is entered into the schedule for any given semester. As a general indicator of capacity, this measurement probably works best for lower level courses where there are multiple sections and where a review of empty seats may clearly indicate that consolidation is needed. Empty seat counts in upper level and graduate courses require a more sophisticated analysis and longer term solutions because departments cannot simply eliminate solitary sections of courses required for the major. Empty seats at this level require longitudinal study to determine if the problem is chronic or acute. Chronic failure to approach capacity could be symptomatic of several root problems such as poor scheduling, lack of recruitment, need to update curriculum, poor program quality, etc. The percentage of empty seats in lower level courses for fall 2006 was 23.14%. This suggests that while there may be some room for consolidation and reallocation based on seat availability, the problem does not appear to be severe.

Another method of measuring capacity is to request that each department and school establish a *target enrollment*, based on current resources, for each program they offer. These enrollment targets are an estimated capacity based on several variables such as available faculty, available space and equipment, teaching loads, accreditation requirements, available scholarships and assistantships, and so forth. This is a subjective number, but it has several advantages over the empty seat method: 1) it is proactive and allows departments to project into the future rather than merely react to the present, 2) it allows departments to incorporate all relevant variables into the projection, and 3) departments are more likely to have a sense of ownership of capacity targets under this model that they might not have under the empty seat model. One caveat to this method is that any projected increases in freshmen enrollment at the institutional level must be factored into the load for those programs that offer core courses.

It is probably advisable to use two or more capacity measures so that they may act as checks and balances to each other. For instance if a program is meeting its enrollment target, but still has a preponderance of empty seats, it would suggest that significant adjustments should be made to the schedule and/or resource allocation.

Discussion and Summary of Implications

Critical Facts

If UALR maintains that freshmen enrollment is an institutional priority, the fundamental challenge is to balance the need to recruit more freshmen with the need to address the causes and consequences of a growing number of under-prepared students. The critical facts in this case are these:

- Freshmen enrollment has declined 8% in seven years. The last five years show a decidedly negative trend ($R^2=.83$) with a decline of 14%.
- Currently, only 47% of all freshmen are retained to a second year. The retention rate for “traditional” freshmen is 20% higher. One-year retention rates for freshmen and juniors appear to be dropping.
- The percentage of students requiring developmental course work at UALR has increased in the last 10 years while the percentage has decreased or remained level across Arkansas 4-year state institutions in general. Currently, UALR remediation percentages range from 16%-19% above the state average.
- Six-year graduation rates show no particular trend, but remain very low at around 20%
- In comparison to the universities that UALR has identified as peer institutions, UALR ranks below the mean in freshman retention and six-year graduation rates and in the case of graduation rates, ranks at or near the bottom.
- African American students on average enter UALR with significantly less college preparation than the student body at large. The remediation gap between black and white students is particularly alarming at around 40%.

It should be acknowledged here that some have made the argument that UALR should shift its emphasis from lower level undergraduate education to upper level undergraduate and graduate education. The common assumption is that large enrollment general education and introductory courses are necessary to finance the rest of the curriculum. The counterargument submits that graduate credit hours generate more money per credit hour both in the Arkansas funding formula and in tuition revenue and therefore offset losses that result from reduced undergraduate enrollment. A careful financial analysis is needed to determine if this is the case. While it is true that formula funding for graduate student semester credit hours (SSCHs) returns well on the investment, it is not as clear that an increase in graduate students, by itself, would offset the loss in freshman tuition revenue should freshmen enrollment continue to decline. Given that graduate student enrollment depends at least in part on the ability to offer assistantships and tuition scholarships, and that graduate education is generally more expensive in cost per student, it may be that the formula funding benefit does not balance the costs in other categories.

Implications

In the short term, it is clear that UALR must address the rising remediation needs of its student body in general and for African American students in particular. While this document does not offer data to show the relationship between high remediation need and high drop out rates, this correlation is well established in national studies (citation here). Current efforts at UALR are either not enough or are too recent to show results. As UALR moves in the direction of increased admission standards, we should expect to see remediation levels decrease, but this will be a slow process and the need for a better remediation strategy is not likely to go away.

