

INTERNAL RELEASE

**University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
Academic Years 2020 through 2025**

Version: December 19, 2019 University Internal Release



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Introduction

In the Strategic Resource Allocation Study 2019 Final Report from February 2019, the following recommendations were made:

(The) Strategic Enrollment Plan should include realistic, measurable, and attainable goals, as well as realistic action plans, to recruit and retain UA Little Rock's diverse student populations. The plan should identify and coordinate the roles and responsibilities of units across campus. It should address strategic marketing targeted at different academic programs and student populations and coordinate the roles of all relevant campus stakeholders - especially faculty and department chairs - in student recruitment and retention. The IEC views an Enrollment Plan as an opportunity for UA Little Rock to reaffirm its commitment to supporting and educating the underrepresented, non-traditional, first-generation, and lower income students of Central Arkansas.

This document contains the initial strategic enrollment management plan (SEMP) for the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UA Little Rock). It is an imperfect beginning to a long-term strategic enrollment planning process. The SEMP contains the goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide targeted recruitment and retention efforts at the UA Little Rock for the next five years. The SEMP contains the historical enrollment profile; enrollment challenges faced by the institution; and the goals, objectives, and strategies that will be utilized to improve enrollment at the university. The plan is intended to be iterative: although its goals and objectives cover a five-year period, the plan, in particular its objectives and strategies, should be revisited annually. In spring 2020, an accountability will be developed to identify responsible parties for executing the strategies, some of which require further development, and ensure clear expectations and reporting on the university's progress as recruitment and retention efforts improve.

The overall purpose of the SEMP is to provide a framework through which the university will stabilize and then turn around a trend of declining student enrollment. At the time of writing the SEMP, the university is experiencing a substantial increase in the number of undergraduate applications and student admittances for fall 2020. This is believed to be a result of early undergraduate recruitment initiatives, which are represented in the SEMP. New collaborations and resource-sharing are also occurring between undergraduate and graduate recruitment and admissions to help address graduate enrollment decline.

In addition to the SEMP being a recommendation of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), its development is needed to support the UA Little Rock Strategic Plan, as evidenced in the strategic plan goal one (*UA Little Rock will prepare its students for success*), objective one (*Increase recruitment of undergraduate and graduate students in all populations*) as well as strategic plan goal two (*UA Little Rock will improve the diversity, inclusion, equality, and global understanding in the campus community*), objective one (*UA Little Rock will maintain and support its diverse student body*). Undergraduate students are the initial focus of this plan but the SEMP incorporates plans from the Graduate School where appropriate as it relates to the recruitment and retention of graduate students.

Development of the SEMP occurred through a collaboration between Academic Affairs, Communications & Marketing, and Student Affairs, under the advisement of the University Recruitment Committee and the University Retention Committee. These committees consist of representatives across the university, including faculty, staff, and students. These committees are described in the planning process section. Improvements to this initial SEMP are expected once a full cycle of recruiting and onboarding students under new onboarding processes is completed.

Along with supporting information, the SEMP provides goal-specific objectives and strategies intended to ensure the success of the plan. The goals and objectives are identified below and strategies are listed in the applicable section of the SEMP.

Goal 1: Implement strategic digital marketing and communication initiatives to support enrollment goals and enhance UA Little Rock's reputation.

Objective 1: Conduct branding study and create new brand messaging platform that is authentic, compelling, and concise by January 20, 2020.

Objective 2: Increase brand awareness and enhance UA Little Rock's reputation. Increase positive brand sentiment by more than 30% by fall 2021.

Objective 3: Increase unique external monthly visits to ualr.edu/academics by 30% by June 2020, and increase completed requests for information (RFI) by 20% by June 2020.

Objective 4: Implement return on investment measurement processes.

Goal 2: Increase the number of entering undergraduate and graduate students by developing targeted recruitment plans and re-envisioning onboarding processes.

Objective 1: Increase the number of new undergraduate freshmen by 40% (818 students) by fall 2024.

Objective 2: Increase the number of new undergraduate transfer students by 15% (1,066) by fall 2024.

Objective 3: Re-enroll an increasing percentage of undergraduate students who have withdrawn or stopped-out prior to obtaining a credential.

Objective 4: Increase the number of new graduate students by 20% (433 students) by fall 2024.

Goal 3: Support success for the diverse range of undergraduate students at UA Little Rock.

Objective 1: Improve the Fall-to-Fall, Full-Time, Bachelor's-Seeking, 1-Year Retention Rate for First-Time in College students (an IPEDS metric) from 68% (2017-2018) to 73% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years.

Objective 2: Increase the Fall-to-Fall, Bachelor's-Seeking, 1-Year Retention Rate for First-Time Transfer students (an OIRA metric) from 69% (2017-2018) to 74% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years.

Objective 3: Increase persistence rates of students who enroll in mostly online courses and close the gap between DFWNC rates between face-to-face (F2F) courses and their online equivalents.

Objective 4: Close the gap between IPEDS rates for first time in college, bachelor degree seeking students who self-identified as Black or African American and those who identified as Caucasian by 2023.

Objective 5: Increase persistence rates (rate of students who either return or graduate) beyond the first year and increase the Overall 6-Year Graduation Rate for Full-Time, Degree- or Certificate-Seeking First-Time in College students (the IPEDS *Student Right to Know* metric) from 39% (2012-2018) to 44% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years.

Planning Process

University Recruitment Committee

The University Recruitment Committee was established in early summer 2019 to address student enrollment, one of the top priorities of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. Faculty, staff, and students were appointed from across campus, including Academic Affairs, Admissions, Athletics, Benton Campus, CALS, Campus Living, Chancellor, Communications and Marketing, CSSC, eLearning, Engineering Technology, Enrollment Services, Faculty Senate Admissions Committee, Financial Aid, Institutional Research and Analytics, International Student Services, Military Student Success, Multicultural Center, Student Accounts, and Transfer Services, as well as representation from the student body and alumni. Its goals are to be a clearinghouse of discussion and best practices and to develop strategic plans for improving recruitment. The Chancellor chairs the committee and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs serves as executive chair.

The committee usually meets twice a month and reviews all areas of admissions and recruitment, including presentations on the funnel and new initiatives that have been instituted. Recruitment statistics, territory maps and activities have also been discussed. The Office of Communications and Marketing shared the new marketing plan that will be rolled out in 2020 and the Office of Institutional Research and Analytics shared the most recent admissions data across all departments and populations. The committee reviewed and advised on the development of the SEMP. A template for the plan was approved by the committee. The committee will continue to meet and discuss revisions to the SEMP as well as proposed changes to the recruitment and onboarding processes.

University Retention Committee

Then Chancellor Rogerson appointed the University Retention Committee in late spring 2019. The charge to the committee was to focus on undergraduate retention; serve as a catch basin and clearinghouse for ideas and suggestions; serve as body with shared knowledge and history of discussion of retention issues; prioritize and make recommendations; adopt a dynamic retention plan and regularly monitor progress; serve as a coordinating body to maximize resources, promote communication, and avoid duplication; and keep the rest of campus abreast of its activities. Chancellor Drale renewed the charge when she assumed the role of Chancellor in fall of 2019, emphasizing the advisory nature of the Committee.

The Chancellor chairs the committee and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Student Success serves as the executive chair. The following areas and levels of the university are represented: Academic Advising, Advancement, Bursar, Communications and Marketing, Deans, Institutional Research and Analytics, IT Services, Online Learning, Registrar, Staff Senate, Student Affairs (including Campus Living, Enrollment, Multicultural Center, Wellness and Inclusion), Student

Government, and Student Retention Initiatives, as well as representation from the student body and alumni.

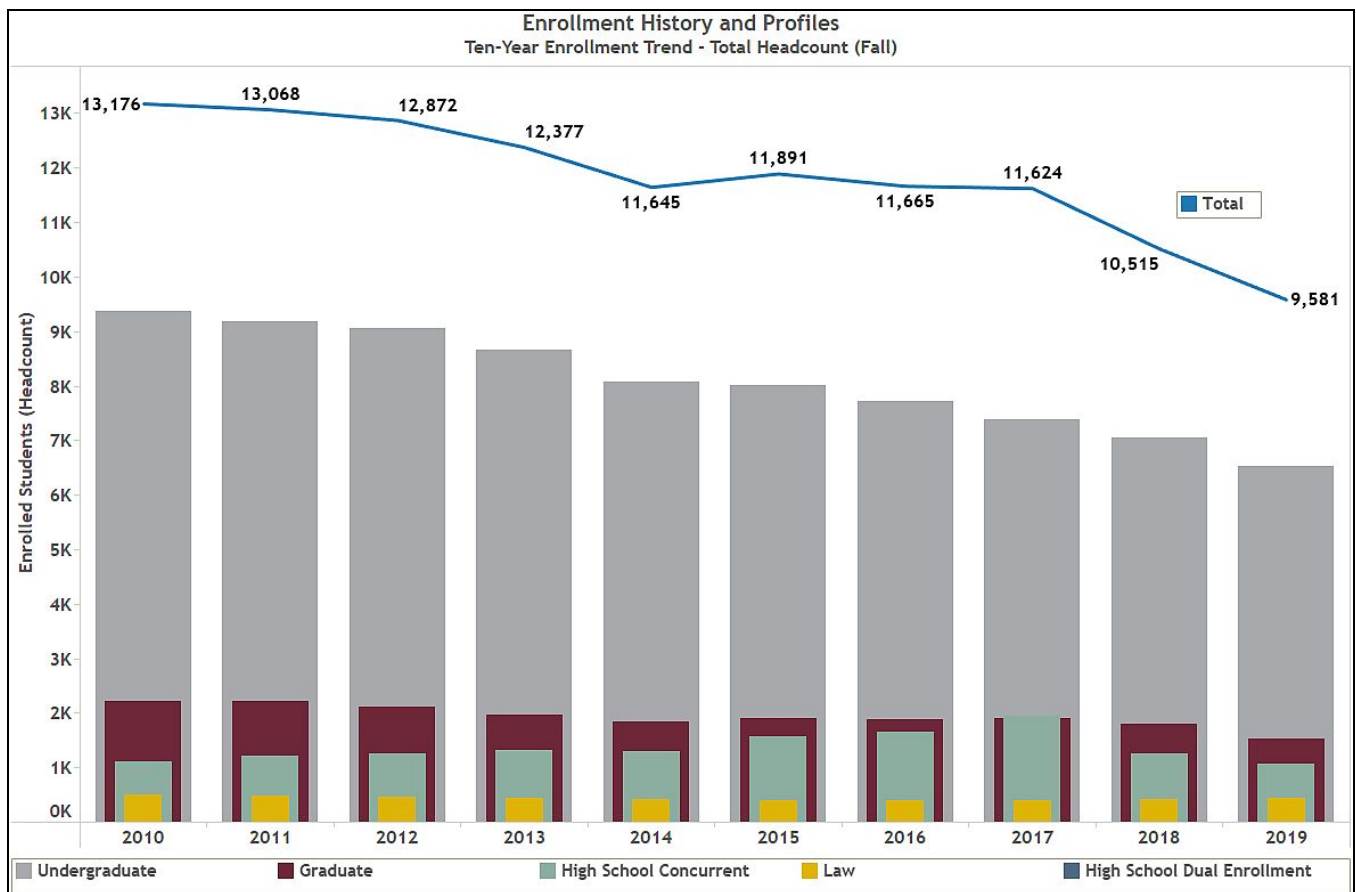
The committee convened on May 30, 2019 and met on most of the second and fourth weeks of each month until October 3, 2019. The committee was provided an inventory and status report of retention activities already under way, and then each member identified five actions that still need to be undertaken. Those actions were organized under more general categories and structured the agenda for discussion, along with special presentations and reports and data from outside the committee. The committee reviewed and advised on the development of student success portion of the SEMP.

Enrollment Profile & Trends

University-Level Enrollment

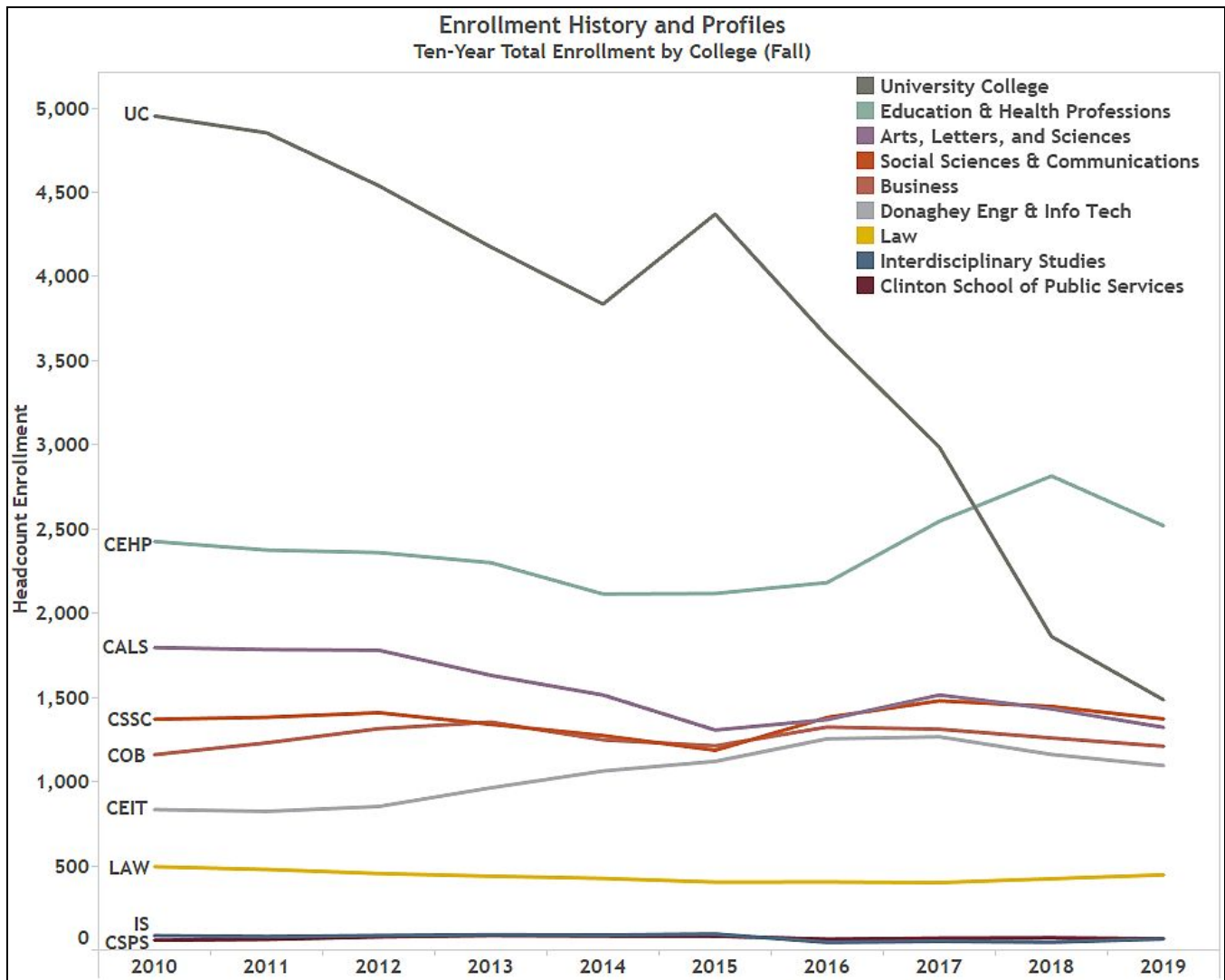
The university's enrollment peaked in fall 2009 with approximately 13,000 students. Since then, total headcount has declined, with enrollment for fall 2019 being approximately 9,600 students. This represents a decline of approximately 26% since peak enrollment.

