

8.1 Student Achievement Measures

The data is sourced from GMC data defined by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the federal government and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) for the state of Georgia. In alignment with its mission to foster individual growth and develop servant leaders, the college has selected four key criteria to evaluate student achievement. These metrics were chosen because they represent the most critical milestones in a student's journey from enrollment to completion.

The college uses the following criteria:

1. IPEDS 150% Graduation Rate: This is the ultimate measure of student success and the institution's primary SACSCOC Key Performance Indicator. It directly reflects GMC's effectiveness in helping students complete their educational goals.
2. IPEDS 150% Transfer-Out Rate: GMC encourages students to transfer after completing their degree. This IPEDS metric specifically tracks students who leave before graduating. Therefore, it is monitored to ensure students are successfully retained through to completion at GMC.
3. IPEDS Annual Number of Graduates: This metric provides a clear, overall measure of the scale of GMC's impact and its success in producing graduates prepared for their next chapter of service and leadership.
4. IPEDS and GOSA Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate: This serves as a crucial leading indicator. Retaining students from their first to second year is the most critical step toward ensuring they will ultimately graduate.

Evaluation of Student Achievement Data

For each of the four criteria above, the institution sets an internal minimum threshold and an aspirational goal using a consistent, data-informed methodology. This method involves calculating a three-year rolling average for each metric to establish a performance baseline. The minimum threshold, which represents a measured drop in performance requiring institutional action, is then set five percentage points (5%) below this average. The aspirational goal, designed to drive continuous improvement, is set five percentage points (5%) above the average. This approach ensures that targets are dynamic and reflective of recent performance. The criteria below include GMC's thresholds for acceptability and whether or not it has been attained.

To provide an external frame of reference for its performance, GMC benchmarks its IPEDS outcomes against a group of ten peer institutions. These institutions are similar to GMC as they share the same Carnegie Classification ("Professional-focused Associate Large/Medium") and are primarily associate-granting colleges that also offer a select number of bachelor's degrees. Comparing GMC's data to the average

performance of this peer group helps the institution understand its effectiveness relative to other similar colleges. The ten peer institutions are listed below:

Antelope Valley Community College District
Delaware Technical Community College – Terry
Henry Ford College
Laredo College
Skyline College
Solano Community College
Tallahassee Community College
Truckee Meadows Community College
University of Cincinnati-Clermont College
West Los Angeles College

A different external benchmark is required for the fall-to-fall retention rate (IPEDS and GOSA) because the standard IPEDS metric is not a meaningful measure for GMC or its peer group. As institutions classified as "four-year," IPEDS requires reporting retention for the first-time, full-time, bachelor's degree-seeking cohort. However, this metric is fundamentally misaligned with institutional mission, as GMC and its peers are all institutions that primarily serve associate-degree-seeking populations. The bachelor's-seeking cohort represents only a small, non-representative portion of the student body.

Furthermore, this specific metric is technically unusable for comparison, as several peer institutions report a retention rate of zero. This occurs because their bachelor's programs require a completed associate degree for admission, meaning they enroll no first-time students into that cohort.

Given this, GMC benchmarks against the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), which aligns with this metric's use by the state of Georgia. The 22 TCSG institutions serve as an appropriate comparison group because, like GMC, they are primarily associate-degree-granting but also offer a limited number of bachelor's programs, and they serve a similar student population. The benchmark is defined as the average retention rate across all 22 TCSG institutions.

1. IPEDS 150% Graduation Rate

The IPEDS 150% Graduation Rate tracks the percentage of first-time, full-time students who graduate within 150% of the time it typically takes to complete their degree.

Table 8.1-1

GMC's 150% Graduation Rate				
Cohort	2015-2021	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024
Graduation Rate	28%	37%	33%	38%
Minimum Threshold	23%	23%	26%	28%
Aspirational Target	33%	33%	36%	38%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	28%	29%	28%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available

Disaggregation of IPEDS 150% Graduation Rate

GMC disaggregates the IPEDS graduation rate by student delivery modality, Pell Grant status, and gender. As discussed previously, these specific disaggregation methods were selected to ensure the institution closely monitors the success of its key student populations: the growing number of online learners, the large population of low-income students, and its predominantly female student body.

Student Modality Disaggregation

GMC students can take courses on-ground, fully online, or in a mixed modality that combines both formats, as seen in 8.1-2.