UALR must also address its declining freshmen enrollment with aggressive marketing and recruitment strategies if it believes that freshmen enrollment is vital to its financial stability and desirable as a part of its educational mission as a four-year institution. Furthermore, UALR will need to make difficult decisions about whom to recruit. Raising admission standards and recruiting students with stronger college preparation will undoubtedly mean turning away some students UALR has historically considered its mission to serve. It may also mean turning away a disproportionate number of minority students unless care is taken to specifically recruit and support these populations.

Many of our self-selected peer institutions are doing a better job with retention and graduation rates than UALR and we have an opportunity to learn from them. For both retention and completion efforts we might look to the University of Colorado at Denver, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of Missouri at St. Louis and Georgia State University.

Even though UALR graduate and law school enrollments are strong and growing, recruitment in this area should not be overlooked. Graduate recruitment may benefit from many of the initiatives that are developed for undergraduate recruitment and graduate representatives should be included wherever possible.

Market Analysis

High School Graduate Population and Projections

The projected number of students graduating from public high schools in Arkansas, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, will decline slightly over the next six years. The decline is not precipitous, but neither will it be a factor in our favor in the effort to recruit traditional freshmen (see table 22).

Table 22: Projected Number of Students Graduating from High School

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
U.S. Public	2,995,360	3,007,730	2,996,400	2,973,350	2,933,160	2,931,260
Arkansas Public	28,420	28,470	28,210	27,220	27,260	27,060
U.S. Private	330,000	331,000	330,000	327,000	323,000	324,000
U.S. Total	3,326,000	3,339,000	3,326,000	3,301,000	3,256,000	3,225,000

Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Tables 24 & 25

Looking more specifically at the ACT scores of Arkansas high school graduates, it is apparent that the market supply of traditional age college students will be further impaired by their general lack of college preparation as indicated by the ACT college readiness benchmark measures. ACT explains that:

A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English Composition, Algebra, Social Science and Biology. These scores were empirically derived based on the actual performance of students in college (ACT High School Profile Report: The Graduating Class of 2006 Arkansas, p.3).

Even though the percentage of Arkansas high school graduates who score at or above the readiness benchmarks across all categories has inched up in the last couple of years, it remains alarmingly low at 17% of all students taking the test; four percentage points below an already low national percentage of 21%.¹

Table 23: Percentage of Students Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks—Arkansas

Grad Year	Number of Students Tested	English	Math	Reading	Science	Meeting All Four
2002	21,007	68	29	48	21	15
2003	21,166	69	29	47	21	15
2004	20,489	68	30	48	21	16
2005	21,000	68	31	47	21	16
2006	21,005	69	34	49	22	17

Source: ACT High School Profile Report: The Graduating Class of 2006 Arkansas

¹ The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are English: 18, Mathematics: 22, Reading: 21, and Science: 24. The state and national readiness percentages are based on how many students score at or above those benchmarks in all four areas.

Table 24: Percentage of Students Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks—National

Grad Year	Number of Students Tested	English	Math	Reading	Science	Meeting All Four
2002	1,116,082	67	39	53	26	20
2003	1,175,059	67	40	52	26	20
2004	1,171,460	68	40	52	26	21
2005	1,186,251	68	41	51	26	21
2006	1,206,455	69	42	53	27	21

Source: ACT High School Profile Report: The Graduating Class of 2006 Arkansas

Other preparedness indicators include the number of Arkansas high school students who take the minimum core curriculum² or more. The percentage of 2006 Arkansas high school graduates who had taken the core or more was 68% and those students consistently got higher scores on the ACT than those students who took less than the core. However, the ACT report *Rigor at Risk: Reaffirming Quality in the High School Core Curriculum* (2007) points out that even students who complete the high school core are not necessarily prepared for college level courses. In fact, three-quarters of these students fail to reach the readiness benchmarks established by ACT research.