Figure 1: Ten-Year University-Level Enrollment



College-Level Enrollment

Figure 2: Ten-Year Enrollment by College

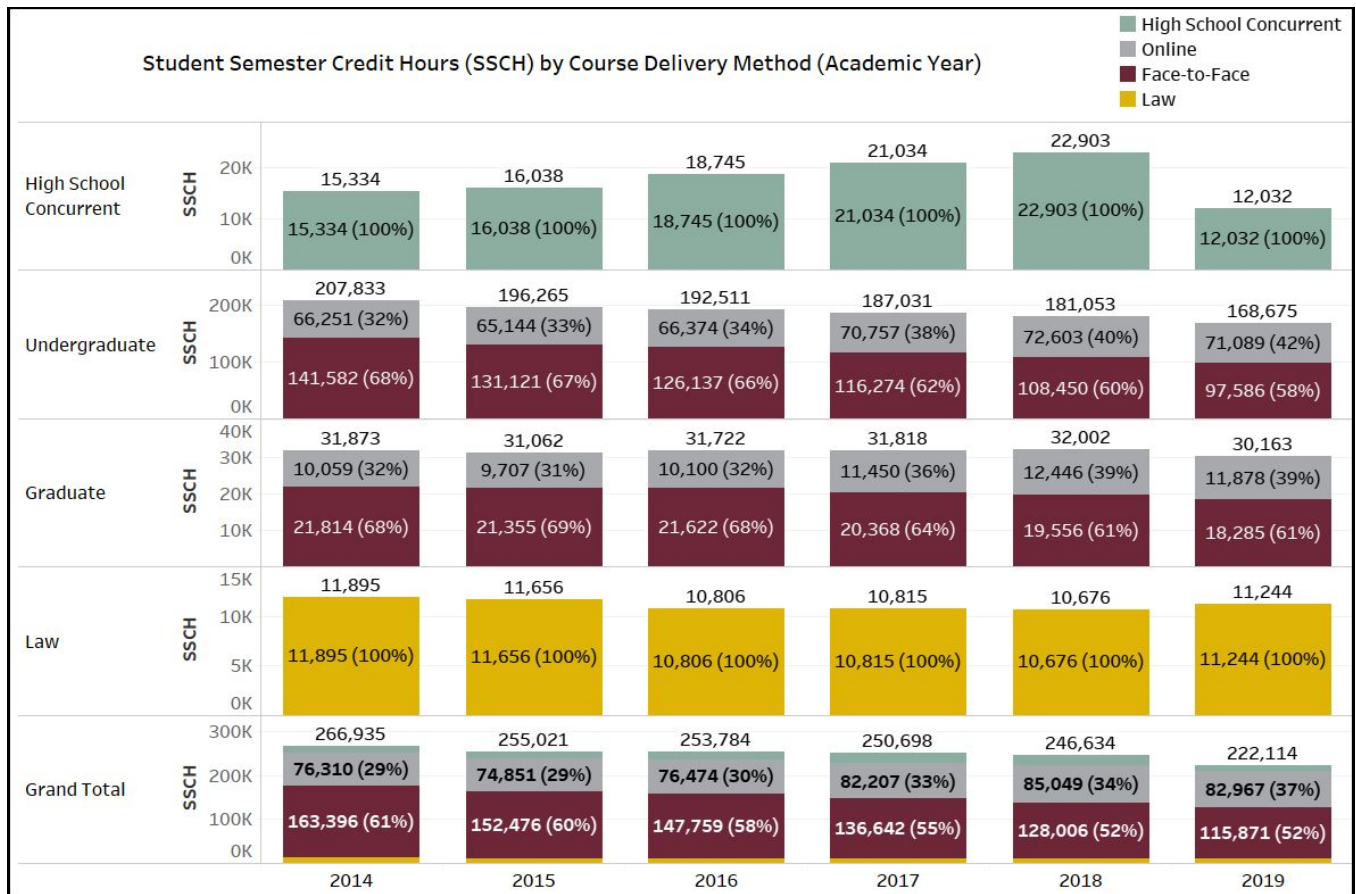


This chart contains the ten-year headcount trend by college for fall terms, based on the primary major of students. It includes the total student body; no groups (i.e. high school concurrent) are excluded. Changes to the declaration process of majors at UA Little Rock reduced the number of students reported in University College. Specifically, the requirement of declaring or pre-admitting into majors at the time of admission and the deprecation of intended (+) majors are contributing factors.

Learning Modality

Since 2013-2014 there has been a steady decline in the number of student semester credit hours (SSCH) provided through F2F instruction, from 71.4% to 62.6% in 2018-2019. In that same time period, online classes increased from 28.6% in 2013-2014 to 37.4% in 2018-2019.

Figure 3: Student-Semester Credit Hours by Delivery Method, Student Level, and Academic Year



Demographic Profile

The percent of all students of color has increased significantly. Currently, UA Little Rock has one of the most diverse student populations in Arkansas. As of fall 2019, African American students represent twenty-two percent of the freshman class; Caucasian students represent thirty-six percent; and students reported as two or more races represent thirty-two percent of the freshman class.

Figure 4: Changing Undergraduate Demographics

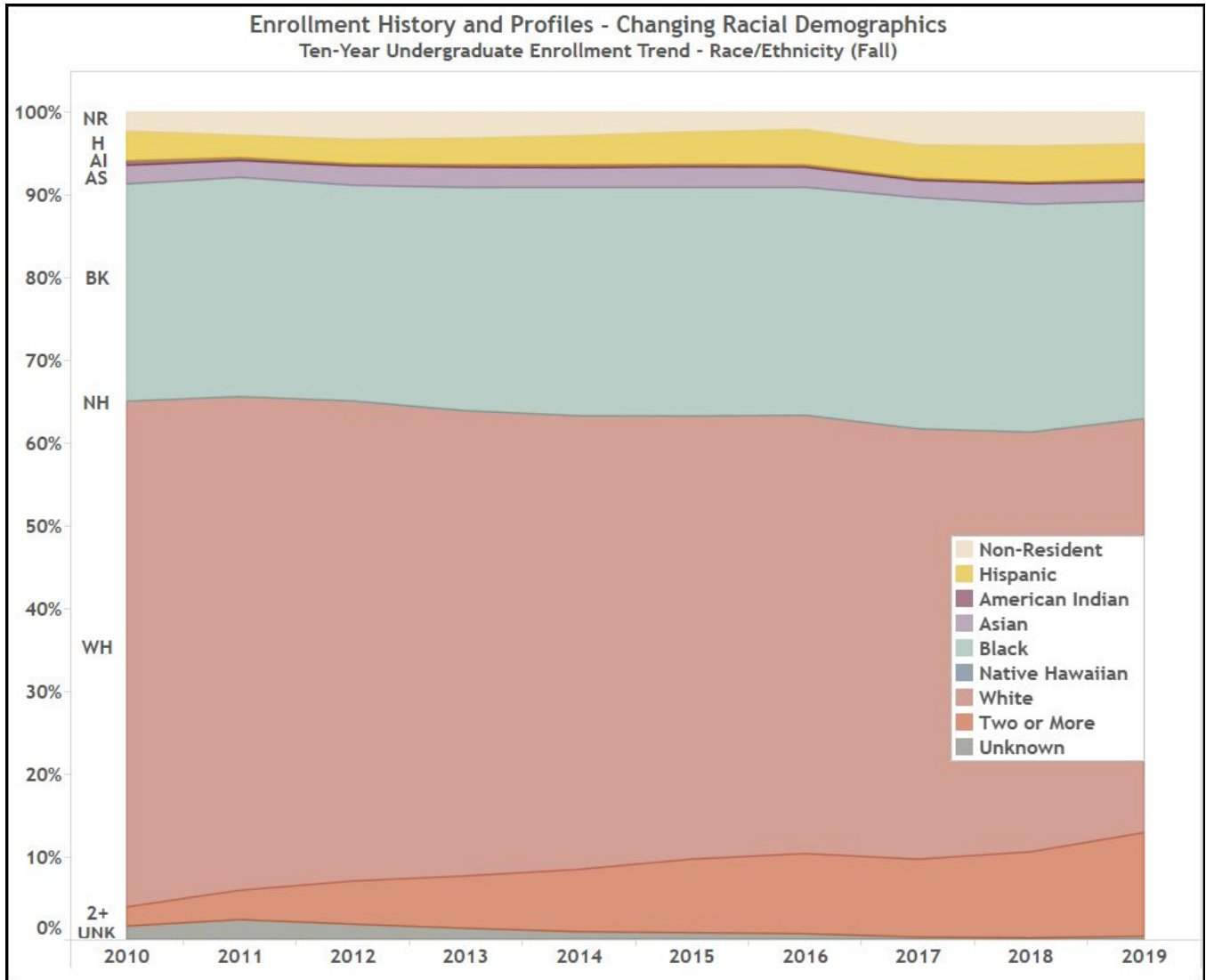


Figure 5: Changing Graduate Demographics

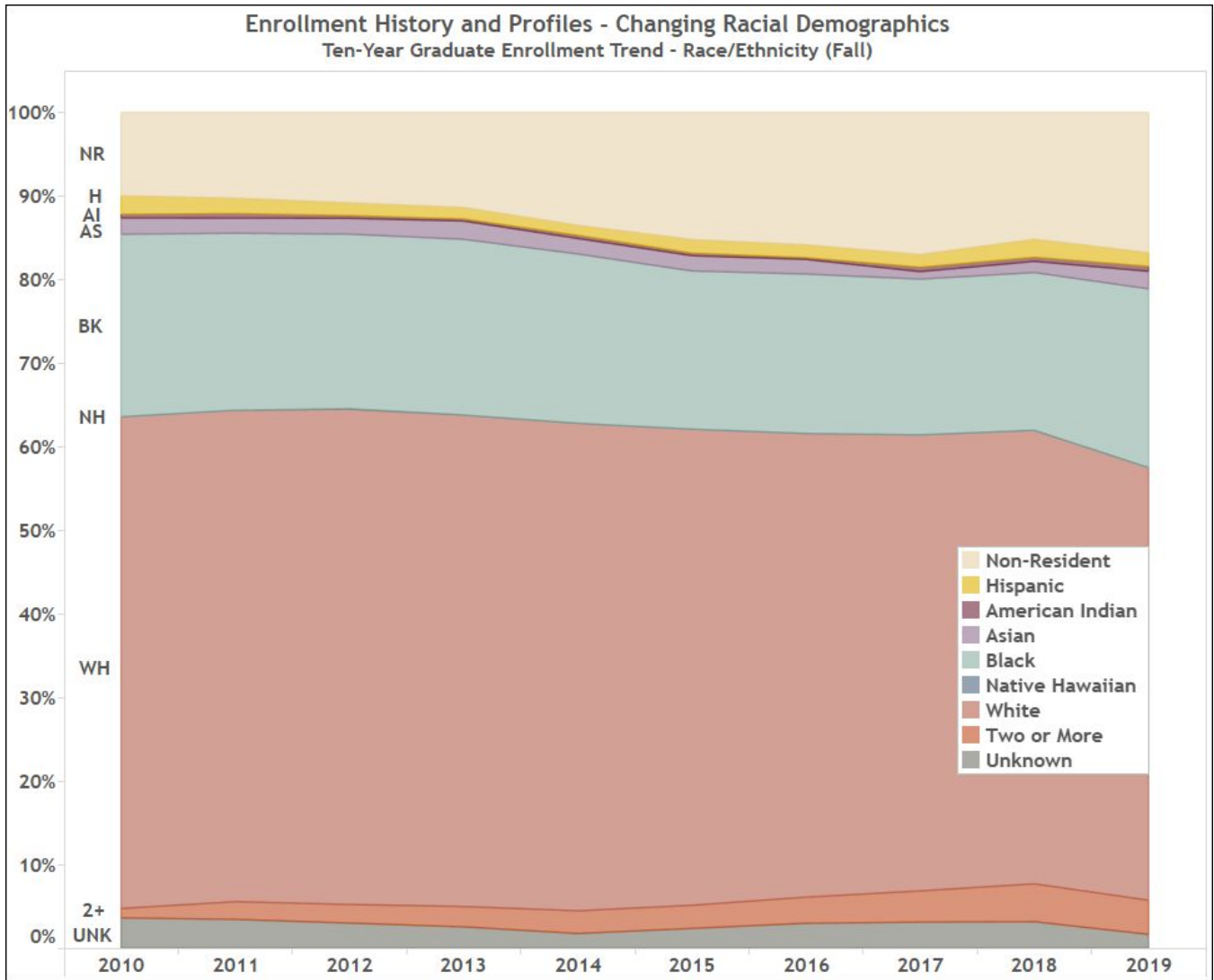
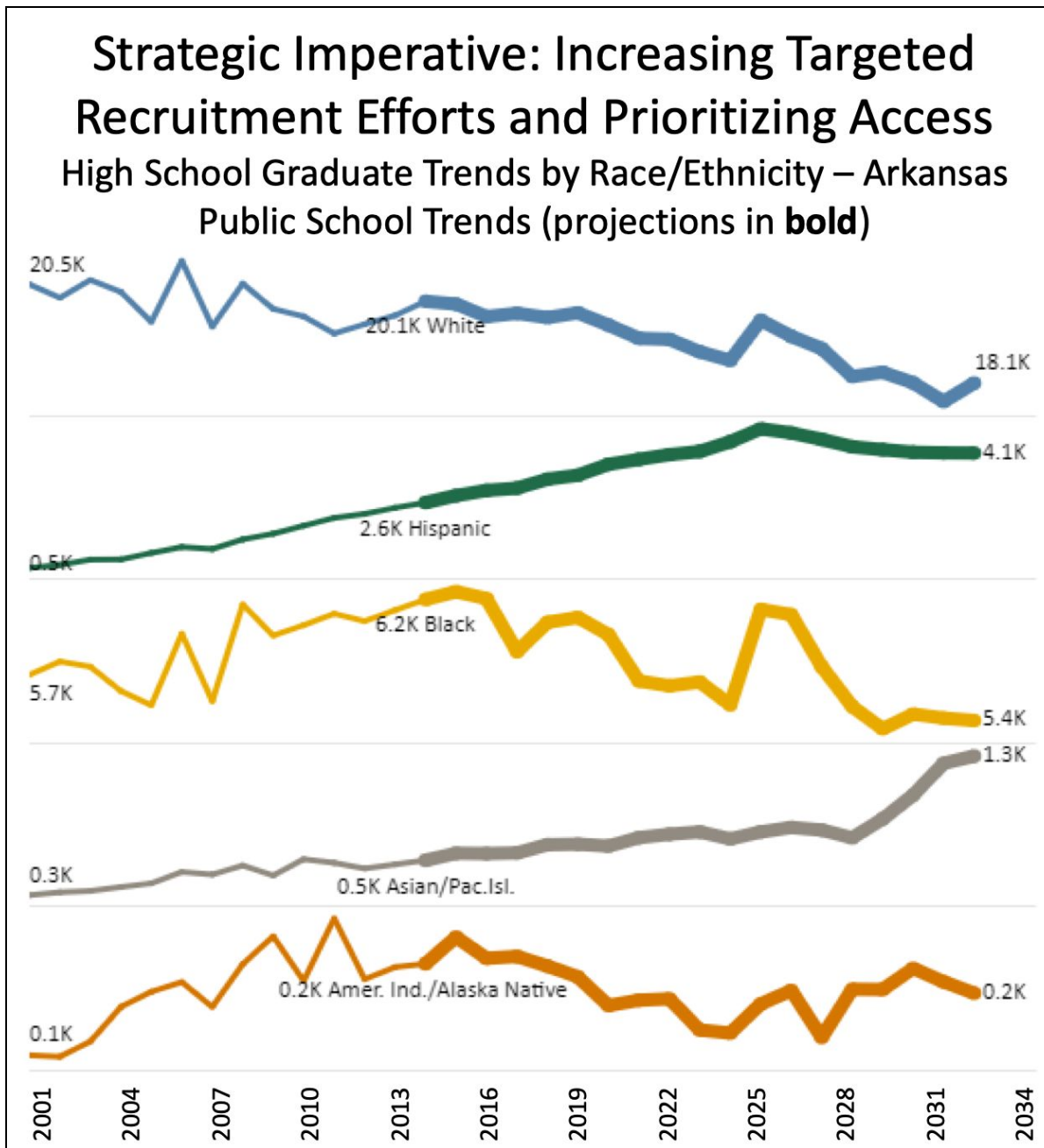


Figure 6: Projected High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates, 2016*. Note: Projections begin with Class of 2014 (thicker line).