Table 8.1-2

GMC's Graduation Rate by Modality				
	Cohort			
Student Modality	2015-2021	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024
On-Ground	35%	40%	34%	39%
Minimum Threshold	23%	26%	30%	31%
Aspirational Target	33%	36%	40%	41%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	28%	29%	28%	*
Mixed Modality	29%	27%	34%	38%
Minimum Threshold	28%	28%	26%	25%
Aspirational Target	38%	38%	36%	35%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	28%	29%	28%	*
Online	20%	17%	23%	25%
Minimum Threshold	13%	13%	13%	15%
Aspirational Target	23%	23%	23%	25%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	28%	29%	28%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available for IPEDS Peer Group

Pell Grant Status Disaggregation

GMC also disaggregates the graduation rate metric by whether the student is or is not a Pell Grant recipient, as seen in Table 8.1-3.

Table 8.1-3

GMC's Graduation Rate by Pell Status				
	Cohort			
Pell Status	2015-2021	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024
Received Pell	25%	33%	27%	35%
Minimum Threshold	20%	20%	23%	23%
Aspirational Target	30%	30%	33%	33%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	25%	27%	27%	*
No Pell	32%	43%	37%	42%
Minimum Threshold	29%	29%	32%	32%
Aspirational Target	39%	39%	42%	42%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	31%	31%	29%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available for IPEDS Peer Group

Gender Disaggregation

GMC also disaggregates the graduation rate metric by gender, as shown in Table 8.1-4.

Table 8.1-4

GMC's Graduation Rate by Gender				
	Cohort			
Gender	2015-2021	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024
Male	25%	34%	30%	33%
Minimum Threshold	20%	20%	23%	25%
Aspirational Target	30%	30%	33%	35%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	25%	27%	26%	*
Female	29%	40%	36%	42%
Minimum Threshold	26%	25%	29%	30%
Aspirational Target	36%	35%	39%	40%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	31%	30%	30%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available for IPEDS Peer Group

2) IPEDS 150% Transfer Out Rate

GMC is committed to helping students complete the degree they originally sought before continuing their education elsewhere. Therefore, the institution closely monitors the IPEDS Transfer-Out Rate (as seen in Table 8.1-5), which specifically tracks first-time, full-time students who leave GMC without graduating. The goal is to keep this rate low, as it reflects success in retaining students through to completion.

Table 8.1-5

GMC's 150% Transfer Rate				
Cohort	2015-2021	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024
Transfer Rate	23%	21%	23%	20%
Maximum Threshold	32%	31%	28%	27%
Aspirational Target	22%	21%	18%	17%
IPEDS Peer Group Average	16%	17%	16%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available for IPEDS Peer Group

3) IPEDS Number of Graduates

GMC utilizes the IPEDS definition for the annual number of graduates, counted from July 1 to June 30. The college compares this figure to its enrollment population by calculating an Annual Graduate Yield Rate, as seen in Table 8.1-6. The formula for this metric is the total number of annual graduates divided by the 12-month unduplicated headcount enrollment. This method provides a comprehensive measure of institutional productivity relative to the total number of unique students served throughout the year.

When this analysis is disaggregated by degree type (associate and BAS), the methodology is adapted to provide a more targeted measure of program productivity. For these specific rates, the denominator is adjusted to include only the 12-month unduplicated headcount of students seeking that particular degree. This differs from the overall institutional rate, whose denominator includes all students served, including large non-degree-seeking populations like dual enrollment and transient students

Table 8.1-6

	GMC's Number of Graduates			
	Academic Year			
Graduates by Degree Type	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Graduates	1,671	1,474	1,303	1,315
Annual Graduate Yield Rate	14%	12%	11%	12%
Minimum Threshold	8%	9%	9%	7%
Aspirational Target	18%	19%	19%	17%
IPEDS Peer Group Annual Graduate Yield Rate	10%	9%	9%	*
Associate Degree Graduates	1,597	1,346	1,136	1,132
Annual Graduate Yield Rate	23%	22%	20%	20%
Minimum Threshold	16%	17%	18%	17%
Aspirational Target	26%	27%	28%	27%
IPEDS Peer Group Annual Graduate Yield Rate	10%	9%	9%	*

BAS Graduates	74	128	167	183
Annual Graduate Yield Rate	11%	14%	19%	19%
Minimum Threshold	15%	14%	10%	10%
Aspirational Target	25%	24%	20%	20%
IPEDS Peer Group Annual Graduate Yield Rate	10%	9%	9%	*

* 2018-2024 Data not yet available for IPEDS Peer Group

4) IPEDS and GOSA Fall to Fall Retention Rate

The Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate is a critical leading indicator of future success, tracking the persistence of first-time, full-time students from their first year to their second. As explained previously, GMC benchmarks this metric against the average retention rate of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) institutions, as the standard IPEDS peer group data is not suitable for comparison. Table 8.1-7 presents GMC's performance alongside the TCSG average.

Table 8.1-7

GMC's Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates				
Cohort	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Retention Rate	51%	48%	45%	45%
Minimum Threshold	46%	46%	44%	43%
Aspirational Target	56%	56%	54%	53%
TCSG Average	60%	55%	57%	58%