The market supply of high achieving students in Arkansas, defined operationally here as those who score 25 or above on the ACT, is currently 21% of all students taking the test. This represents 4,397 students statewide in 2006. The percentage of Arkansas students scoring 19 or below on the ACT in 2006 is 45%.

We also know that the market of prospective students who take the ACT overwhelmingly do *not* choose UALR as a first choice. In 2006 only 3% of all students taking the exam listed UALR as a first choice institution. Even in the 2nd through 6th choice column, UALR ranked fifth among Arkansas higher education institutions. [Can we find out what percentage of ACT 25 and above choose UALR?]

Arkansas Population Census and Projections

Population estimates for Arkansas, the Little Rock-North Little Rock metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and Pulaski County indicate modest population growth of about 1% a year through 2006 and for the state of Arkansas, another 2% growth in 2010 and 3% in 2015 (see tables 23 and 24).³ However, when the projections are broken out by age, it becomes evident that the age groups we look to for recruitment, 18-24 and 25-44 will decline slightly by 2010. The 18-24 year old population will decline again in 2015 while 25-44 year olds will begin to rebound. This suggests that efforts to recruit *both* traditional *and* non-traditional students will not be helped by general population trends in Arkansas (see table 24).

² The minimum core consists of four years of English and three years each of mathematics, social studies and natural sciences (ACT, *Rigor at Risk*, 2007, p.6).

³ The U.S. Census Bureau has two kinds of population estimates: the word *estimates* is used to refer to population estimates for years between the last census year and the present year; *projections* refer to estimates of the population in future years.

Table 25: Arkansas Census for 2000 and Population Estimates through 2006

Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
AR	2,673,400	2,691,665	2,706,198	2,723,645	2,746,823	2,775,708	2,810,872
MSA	610,518	616,776	621,991	628,031	634,748	642,630	652,834
Pulaski	361,474	362,195	363,318	363,984	364,325	365,274	367,319

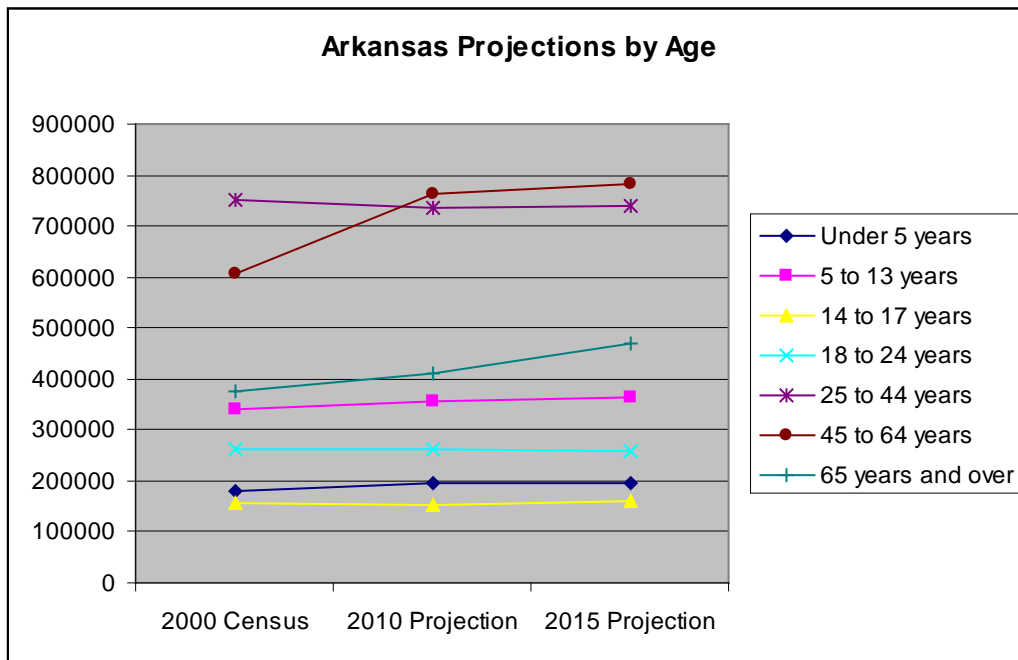
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; tables for annual estimates of the population by state, MSA and county