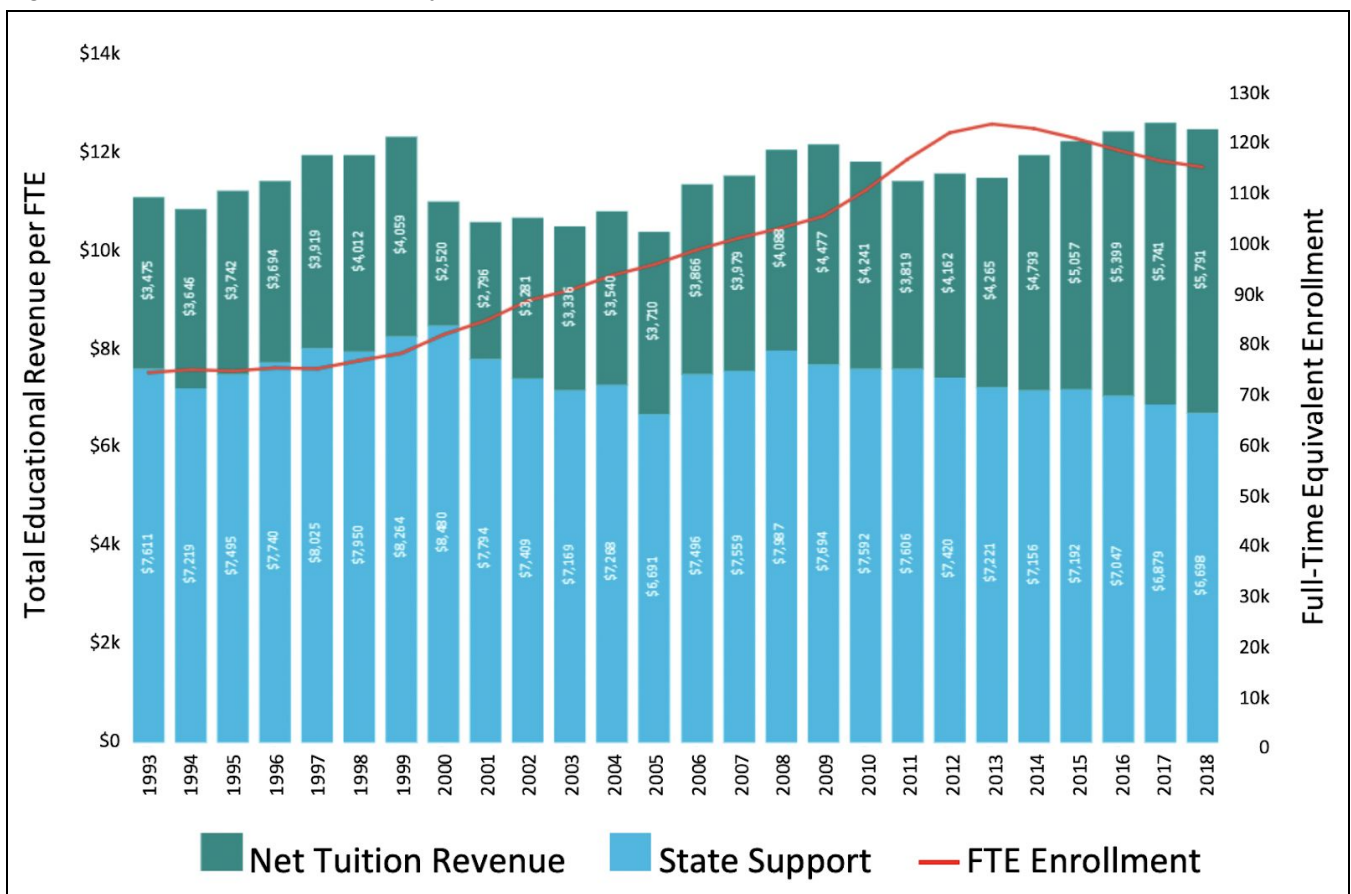
Trendlines for students in Arkansas public school show a decline in Caucasian graduates, while Hispanic students are increasing in numbers. This is consistent with general population trends, and for Arkansas specifically. Hispanic students make up the largest growth area, going from 2,800 for the class of 2014 to a projected 4,100 students by 2034.

Enrollment Challenges

Declining State Support

The decline of state support for higher education in Arkansas has shifted more of the financial burden to students. According to the *State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Dashboard*, state financial support has declined every year in Arkansas since 2008. However, given that the state appropriations have remained relatively stable for UA Little Rock while enrollment has decreased, the per-student state appropriations funding for UA Little Rock has increased.

Figure 7: Educational Revenue by Full-Time-Equivalent for Arkansas Institutions



Source: *State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Dashboard*. *State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (2019)*. *State Higher Education Finance: FY 2018*. Boulder, CO.

Non-Traditional Student Market

UA Little Rock is known in the community as the place for non-traditional students. There are students who have delayed enrollment in college after high school, who often work full-time, who are parents,

who are in the 'sandwich generation,' who are first-generation, who commute to school, or a combination of these. Often these students require additional layers of support to help them make it to graduation. UA Little Rock has made progress in some areas, but bringing those services to scale has proved to be a challenge both in terms of staffing and funding.

Figure 8: First-Generation New Freshmen

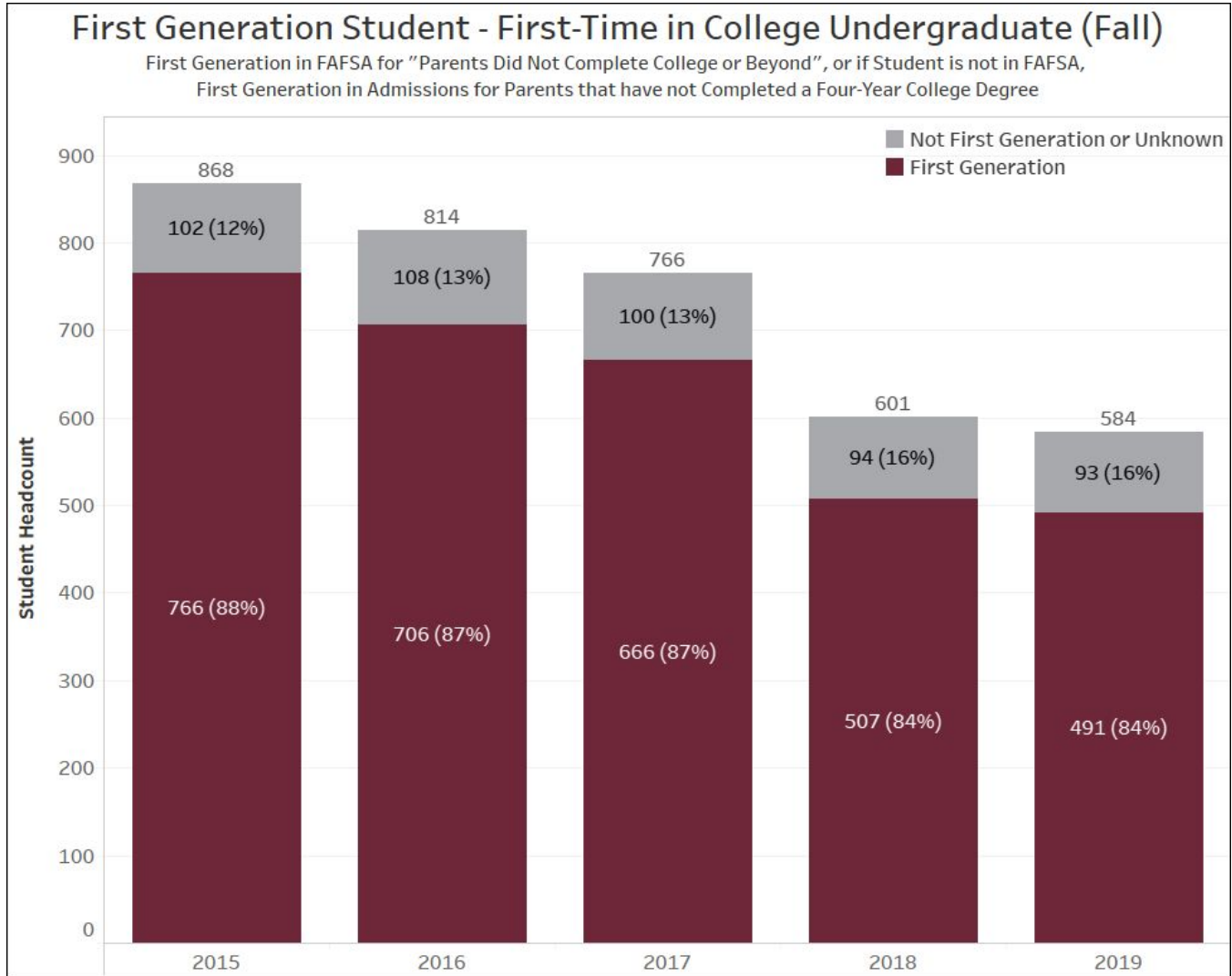


Figure 9: New Transfer First Generation Students

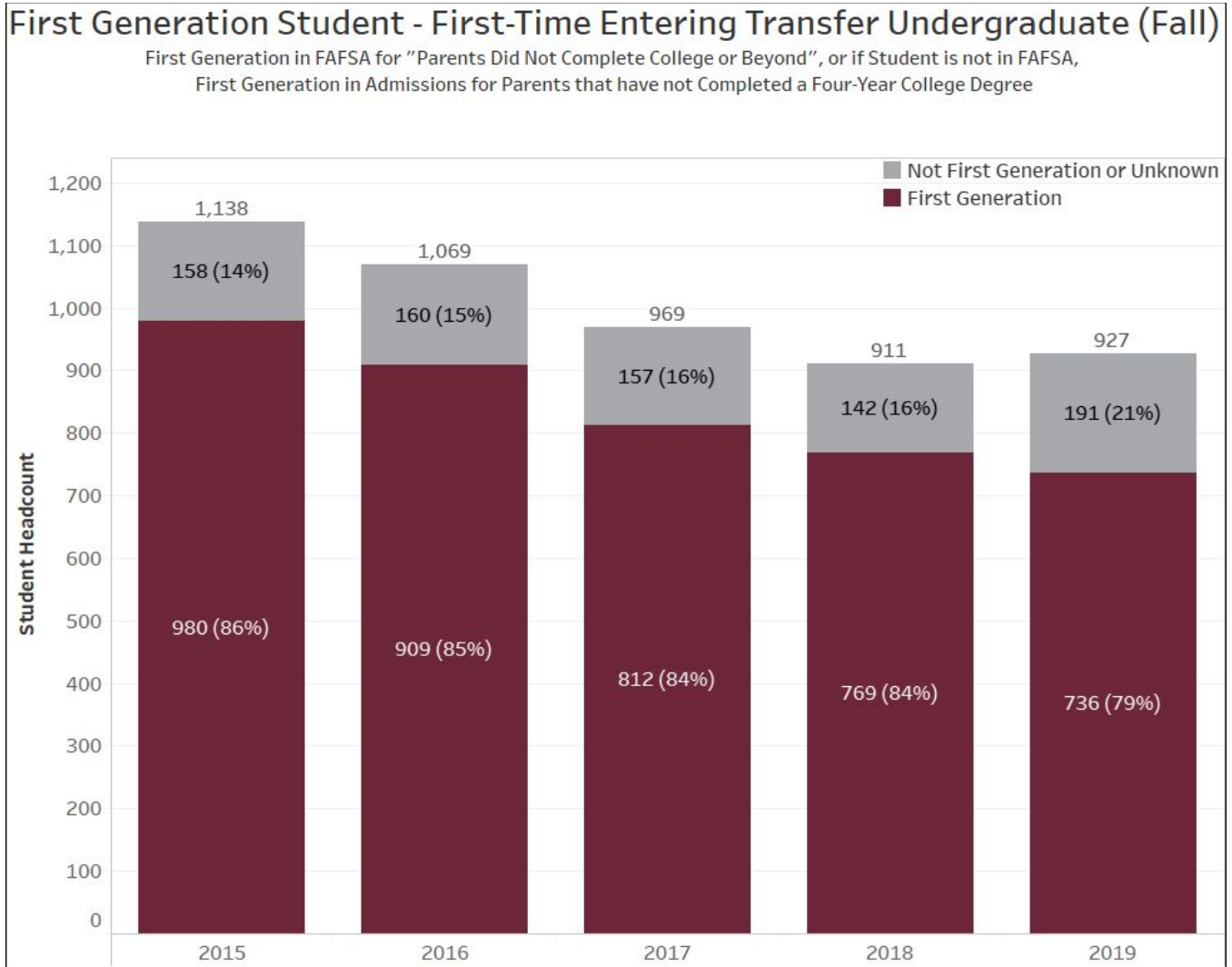


Figure 10: New Freshmen with Dependents

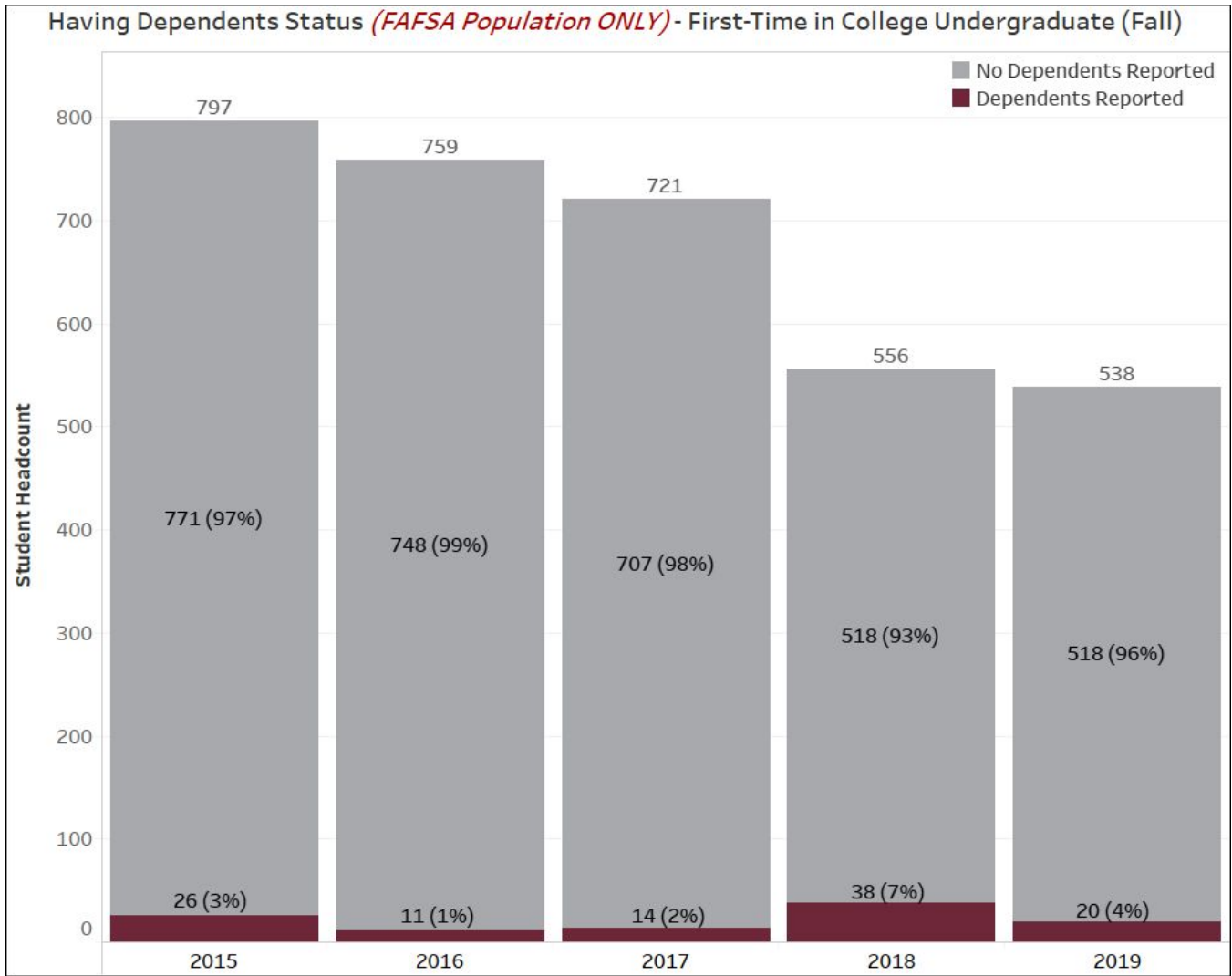


Figure 11: New Transfers with Dependents

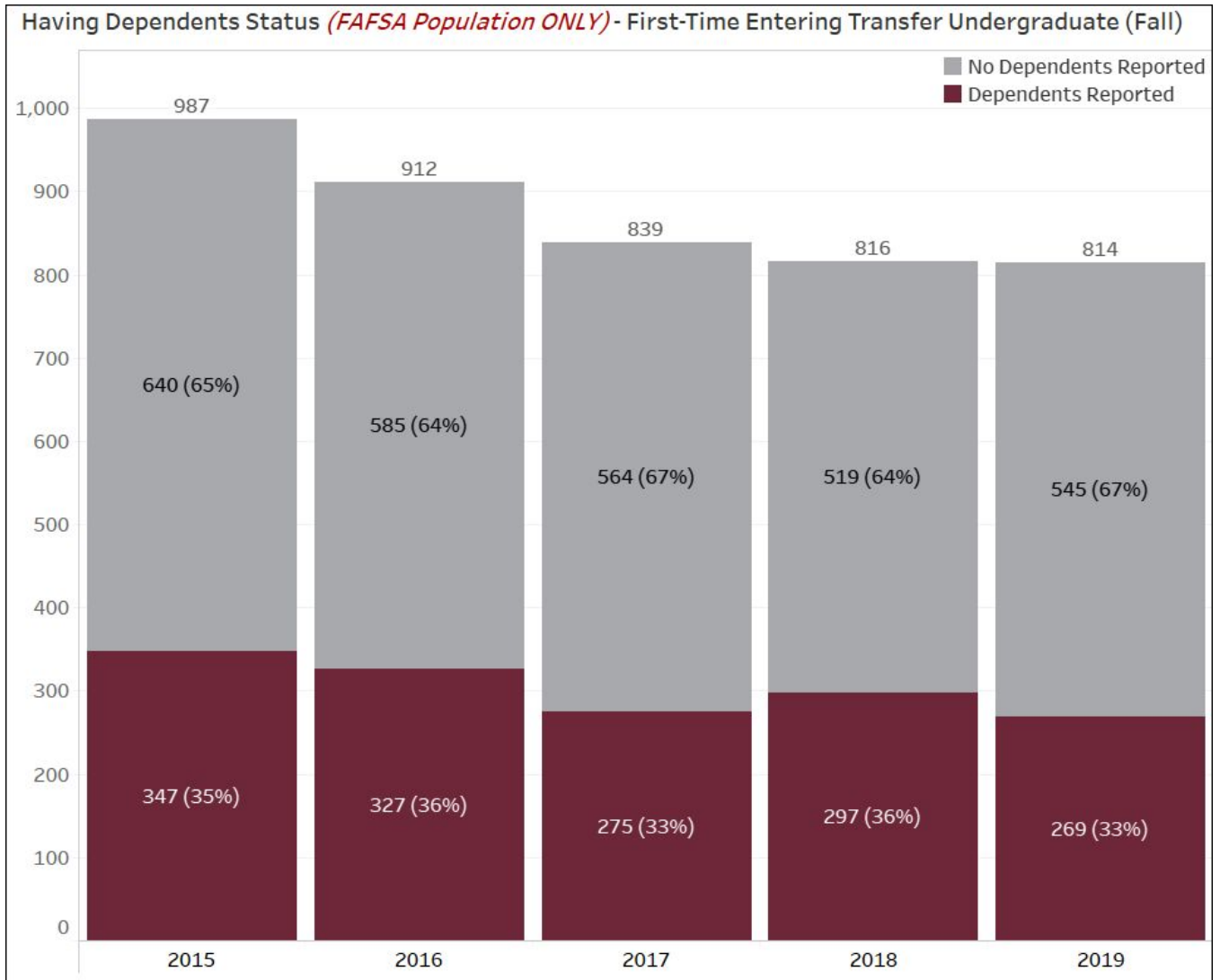


Figure 12: Dependency Status for New Freshmen

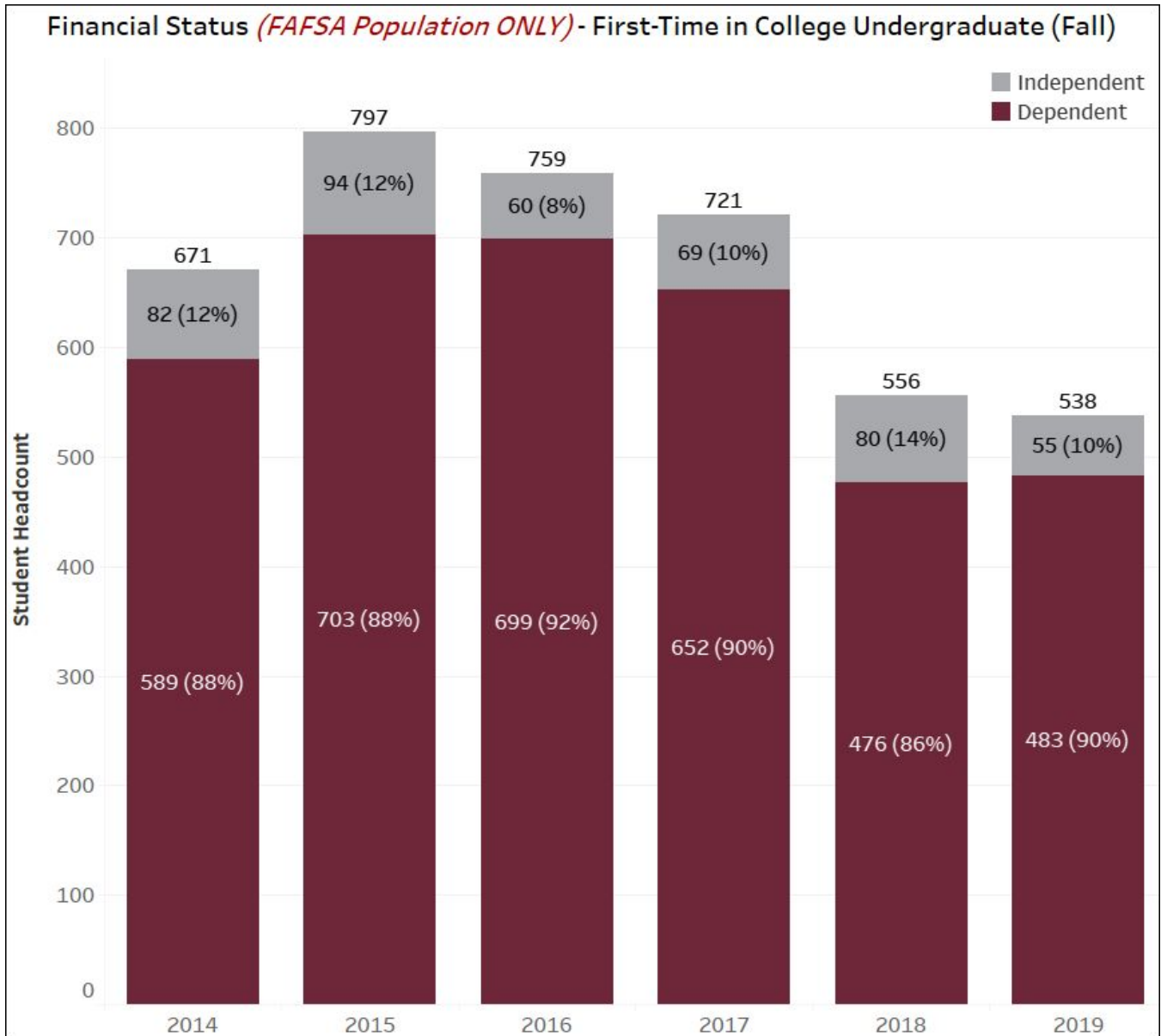


Figure 13: Dependency Status for New Transfers

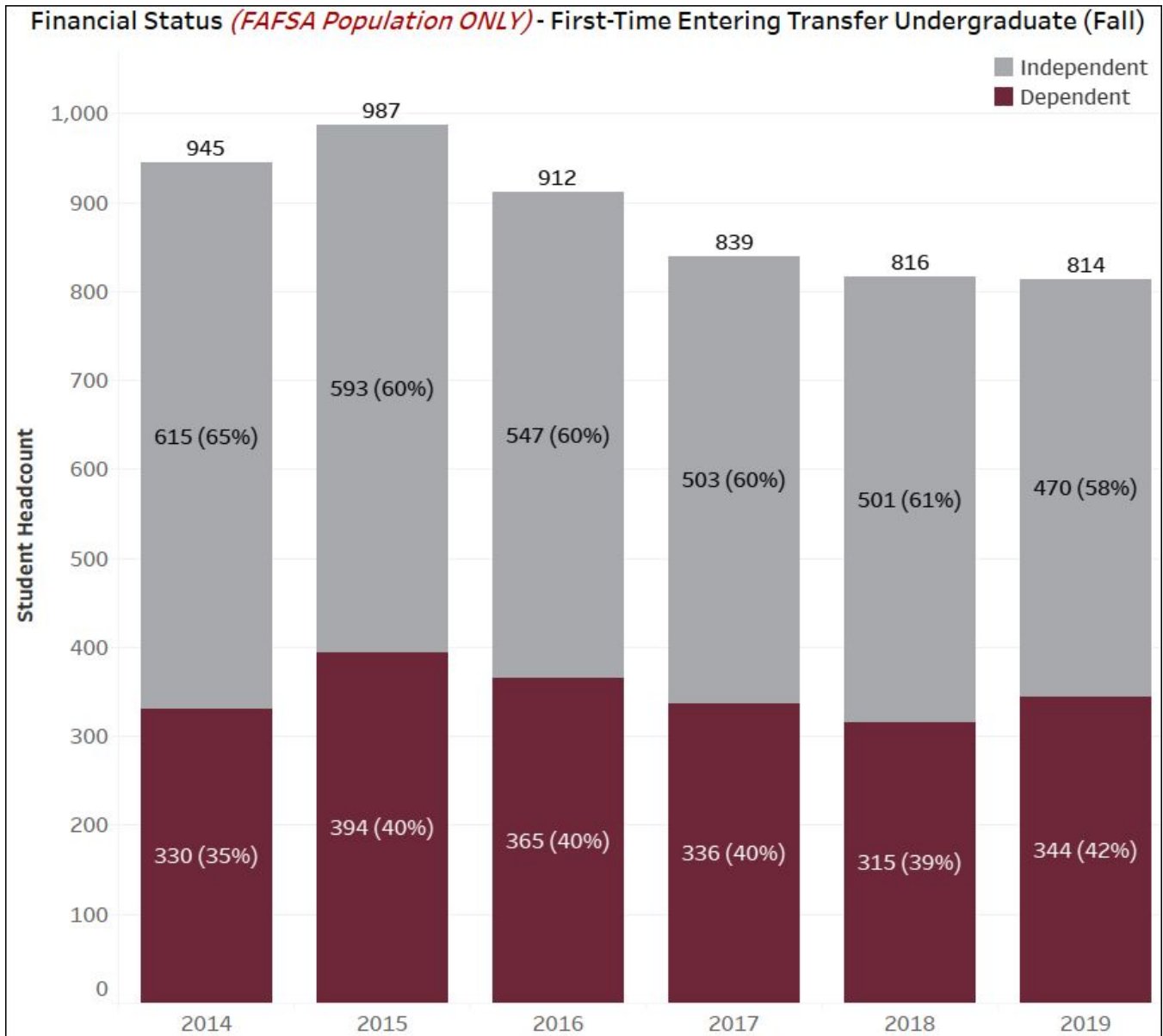
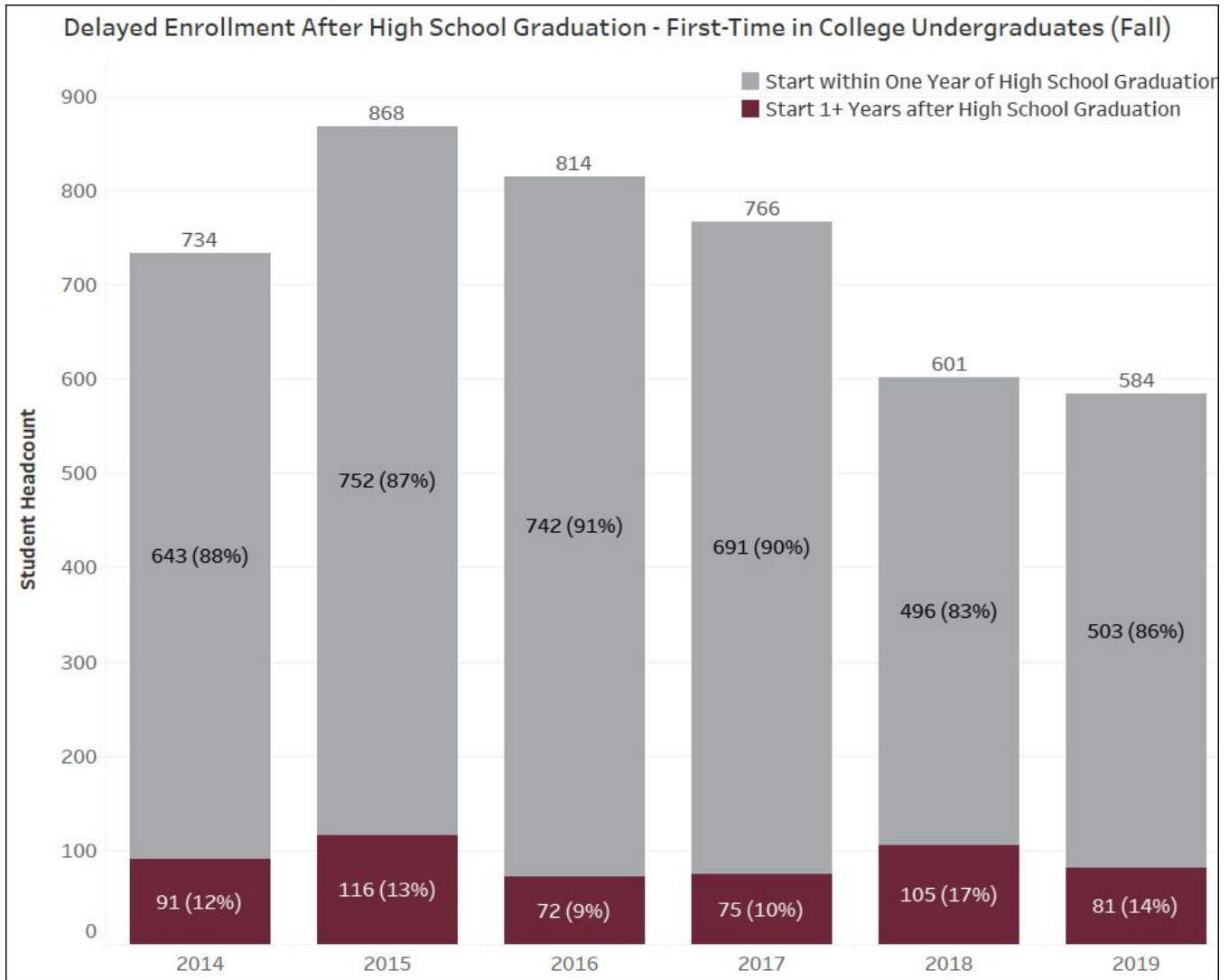