Table 26: Arkansas Census for 2000 and Population Projections through 2015 by Age

	2000 Census	2010 Projection	2015 Projection
Arkansas	2,673,400	2,875,039	2,968,913
Under 5 years	181,585	194,806	196,855
5 to 13 years	341,318	354,755	365,694
14 to 17 years	157,466	153,095	158,515
18 to 24 years	261,738	260,410	259,068
25 to 44 years	750,972	735,157	738,939
45 to 64 years	606,302	764,664	781,962
65 years and over	374,019	412,152	467,880

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Interim Projections of the Population by Selected Age Groups

Graph 11: Arkansas Projections by Age through 2015



Market Share Trends

UALR’s market share of all college-going students in Arkansas has declined by 1.18 percent in the last seven years. Historically, UALR has held the number two position behind the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, but as of fall 2006 it slipped to third place behind the University of Central Arkansas. Clearly, the rapid growth of Pulaski

Technical College has had a significant impact on UALR's market share. PTC is now the fifth largest higher education institution in the state and one of two community colleges in the top ten institutions by size. Northwest Arkansas Community College at 3.94% ranks ninth. (See appendix A for complete market share data from 1990. See table 27 for abridged version.) Although the growth of community colleges over the last decade has cut into four-year institution enrollment nationwide, there is probably a little more to it than that. The University of Central Arkansas managed a steady incline over the last seven years as did Arkansas Technical University. How did these institutions manage to buck the trend? In the case of UCA it appears that aggressive marketing strategies applied early in the trend and maintained throughout paid off...

Table 27: Market Share of Selected Institutions from 2000 to 2006

Inst.	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
UAF	13.11%	12.95%	12.59%	12.44%	12.70%	12.67%	12.33%
UCA	7.24%	6.98%	6.73%	7.22%	7.41%	8.08%	8.49%
UALR	9.37%	9.31%	9.04%	8.92%	8.68%	8.45%	8.19%
ASUJ	8.91%	8.69%	8.21%	8.02%	7.73%	7.40%	7.53%
PTC	3.68%	4.08%	4.21%	4.65%	5.31%	5.46%	5.81%
ATU	4.42%	4.59%	4.61%	4.74%	4.77%	4.86%	4.84%
UAFS	4.47%	4.66%	4.84%	4.82%	4.84%	4.81%	4.63%
HU	3.70%	3.85%	4.01%	3.88%	3.93%	4.08%	4.18%

Sources: ADHE Table 6, UALR Office of Recruitment and Retention

Note: Based on Fall Headcounts; listed in order of 2006 rank in market share

Minority Student Market

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the estimated Arkansas population by race/ethnic origin in 2005 is as follows:

Table 28: Arkansas Population by Race/Ethnicity in 2005⁴

African American	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	White/Non Hispanic	Total
447,072	39,027	36,412	130,846	2,139,069	2,779,154

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population of Arkansas high school graduates by race/ethnic origin for the 2005-2006 academic year was:

Table 29: Arkansas High School Population by Race/Ethnicity for 2005-2006

African American	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	White/Non Hispanic	Total
5,534	154	449	1,121	19,449	26,707

⁴ Each category includes those who identify as a member of that group wholly or in combination with another group. Therefore the sum of the race/ethnic category estimates does not precisely equal the total estimated population for 2005. Census estimates are extrapolated from actual 2000 census figures.