Figure 14: New Freshmen with Delayed College Start

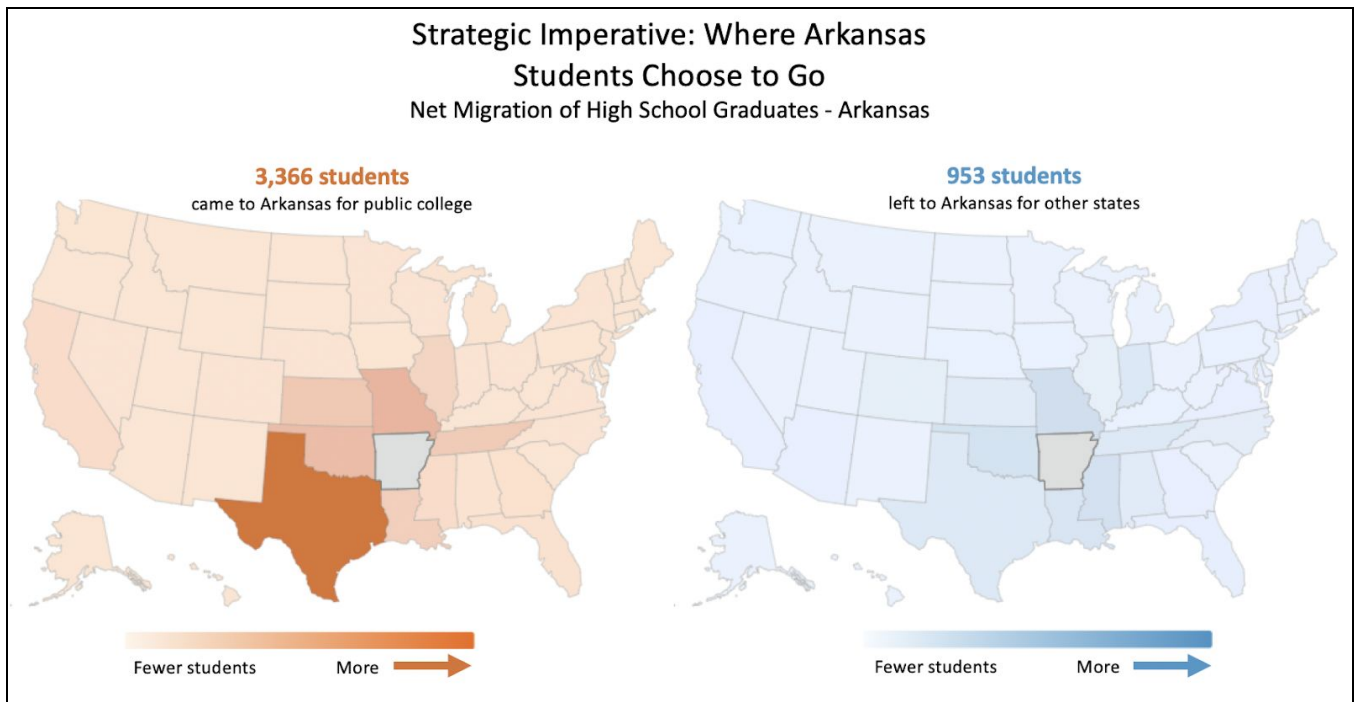


Students Choosing to Go Elsewhere or Nowhere

Arkansas receives more students from other states than it sends out, with Texas sending the most at 1,640 students. Arkansas sends the most college students to Missouri, with 140 leaving for school. Within the state, there is also competition for increasing enrollment. Below are three charts that provide the top ten institutions that senior high school concurrent students, admitted students, and admitted transfer students attended for fall 2018.

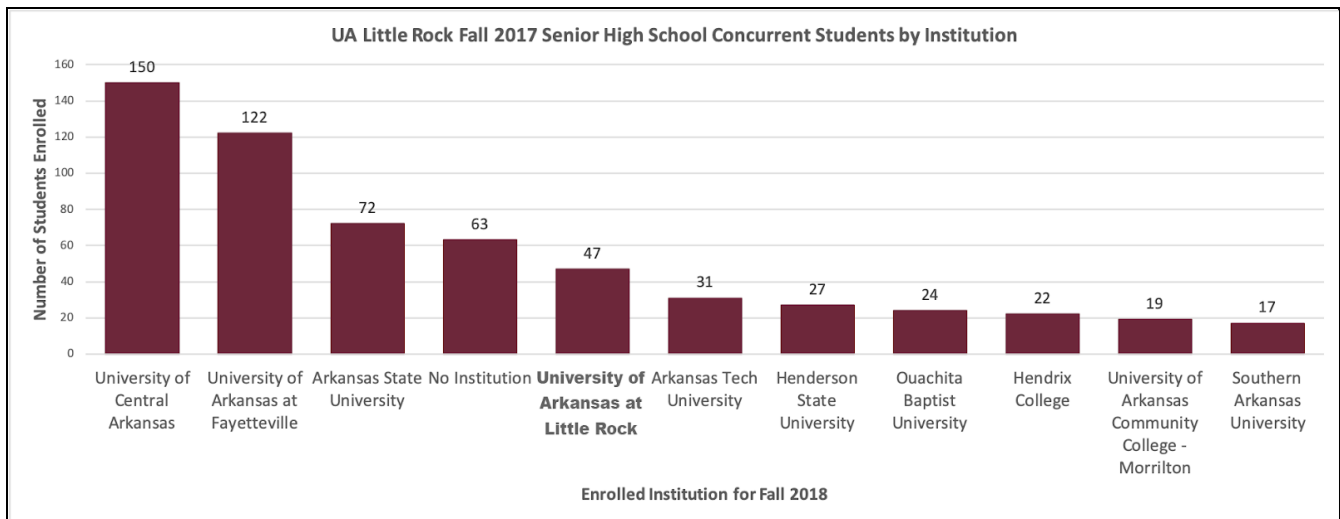
Catchment areas for all universities are growing all the time. Universities are competing for students in the backyards of other institutions, and geographic areas near a university can no longer be counted on for reliable enrollment.

Figure 15: Net Migration of Arkansas High School Students



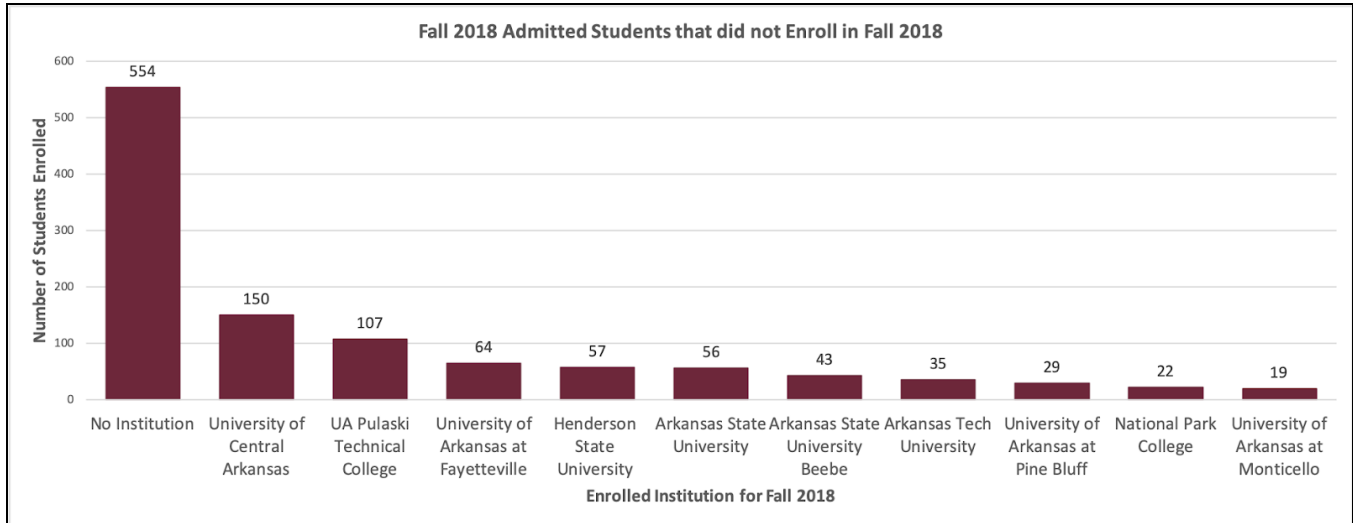
Source: *The New York Times* (August 2016). *The Great Out-of-State Migration: Where Students Go*. New York, NY.

Figure 16: Top institutions attended by UA Little Rock High School Concurrent Students



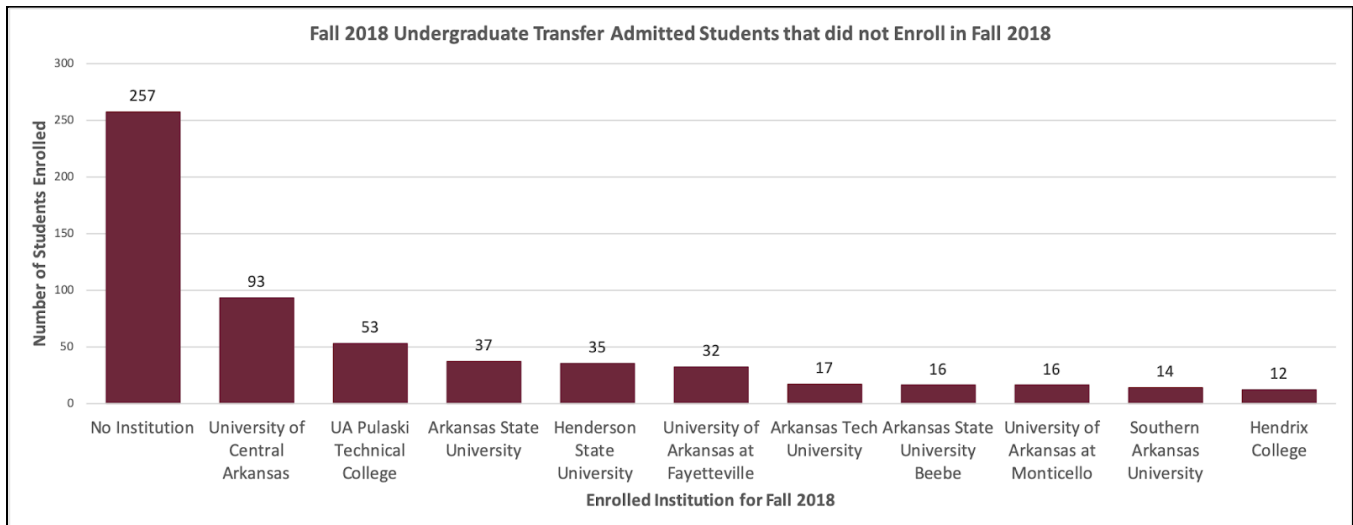
The chart displayed above is based on Fall 2017 Senior High School Concurrent Students. The results provide the top ten institutions that the Fall 2017 Senior High School Concurrent Students attended in Fall 2018.

Figure 17: Top institutions attended by undergraduates admitted to UA Little Rock



The chart displayed above is based on Fall 2018 Admitted Students that did not enroll in Fall 2018. The report includes undergraduate students only (excluding High School Concurrent and Non-degree seeking Students). The results are based on the top ten institutions that the Fall 2018 UA Little Rock Admitted Students attended.

Figure 18: Top institutions attended by admitted transfer students not enrolling at UA Little Rock



The chart displayed above is based on the Fall 2018 Undergraduate Transfer Admitted Students that did not enroll in Fall 2018. The results provide the top ten institutions that the Fall 2018 Undergraduate Transfer Admitted Students attended in Fall 2018.

Legacy Onboarding Practices

Two departments integral to onboarding new students are Admissions and Financial Aid & Scholarships. Inefficiencies were identified in both areas and are being systematically improved, including new leadership in each department. The departments are now actively reviewing and improving processes and procedures that negatively impact student onboarding, in addition to conducting informal assessments that lead to continuous improvements.

Each year, thousands of students list UA Little Rock on their FAFSA submission. Many of those students never apply for admission to UA Little Rock. Through a new partnership between Admissions and Financial Aid, UA Little Rock will begin reaching out to those students with personalized letters to help guide them through the admissions process.

Many of the processes that Financial Aid has practiced lately have proven to be inefficient and outdated. That includes manual processes to award scholarships and a customer service plan that makes it difficult for staff to maintain a consistent message toward students who visit the office. Turnover in Financial Aid personnel caused the office to fall behind in automating core processes. The failure to leverage available technology has caused an unnecessary reliance on manual processes that have slowed financial aid awarding and packaging.

Until recently, a student could visit Financial Aid on three different days and meet with three different advisors. This has led to students getting conflicting information that makes it difficult for students to navigate an already complicated financial aid process. Improving this process will allow students to meet with one advisor and get a consistent message each time the student contacts the office. Also contributing to the conflicting information is a lack of training and professional development for the financial aid advisors. Professional development is being provided, which will improve service capabilities and reduce processing times.

In a well functioning office, financial aid would stay a step ahead of students. Students would be admitted and awarded their aid before they feel the need to inquire as to the status. These issues have led to student onboarding challenges. Goal 2 addresses these deficiencies with strategies to improve financial aid processing and customer service.

Goal 1: Improve Marketing & Digital Outreach

Implement strategic digital marketing and communication initiatives to support enrollment goals and enhance UA Little Rock's reputation.

With enrollment declining for several years, it is apparent that new marketing and communications strategies should be considered that will better position the university for success in growing enrollment and enhancing its brand reputation among target audiences. The Office of Communications and Marketing has developed and implemented a comprehensive strategic marketing and communications plan that includes the objectives and strategies summarized below. The strategies included take into account the drastic changes in the way media is consumed today, compared to the past several years among our target audiences.

Objective 1: Conduct branding study and create new brand messaging platform that is authentic, compelling, and concise by January 20, 2020.

The Office of Communications and Marketing has recently completed a branding study resulting in the creation of a new messaging and branding platform. This new platform will form the baseline for a compelling, consistent message to be distributed across all owned, earned, and paid media channels. The institution will also identify five *pillars* that will be promoted in order to assist with elevating our institutional reputation. Pillars can be specific academic programs, a college, a school, or a center that has proven to be highly valuable to UA Little Rock and its constituents. The new brand launch will take place in January 2020.

Strategies

Discover (Completed August/September/October 2019)

- Conduct interviews and focus groups with internal and external stakeholders to learn about our distinctive competencies through storytelling
- Review data obtained during the discovery phase
- Develop communications and marketing plan (tactics/dates/budget)

Define (Completed November 2019)

- Messaging strategy
- Tone and personality
- Strategy refinement

Test (In Process)

- Share message concepts with cabinet, deans, and focus group participants for feedback and buy-in.
- Adjust message concepts if needed

Create (December 2019)

- Strategy to rollout new messaging
- Develop design elements to support the new messaging
- Create messaging guidelines and examples of best practices

Quantitative Research (December 2019)

- We will conduct an online survey in central Arkansas to get a baseline understanding of our brand perception. This will allow us to compare to future perceptions to evaluate the success of new brand messaging.

Rollout (January 2020)

- Launch communications and marketing plan (tactics/dates/budget) that will best strengthen the image of the university and elevate awareness of key messages
- Conduct internal brand ambassador training sessions that introduce the new messaging platform and review design elements and best practices
- Celebrate on campus with students, staff, and faculty

Objective 2: Increase brand awareness and enhance UA Little Rock's reputation. Increase positive brand sentiment by more than 30% by fall 2021.

Measurably increase brand awareness and enhance the institution's reputation by fall 2021. The strategies listed below will also directly support the institution's efforts to increase enrollment. The quantitative research discussed above will provide a baseline measurement of current brand perception.

Strategies

- Integrate new brand messaging into all marketing collateral and content such as social media, news articles, etc. to ensure consistent messaging
- Create messaging and ads for different prospective student personas based on admissions data and goals
- Create specific messaging and ads for other external audiences
- Modify marketing mix and ensure that our message is targeted to the right audience at the right time
 - More digital channels, less traditional channels such as print and television
 - Reduce ad spend on television and print media by 50%
 - New channels include YouTube, Streaming Media (non-skippable), Linked In (graduate programs), etc.
 - Organic social media stories in both written and video form on LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.
 - Increase ad spend on existing digital channels such as Google AdWords, etc.
- Train staff and faculty, and external constituents (brand ambassadors) on how to integrate new brand messaging into storytelling
- Conduct qualitative and quantitative brand perception surveys in 2021

Objective 3: Increase unique external monthly visits to ualr.edu/academics 30% by June 2020, and increase completed RFIs 20% by June 2020.

During the past several months, the web team in Communications and Marketing redesigned the entire academic programs section of the university website. This process ensures that program information is displayed consistently across all colleges, with clearly stated requirements and benefits for prospective students. All program pages include a request for information (RFI) form that is short and simple and is optimized to generate form completions. The pages have been live for several months, and all necessary modifications have been made. Now is the time to aggressively increase traffic to these pages in order to generate a higher number of RFIs, applications, and enrolled students.

Strategies (In addition to the strategies discussed in Objective 2 above)

- Conduct SEO audit on website and make necessary adjustments to content, page title tags, and alt-image tags, etc. to improve page positions on Google organic search
- Ensure that all advertising messaging is consistent with the landing page reference in ads
- Ensure that all landing pages are relevant to the audience targeted if pages are campaign specific, such as a military focused campaign

Objective 4: Implement return on investment measurement processes.

Implement return on investment measurement processes allowing for best in class measurement of success of all initiatives by June 2020. Setting up infrastructure and processes to allow for ROI measurement is imperative. This will allow the communications and marketing team as well as Admissions to know specifically what campaigns, ads, content, and images contributed to any particular student enrolling at UA Little Rock. Understanding attribution allows us to maximize return on investment.

For example, if we launch a campaign for graduate programs and place ads on Facebook, LinkedIn, The Democrat Gazette, Google Ad Words, Google Display Network and YouTube, we will be able to calculate not only what channel/source produced the highest ROI, but what specific ads performed best on what channel. This process then allows us to modify our ad spend based on specific data.

Strategies

- Train communications and marketing team as well as all university personnel who place online ads to add tracking variables to links provided to advertisers for ads placed.
 - Variables can include Campaign Name, Source, Ad Name, Keywords, and more.
 - Example url with hidden variables highlighted:
https://ualr.edu/academics/graduate?utm_source=DemGaz&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=GradSpring2020&utm_content=image-notrad-male
 - These links are not actually visible
- Use <https://ga-dev-tools.appspot.com/campaign-url-builder/> to build links for ads placed online.

- Add hidden fields in all RFIs to allow for the collection of the tracking variables to each prospective student

Goal 2: Improve Student Recruitment and Onboarding

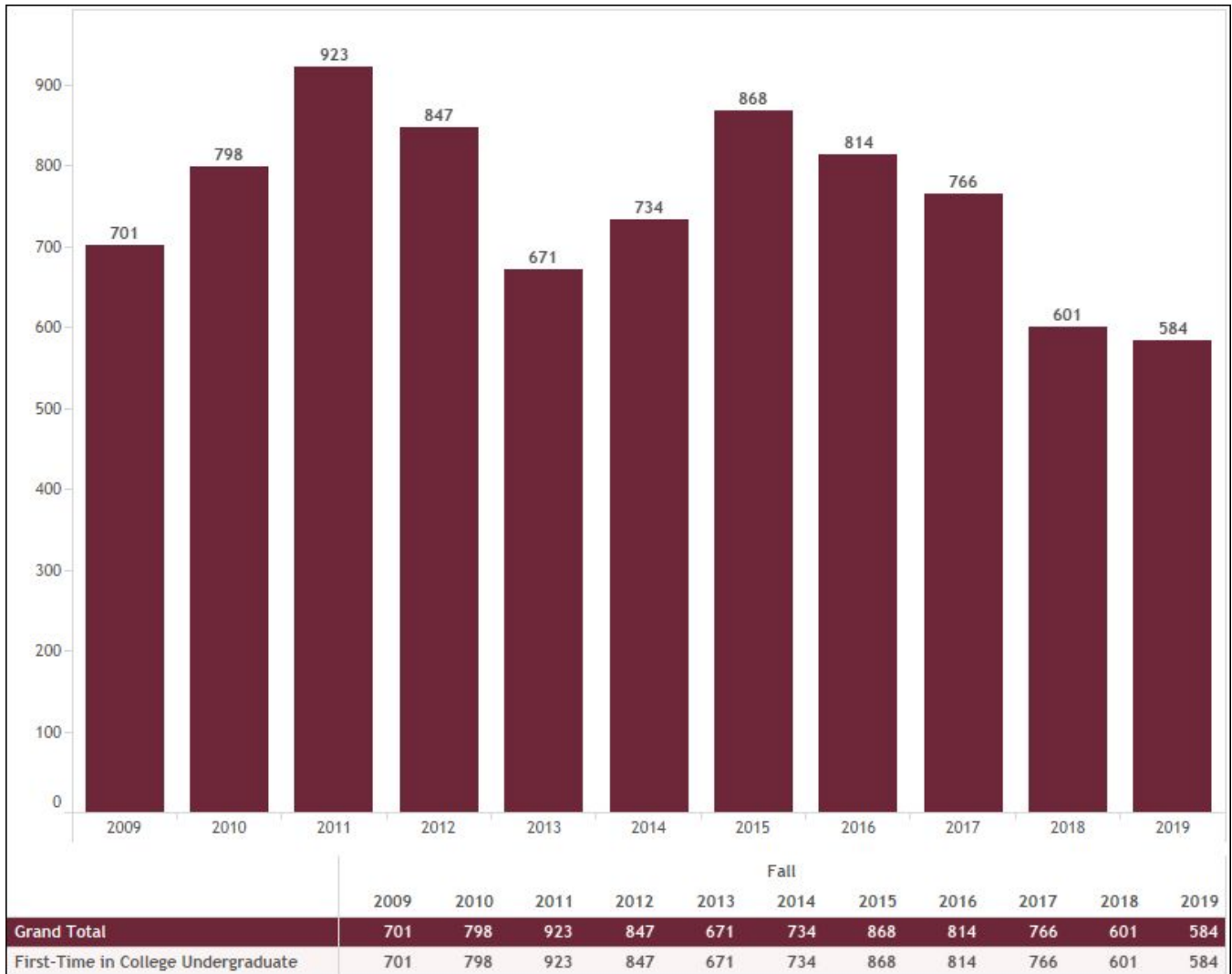
Increase the number of entering undergraduate and graduate students by developing targeted recruitment plans and re-envisioning onboarding processes.

Targeted Populations

New Freshmen

New freshmen are students who are entering their first year of college following high school graduation or successful completion of the GED. UA Little Rock attracts over 65% of our freshman class from central Arkansas. Due to this large population, many of our recruiting efforts will focus on area high schools and community partners. We will continue to build relationships in the community with area stakeholders. These relationships are important because they provide the opportunity to open doors within districts and schools for our recruitment staff to provide specific programming. Some of these opportunities include application days in which districts will let us work with groups of students at their schools. Schools issue passes for students to visit and work with recruiters, Admissions staff and Financial Aid staff to complete applications on provided computers, and learn about scholarships and other aid. By building these relationships from the top down we are also able to encourage districts to send buses to campus for specialized tours and programs. This top down approach enables UA Little Rock to forge relationships with the Directors of Counseling in each district which further opens access for recruiters.

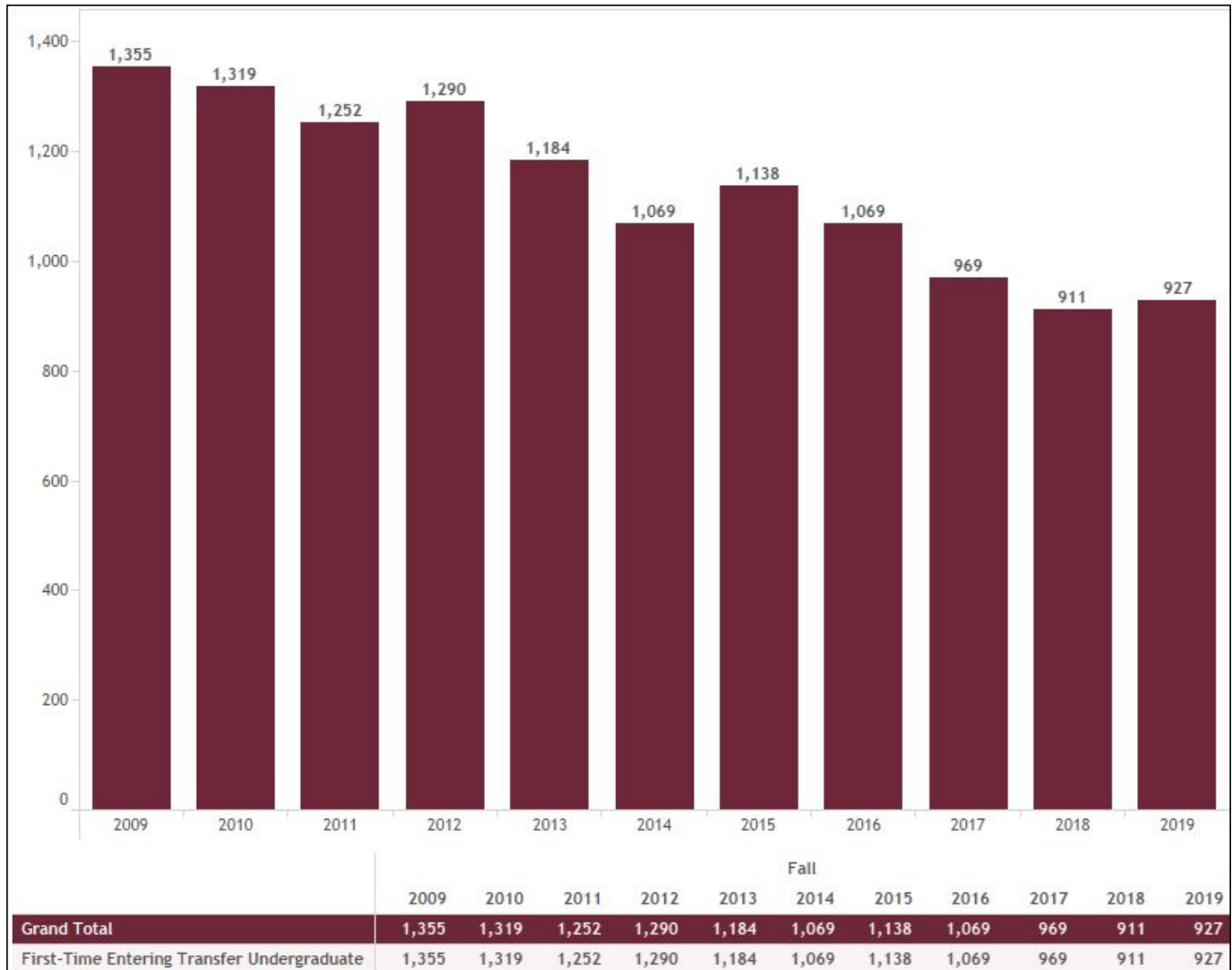
Figure 19: First-Time in College Undergraduate (New Freshmen)



Transfer Students (2- and 4-Year)

A transfer student is one who begins their college career at one institution, earns credits through completion of coursework, and then decides to transfer to a different school to finish their education, or take additional coursework. With this population equating to more than half of our student body, it is imperative that we implement targeted recruitment efforts to attract transfer students. One strategy that has been implemented is guaranteed admission for anyone transferring to UA Little Rock after receiving an Associate’s degree from their most recent accredited institution. Much like the new freshman strategy to enhance relationships with school districts, relationships are being enhanced with two year institutions. This provides UA Little Rock with more access to potential transfer students. For example, UA Pulaski Technical College (UA-PTC) agreed to help host Transfer events on their campus. These events will include information about UA Little Rock programs and opportunities as well as waived application fees and on the spot admissions and scholarships for eligible students. Admissions has recently hired a transfer-specific recruiter that will further help efforts.

Figure 20: First-Time Transfers (New Transfers)



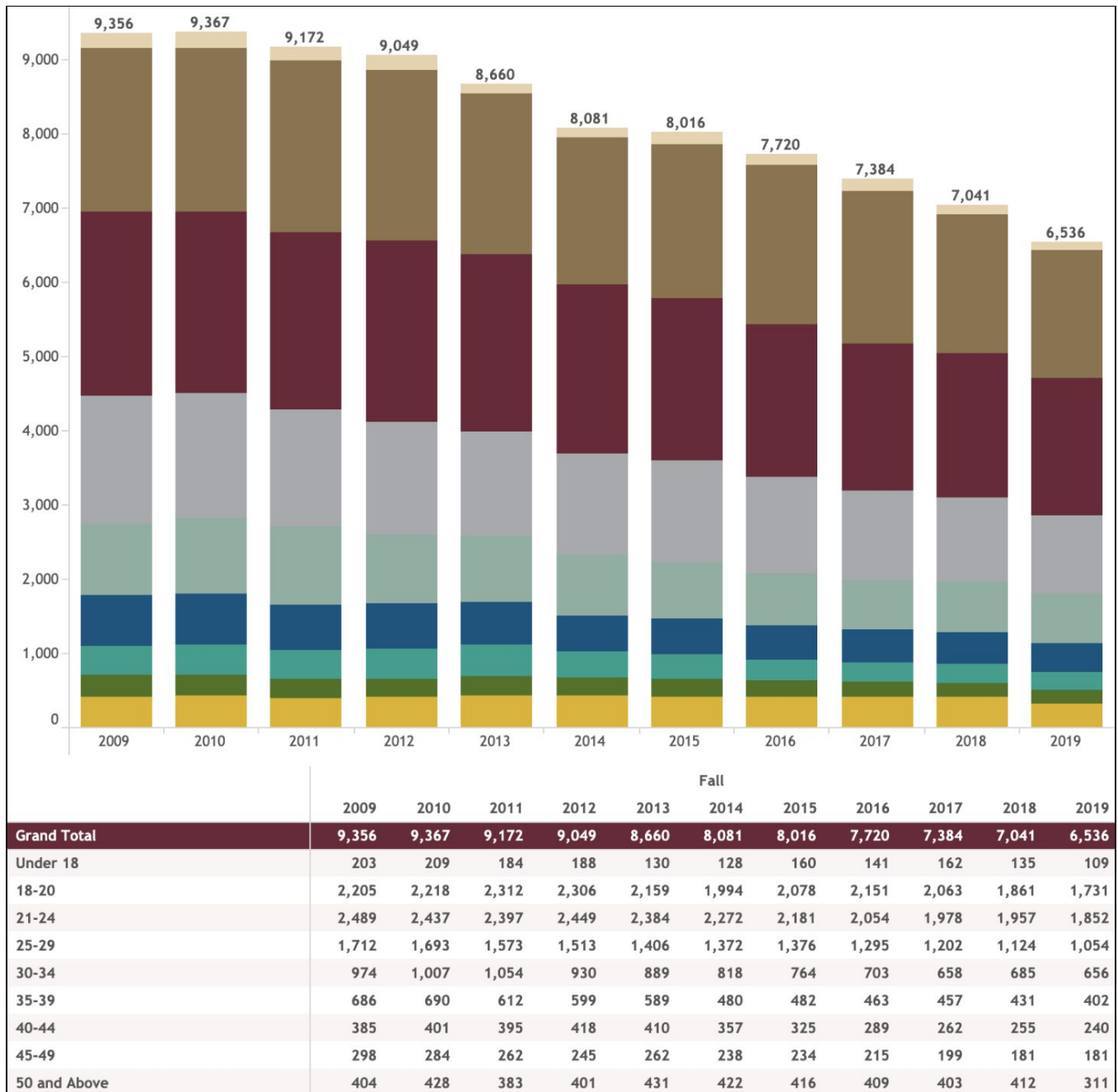
Non-Traditional Students

Non-traditional students bring life experiences that enrich our classrooms and student body. They help us achieve our mission to support students in their lifelong desire to learn. We welcome the student who did not finish a bachelor’s degree in the four years following a high school diploma, or has a late-blooming interest in beginning a new direction in higher education. Though limited support services are offered to students, more wrap-around supports are needed. This includes services to students balancing jobs and family and to active duty military members, veterans, and their families.