Source: Arkansas Department of Education

These figures give a sense of the actual numbers of minorities available for recruitment as college students and Table 12 in the minority enrollment trends section identifies what percentage of the whole population these numbers represent. Gregory Hamilton of the Institute for Economic Advancement (College of Business Administration, UALR) has developed Arkansas population *projections* through 2020 for African Americans, Hispanics and all Non-Whites. Table 30 shows those projections for all age groups; Table 31 shows the projections for selected age groups by racial category. It appears that the traditional age pool of prospective students will dip over the next twelve years for African Americans and Whites while the same age group for all Non-Whites will increase slightly. This would suggest that the increase in this category is primarily accounted for by a growth in the Hispanic population as indicated by the overall increase in the Hispanic population shown in Table 30 (complete projection data for Arkansas Hispanic population is not available at this time). It also makes a difference which methodology is used as the Natural Increase Series appears to be more conservative than the Cohort Component Population method. The complete data set can be found at the IEA Census State Data Center: <http://www.aiea.ualr.edu/census/default.html>.

Table 30: Arkansas Minority Population Projections

	2010	2015	2020
African American	459,328	480,803	498,806
Hispanic	162,182	NA	240,404
All Non-White	740,359	888,852	1,049,633
White	2,348,122	2,451,961	2,527,614

Source: Institute for Economic Advancement, UALR

Note: Projections for African Americans are based on the Natural Increase Series; projections for Hispanics, whites and non-whites are based on the Cohort Component Population method.

Table 31: Arkansas Minority Population Projections by Age Group

Age	2010			2015			2020		
	B	NW	W	B	NW	W	B	NW	W
15-19	41,953	53,191	142,345	39,362	52,618	136,666	41,483	47,275	144,767
20-24	42,271	48,927	144,460	41,964	52,476	140,242	39,399	51,921	134,609
25-29	39,299	49,014	142,012	40,649	47,490	141,258	40,352	51,009	137,089
30-34	32,634	44,915	130,834	38,475	48,183	140,439	39,786	46,676	139,679
35-39	28,070	38,980	133,339	31,974	44,064	129,262	37,673	47,229	138,750
40-44	25,881	35,210	135,335	27,063	37,797	131,160	30,892	42,788	127,135
45-49	28,402	37,077	155,618	24,812	33,961	132,715	25,970	36,499	128,614
50-54	28,302	35,677	152,585	27,199	35,413	151,850	23,746	32,469	129,441
55-60	24,164	29,663	139,988	26,595	33,325	147,220	25,563	33,139	146,537

Source: Institute for Economic Advancement, UALR

Note: All projections in this table are based on the Natural Increase Series method. B=African American, NW=Non-White, W=White.

In terms of preparedness, non-Asian minority students who took the ACT in 2006 scored lower than White students in all categories; African American students scored

significantly lower than did those in all other racial/ethnic categories. The ACT college readiness percentages are shown in Table 31.

Table 32: Percentage of Students Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks by Race-2006

	English	Math	Reading	Science	Meeting All Four
African American	39	8	19	4	2
Native American	66	29	50	17	10
Hispanic	53	25	36	13	9
Asian/Pacific Island	64	45	44	30	23
White/Non-Hispanic	76	39	57	26	21
Total	69	34	49	22	17

Source: ACT High School Profile Report: The Graduating Class of 2006 Arkansas

Appreciative Inquiry Study

In 2006, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock commissioned MarketSearch, the research division of Mangan Holcomb Partners, to do an *Appreciative Inquiry* marketing study on UALR stakeholders. The purpose of the study was to gain insight on what faculty members, staff members, traditional and non-traditional students, alumni and community members say about “the university’s strengths, best attributes, and the reasons these individuals are motivated to invest their time and resources in the institution (Jones, 2006, p.3).

The findings of this study suggested that UALR has a fragmented rather than unified culture where there is no consistent and deep penetration of organizational values among the various stakeholders. That is, no one single value or attribute emerged as a priority for the groups interviewed. Several common themes did, however, emerge among most groups. They were: accessibility to quality education, life-changing experiences, and diversity, although the latter was not indicated as a strong priority in any of the groups.

Since the market study did not include prospective students, it cannot provide any qualitative information about what the members of this group may think or feel about UALR. Nevertheless, the results do suggest that marketing messages that emphasize the university’s strengths as well as a strong central theme could be motivational to prospective students.