Admissions plans to enhance recruitment efforts with additional outreach in the community. Some examples include our recent partnerships with the Goodwill Excel Center and other nonprofits such as Our House and City Year. Admissions will also pursue avenues in local businesses, strategically

focusing on those business that match or pay tuition benefits. Enrollment is working with the Alumni Office to develop an alumni recruiting team that works with organizations and businesses that have an alumni connection. Recruitment events in the UA Little Rock Downtown space will focus on specific populations, including the business community. Community centers will also be a priority with recruiters and admissions staff participating in activities and outreach. This same type of involvement will be in area churches and places of worship. The potential to reach stop-out students with these types of activities is something worth pursuing and will be a focus for Admissions.

Figure 21: Undergraduates by Age Range (Excludes High School Concurrent)

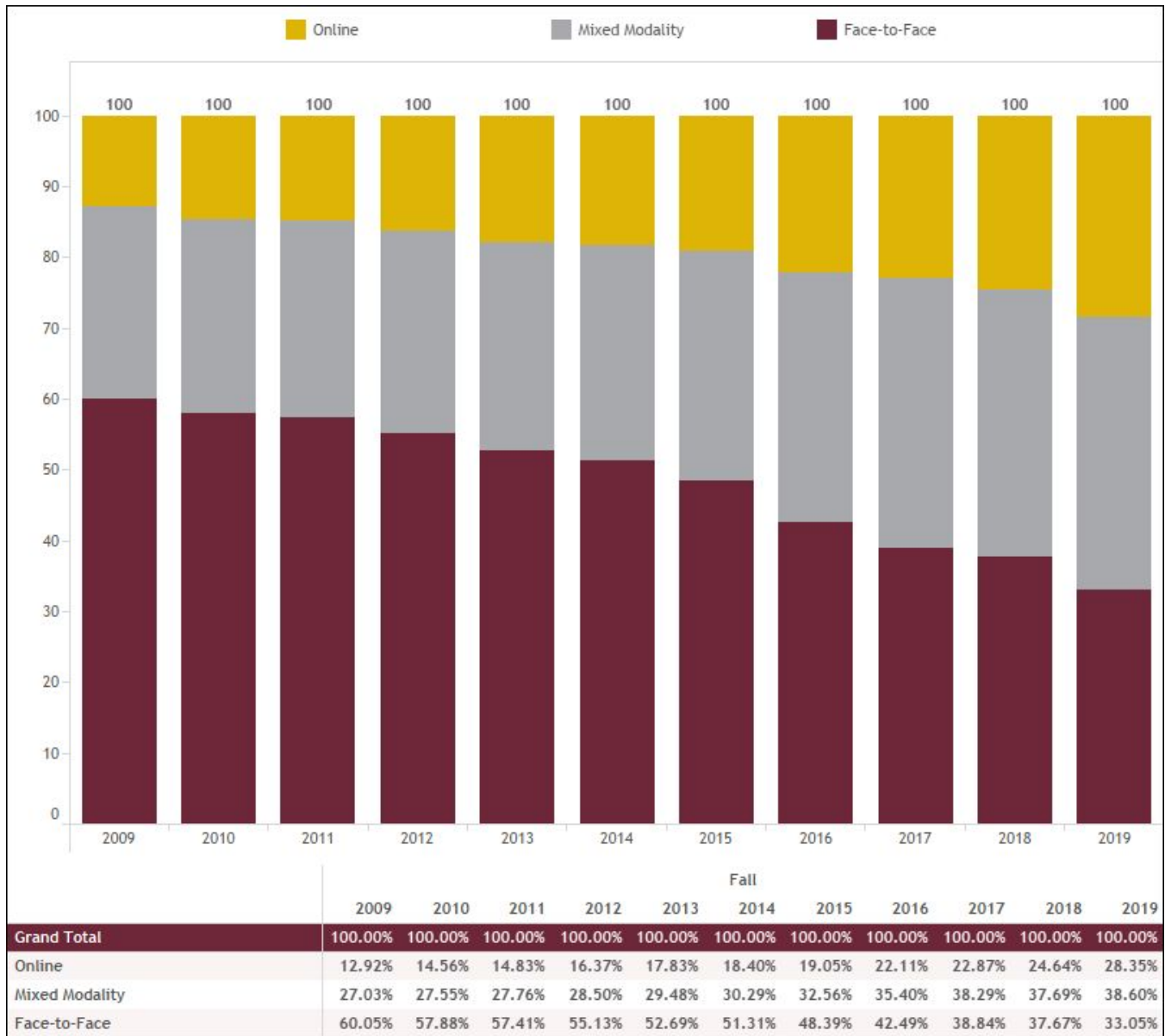


Online Learners

UA Little Rock is on the forefront of online course offerings and has continued to grow in the number of students seeking alternative learning modalities. The number of online-only students has increased to twenty-eight percent in fall 2019, and the number will continue to grow due to the number of students looking to begin or finish their degree on their terms. Part of the growth is in increasing enrollment in the Online Campus, which appeals to students both for the flexibility it offers and reduced cost. The number of fully online programs (doctoral, masters, bachelors, certificates, and minors) has grown from ten, in 2015, to fifty-seven in 2019.

In addition to eLearning's ongoing involvement with university-wide efforts on campus, such as Discover and Explore events, eLearning works closely with departments to coordinate recruitment campaigns (e.g., to reach out to students who have withdrawn or stopped out of F2F programs) and has been planning with Student Affairs for campaigns focusing on students from community colleges and law enforcement personnel requiring education for career advancement. eLearning recently collaborated with Admissions to waive the application fee for fully online students during National Distance Learning Week.

Figure 22: Undergraduate F2F, Online, and Mixed Modality Student Distribution

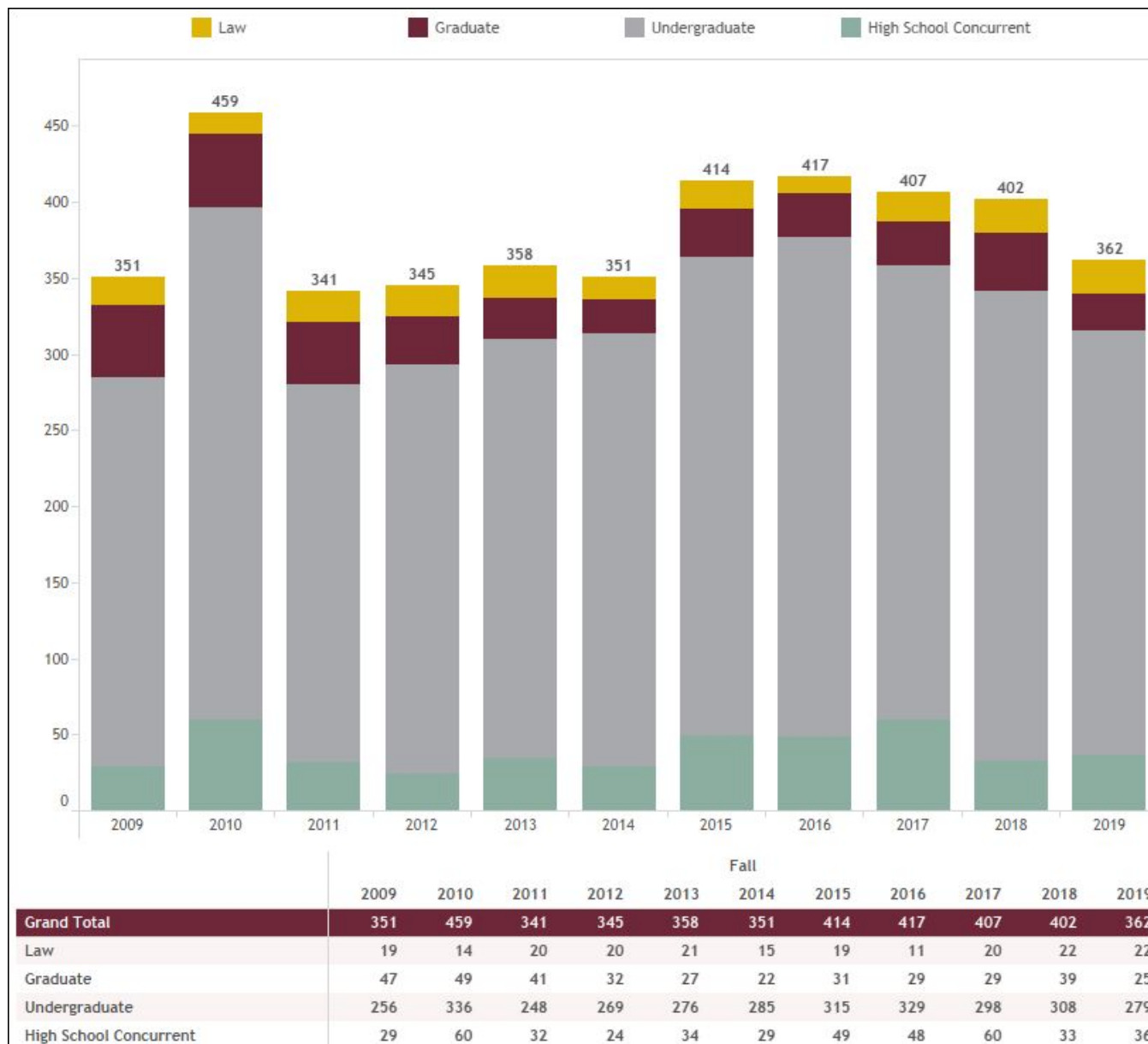


Hispanic/Latinx Students

UA Little Rock is a diverse campus and continues to recruit and enroll students of Hispanic and Latinx backgrounds. This is a growing population in Arkansas and there will be a continued rise in Hispanic/Latinx high school graduates. UA Little Rock has been designated a Latino Destination Campus by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and takes seriously its commitment to this growing population. Recruitment efforts will focus on coordinating efforts with university units (e.g., Communications and Marketing, eLearning, and TRIO and others) and external partners (e.g., Hispanic-Latino Initiatives, Mexican Consulate, LULAC, and community groups). Future efforts should

consider enhancing bi-lingual services offered in the university's business offices, especially those related to on-boarding and supporting students.

Figure 23: Hispanic Student Headcount by Student Level



International Students

Many international students are looking to study at an institution outside their home country. Enrollment has been on the decline over the last couple of years for this population of students. Admissions and International Student Services are working together to recruit and admit international students by focusing on our online presence, communication, and marketing. A recent collaboration between the

Office of Admissions, Office of International Student Services, the Graduate School, and the Office of Communications and Marketing enabled UA Little Rock to purchase a pilot of Keystone International, which is a third party marketing tool designed to market UA Little Rock programs and degrees within specific countries in their languages. This pilot program will run November 2019 through November 2020. Countries represented in this pilot include China, Germany, India, Japan and the United Arab Emirates, among others.