Discussion and Summary of Implications

Two things are clear from the available demographic and market data: 1) the demographic trends generally will not work in the institution’s favor in terms of increasing enrollment and retention, and 2) UALR has a relatively weak market position relative to its primary competitors.

On the first point, the demographic data regarding general population, high school graduates and minority populations indicate either a slight decline or an essentially flat trend line over the next ten to fifteen years. Furthermore, data on college preparedness indicate that Arkansas provides a relatively small pool of well prepared prospective students for which we can expect competition to be extremely intense.

On the second point, there are two indicators that are especially revealing. The first is that only three percent of students in Arkansas who take the ACT select UALR as a first choice institution and the second is that UALR has dropped to third place in enrollment in the state and continues to lose freshman enrollment to other institutions. The Appreciative Inquiry gives us a little insight into fragmented identity of UALR that may contribute to a weak market position. It is probably also the case that many current and potential stakeholders have heard UALR's pejorative sobriquet—the "university of last resort." UALR not only has to establish a positive image in the community, it has to overcome a negative one in the minds of some. Another factor contributing to UALR's weak market position is the fact that it is joining the marketing race late and with a smaller investment with respect to other institutions, particularly the University of Central Arkansas which passed UALR in enrollment last year. UCA is currently spending around \$900,000 a year on advertising; Arkansas State University is spending around \$330,000 a year. UALR began its first marketing campaign last year with \$250,000.⁵

With respect to minority recruitment and retention, there are several conclusions to be drawn from the data. The availability of traditionally aged minority prospective college students will decline slightly as will the total population in this age category with the probable exception of Hispanic students. The bigger problem, however, is that African American, Hispanic and Native American students in Arkansas are generally less well prepared for college than their White and Asian counterparts and therefore it will be more challenging to both recruit and retain these populations in proportions equal to their numbers in the general population. UALR must develop very specific strategies both in marketing and in early intervention programs in order to meet its institutional goals and serve these constituents effectively.

In virtually all areas of enrollment management UALR must now play catch up if it is going to reverse its decline in enrollment and market share. Based on the goals stated in the university's strategic plan and its enrollment management plan, it must devise strategies both to recruit more freshmen and retain more continuing students. This involves appealing to more prospective students and specifically appealing to more of Arkansas' well prepared students in order to reduce the levels of required remediation and the likelihood of high attrition rates. However, even if UALR succeeds in attracting more college-ready freshmen, the demographics suggest that it will not be enough to sustain the university and serve a majority of our constituents within the state. Effective and aggressive marketing will be an important part of the recruitment component of enrollment management, but it will not be the entire solution. Success programs will also be critical to the overall success of the enrollment management plan.

⁵ *Arkansas Business*, August 13-19, 2007

Strategies

Goal 1: Increase enrollment of college-prepared students

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 2: Increase enrollment to approach institutional capacity

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 3: Increase enrollment of freshman students, including traditional freshmen

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 4: Improve retention rates overall to meet or exceed the average of peer institutions

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 5: Improve completion (graduation) rates to meet or exceed the average of peer institutions

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 6: Maintain demographically appropriate levels of minority student enrollment including an increase in the number of Hispanic students attending UALR

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 7: Improve minority retention and completion rates to match rates for the UALR student body at large

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 8: Ensure that transfer students are matriculated at UALR with the highest level of support we can offer

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Goal 9: Maintain currently strong levels of graduate student enrollment growth; phase in increased doctoral level enrollment after undergraduate lower level enrollment begins to increase.

Current Strategies

Recommended Strategies

Coordination of Strategies

Implementation Time Line and Responsibilities

Implementation Timeline

Academic Affairs Responsibilities

Educational and Student Services Responsibilities

Finance and Administration Responsibilities

University Advancement Responsibilities

Computing Services Responsibilities

Athletics Responsibilities

Office of the Chancellor Responsibilities

Monitoring Progress