Figure 24: International Students by Student Level

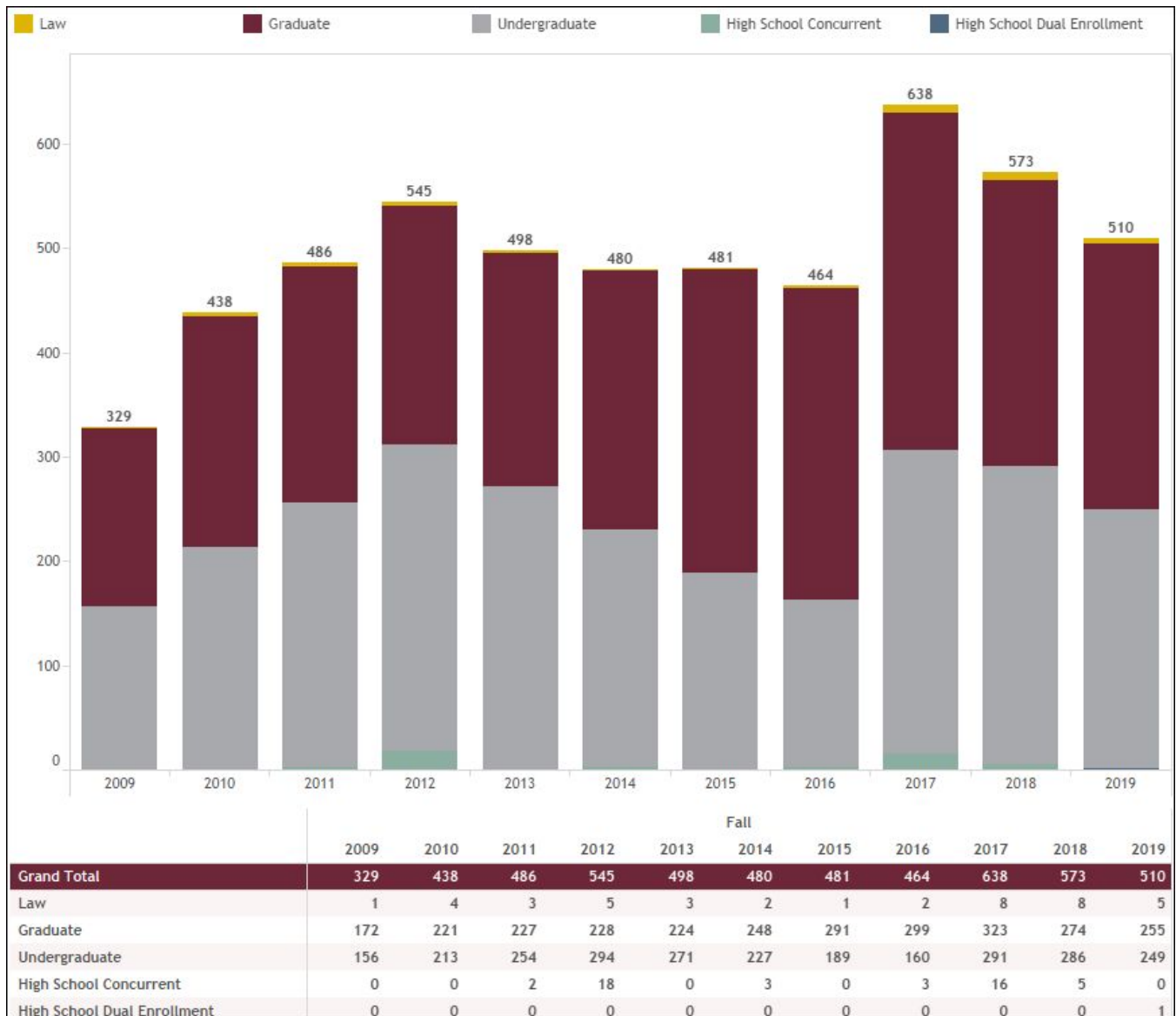


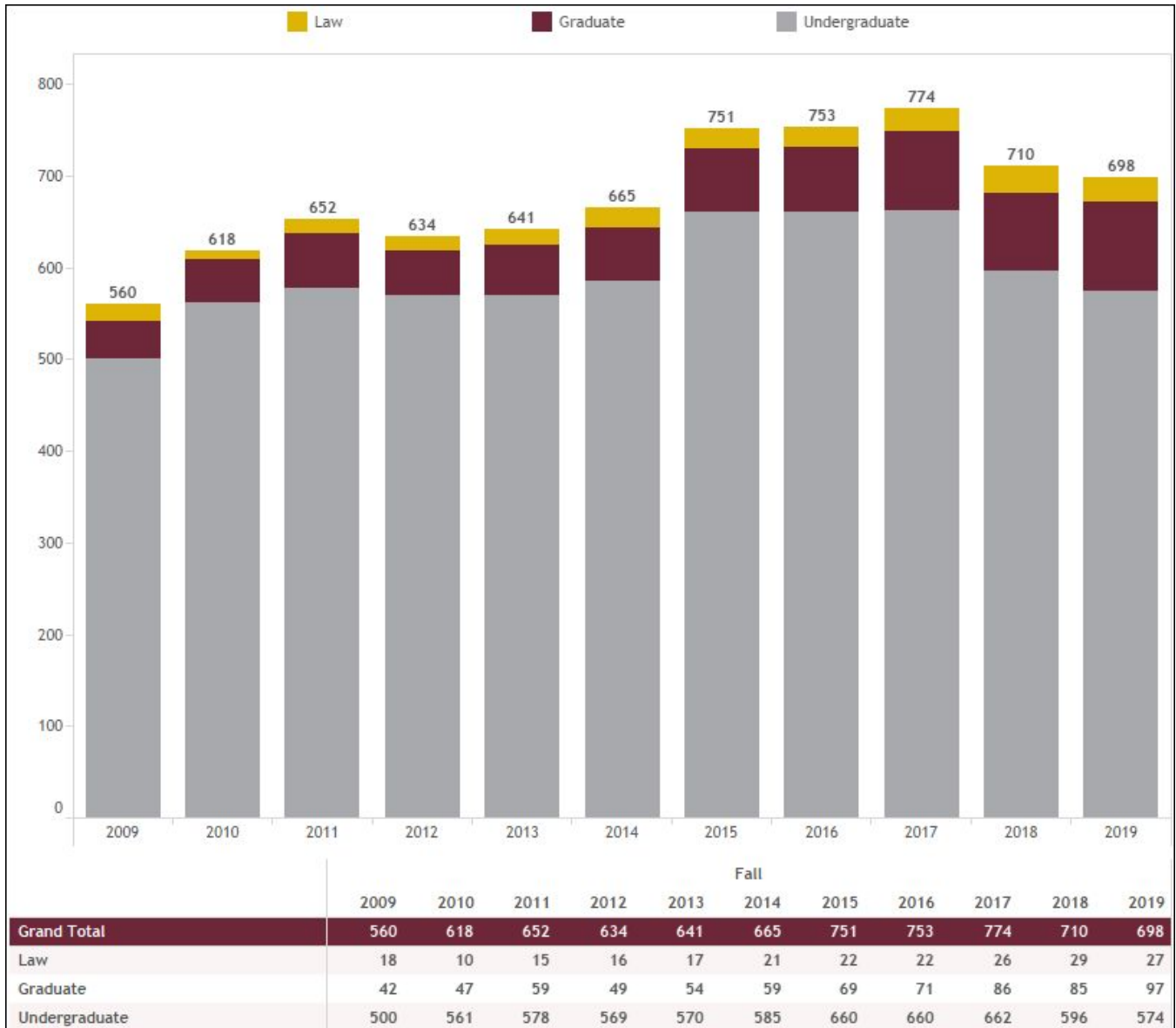
Figure 25: International Students by Country



Military Affiliates

UA Little Rock received the Purple Heart University designation in 2016 and is proud to serve over 700 Active Duty, Reservists, National Guard members, Veterans, and their family members. UA Little Rock is ideally situated near both the Little Rock Air Force Base and the Arkansas National Guard post at Camp Robinson. Developing relationships with on base personnel is key to engaging this large population. A military-specific recruiter will be hired to help with this process. The Office of Military Student Success is collaborating with eLearning and the Office of Communications and Marketing to create a marketing plan for military members focusing on the phrase *Start Here, Finish Here* for our military students who are active duty and may be deployed. A Little Rock Air Force Base recruitment plan was developed that includes promotion of our Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative (AU-ABC) between Air University and UA Little Rock. UA Little Rock is the only Arkansas school that is a Community College of the Air Force General Education Mobile (GEM) designated school. This allows UA Little Rock to offer general education courses online for Air Force personnel who want to complete their degree requirements. Arkansas National Guard in summer 2019 began the GOLD Officers Training Program with a designated Army recruiter. This program recruits students who want to become Army officers in the Arkansas National Guard. In exchange for their commitment, the Arkansas National Guard through the ROTC Minuteman Scholarship pays their tuition to UA Little Rock. Admissions works with the GOLD program officer to help recruit potential students.

Figure 26: Military Affiliates by Student Level



Graduate Students

Graduate students are a critical part of the UA Little Rock campus identity, especially given our relatively large proportion of graduate students (eighteen percent). In addition, our location in the heart of the state’s government, business, education, and health care sectors positions us to effectively recruit working professionals who need to reskill or upskill into our graduate programs. Results from a recent capacity survey along with workforce demands will help identify specific programs to market to working professionals in the central Arkansas region.

In addition to working professionals, international students are vital to the success and vitality of our graduate programs. As mentioned above, the Graduate School collaborated with Student Affairs and

Communications and Marketing to purchase Keystone International, which is a third party marketing tool designed to market UA Little Rock programs and degrees within specific countries in their languages.

Re-envisioned On-Boarding Processes

Admissions & Recruitment

Admissions and Recruitment began to reevaluate processes for recruitment and onboarding as soon as new leadership was installed. The application processing time has decreased dramatically to students being decisioned within 24-48 hours of a completed application. During peak times, all admissions and recruitment staff are working together to review and approve applications. Cross training provided by admissions staff for recruiters as well as customer service and marketing staff has resulted in quick application decisions even during times of increased volume.

Admissions increased the number of names purchased from test providers from approximately 18,000 to 50,000. This is clearly a resource that was underutilized prior to 2018. UA Little Rock now has access to more than double the contacts for high school juniors and seniors in Arkansas and contiguous states. The goal is to increase this purchase number by another 25,000 in the next year. These names are uploaded into the current CRM-Recruit software.

Publications have been updated and their print production was increased. This includes everything from inquiry postcards to view books to pennants. Publications are mailed to names and addresses in CRM-Recruit as well as passed out by recruiters and others during visits, events, and college fairs. Sticker sheets are another new addition that have proven to be extremely popular. These sticker sheets have admissions information on the front (phone number, website, email and social media information) as well as instructions to apply for admission and for scheduling a campus tour. The number of sticker sheets ordered will increase due to their popularity this recruiting season. Freshmen and Transfer students have separate admit packets that are new. These packets are personalized for each student and also include their student ID, net ID, UA Little Rock email address, start term, student type, documents needed, instructions for logging into BOSS, Campus Living information, and scholarship and financial aid information as well as instructions to sign up for orientation. Admit packets will be further updated to include Trojan pieces (lanyards, stickers, etc). Thank you cards for students who attend events, campus tours, school visits and other experiences will be hand written by recruiters to help personalize communication with prospective students.

Recruiters have recently worked to revamp the campus tour program. They are working to create a more interactive and engaging experience for our on campus visitors. With a new partnership with Athletics, Maximus, our Trojan mascot, has been available for tour groups, orientation, and other recruitment activities. The partnership with Athletics will continue to grow as new opportunities become available.

SLATE, a student recruitment management tool, is being considered to replace the existing student recruit management software. The existing software is problematic for a variety of reasons, such as the technical issues of incompatibility with student information systems. Admissions Counselors currently must double enter information between systems. This is time consuming and increases the time per application review as well as the chances of human error. As we continue to innovate our recruitment process we must also provide IT that complements and streamlines our application processing to keep up with demand. It is imperative that we find technology that offers ease of use and quick communication across all systems.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Financial Aid & Scholarships is an integral part of the student onboarding and retention process for students at UA Little Rock. As a result, it is imperative that we continually evaluate our processes and put forth a plan to grow and improve so we can continue serving our students in the best possible manner.

Financial Aid & Scholarships has recently recommitted itself to training and professional development. It is clear that there has been a lack of training involving federal and state financial aid programs in the past and a renewed emphasis on training and developing staff will improve the efficiency of the office, which will in turn improve the experience of the students. The state aid training sessions will also be made available to other departments within Student Affairs because these staff members are regularly questioned by students and parents about financial aid. It is imperative that staff are equipped with the tools they need to answer questions accurately and timely.

Financial Aid is in the initial planning stages of a new customer service model. Each Financial Aid Adviser will be in charge of a specific set of students based on students' last names. One advisor would have all students whose last name starts with A-E and so on. This way students know which advisor to see, they can develop trust with their advisor, and they can get a consistent message each time they visit the office. This will also help us expedite the verification process for federal financial aid with the ultimate goal of financial aid packaging to be completed within 24 hours of the student completing their requirements and submitting required documentation.

The department has implemented BlackBaud Award Management to streamline scholarship awarding. As we continue to implement all pieces of the product all departments and colleges campus-wide will be able to utilize the program to award departmental scholarships. The ultimate goal is to be able to award all institutional and private scholarships through TrojanSmart within the next 18 months. This will include all scholarships offered by the UA Little Rock Scholarships office as well as scholarships offered by individual colleges. This timeline could move up, depending on what issues are discovered during implementation. This will allow departments to better manage the entire scholarship awarding process, including the applications, awarding of scholarships, and post-acceptance requirements.

Involvement of Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff are an integral part of recruitment, and to this end it is imperative that efforts are coordinated.

The office continues to roll out a Campus Partners Liaisons with key areas across campus such as the College of Business; Engineering and Information Technology; College of Social Science and Communications; College of Education and Health Professions; College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences; Campus Living; DSC; Military Student Success Center; Financial Aid; Athletics; TRIO; CWDSA; Donaghey Scholars; CLC; UA Little Rock Online; Student Experience Center; Alumni and Development; Student Assistance and Transition Center; TAASC; High School Concurrent Office; Children International; and International Student Services. This collaboration is mutually beneficial to all areas with the intent of streamlining communication between the areas and prospective students, identifying and coordinating recruitment activities across campus, and assisting in building stronger relationships within the university. This area will be a continued focus in order to ensure that campus partners know about upcoming recruitment events.

The Office of Admissions provides weekly reports to all five colleges that lists prospective students who were admitted the previous week, along with their contact information and areas of interest. The intent is to have these students contacted by a faculty or staff member from their academic area of interest to discuss majors, career opportunities, exciting news from their college, as well as coursework and research opportunities if applicable. This helps keep the students engaged and increases the yield from admitted to enrolled.

The development of academic area content for communication plans is of the utmost significance in student recruitment. Exciting, new, and up-to-date content throughout the recruitment process is needed to keep prospective students' attention and for ongoing communication. Students, especially non-traditional, expect more than information on the university as a whole. Students seek details on academic content, major opportunities, and job placement. In order to provide this level of content, a partnership should continue growing between academic and non-academic units involved in the recruitment of students. Academic content and communication plans should also be re-visited and addressed in the SEMP once the current academic planning process is complete. This might include creative and just-in-time opportunities afforded through Extended Education and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) initiatives to award credit to students who have workplace experience and domain knowledge.

To assist in further linkages between academic units and the Office of Admissions, a *Request a Recruiter* website will be launched. *Request a Recruiter* will allow on-campus partners to request that a recruiter participate in events that will be attended by prospective students. This will be a new way to invite a recruiter to both on- and off-campus events. *Request a Recruiter* will contain the recruitment calendar and dates of recruitment events.

Further opportunities for faculty and staff involvement include participation in on-campus events, including campus tours, Discover UA Little Rock, Explore, Experience, Transfer Fridays, Transformation, Counselors Luncheon, Transfer Receptions, and Saturday Spotlight. These events would not be successful without the inclusion of academic departments and colleges. Involvement includes, but is not limited to, meeting with prospective students on campus tours, volunteering to staff tables and tents at Discover, and providing an engaging lecture for Experience days. Other involvement includes presenting to group tours at events as well as showcasing hands-on labs and experiences on campus such as the Emerging Analytics Center and Nursing Simulation Hospital.

Goal 2 Objectives and Strategies

Goal 2: Increase the number of entering undergraduate and graduate students by developing targeted recruitment plans and re-envisioning onboarding processes.

General Goal 2 Strategies

Recent analysis in the Division of Student Affairs have revealed a number of opportunities that will assist in the obtainment of multiple objectives in goal two. These strategies are applicable to multiple objectives; are in various stages of development, and have already shown promising signs of success. In order to reduce duplication of strategies across the objectives, general strategies are provided here.

- Cross-train between staff in Financial Aid & Scholarships and Admissions and Recruitment in order to leverage all available staff resources during peak and non-peak processing times.
- Share data between Financial Aid & Scholarships and Admissions and Recruitment as permissible under applicable laws and regulations in order to maximum the outreach to prospective students as well as the yield from admitted to enrolled students.
- Lead among peer universities in the processing of financial aid, targeting a 24-hour turnaround of federal aid and a 12-hour turnaround during peak processing. This will involve retooling our financial aid processes and incorporating the use of modern financial aid technologies.
- Reduce the turnaround time for awarding and processing scholarships by a) growing the scholarship staff to three, b) automating the exchange of data between the scholarship software and the student information system, and c) removing or reducing self-imposed barriers, such as moving from handwritten to electronic student signatures on scholarship thank you letters.
- Re-develop the Financial Aid and Scholarships website with a focus on student and guardian friendliness and mobile-device readiness. Include a personalizable cost of attendance calculator.
- Procure technology necessary to offer application days at both traditional (e.g, high schools and community colleges) and non-traditional (e.g., churches, not-for-profits, companies, etc.) locales. This will involve procuring the technology (carts, laptops, wireless cards, etc.) necessary to support on-the-spot applications.

- Expand recruitment capabilities into onboarding units (e.g., International, Intensive English Language Program, Military Student Success). Personnel in these areas will play a critical role in the recruitment of students applicable to their service area.
- Enhance prospective student communication plan to include more in-depth content from the academic areas, birthday messages, holiday messages, etc.
- Create a more robust social media presence using Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram. This will be used to promote events, application days, exciting news, academic content, deadlines, etc.
- Cross-train between Admissions & Recruitment and related onboarding units (e.g., International, Intensive English Language Program, Military Student Success). Staff in the related onboarding units will serve as a back-up admission counselors and Financial Aid advisors, ensuring an improved processing time for applications and financial aid.
- Increase data processing and analytical capabilities within the onboarding units, focusing first on Financial Aid and Scholarships, then Admissions & Recruitment, and finally related onboarding units. Measureable and accessible quality performance indicators are needed to inform decisions and ensure continuous improvement. There is also a need to automate and remove inefficiencies in processing of student data.
- Launch a student referral system (Trojan Referral) by which individuals can share the contact information for potential students. This information will be loaded into the university's recruitment management platform.
- Launch a recruitment event system (Request a Recruiter) by which individuals will submit details for events where a recruiter is needed. This should also include the means by which faculty and staff can offer to participate in recruitment events.
- Hire all budgeted positions for the onboarding units (Admissions & Recruitment and Financial Aid & Scholarships) and advocate for the immediate re-hiring when vacancies become available.
- Implement Campus Partners Liaisons with key areas across campus such as the Colleges, Campus Living, DSC, Military Student Success Center, Financial Aid, Athletics, TRIO, CWDSA, Donaghey Scholars, CLC, UA Little Rock Online, Student Experience Center, Alumni and Development, Student Orientation and Transitions, TAASC, Children's International, and International Student Services.
- Partner with Athletics to provide materials to visitors at athletic events. This includes digital and print materials available at the Jack T. Stephens Center.
- Continue to develop Orientation programming for new incoming freshmen and new incoming transfer students to help build a sense of community. Seamlessly advise new students and introduce them to Trojan Technology and business offices during orientation.

- Increase the number of touch points with prospective students via phone, text, and email. For example, personal invites to events, admitted but not enrolled, admitted but not registered for orientation, not admitted because of missing credentials, mailing of inquiry postcards, search pieces, completed requests for information, etc.
- Contract with the National Research Center for College and University Admissions for our digital marketing, lead generation, and for geo-fencing strategies. Increase our digital and geo-fencing scope to include entire travel season (fairs and visits). This includes pop-up ads on Facebook, Amazon, Google, Yahoo, and Snapchat. This initiative is paid for with the budget from the Office of Admissions.
- Partner with Academic Affairs, in accordance with the academic plan, to market and recruit to traditional and non-traditional students. This includes utilization of Extended Education and exploration of opportunities through the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) initiative.

Objective 1: Increase the number of new undergraduate freshmen by 40% (818 students)

Strategies

- Implement application days at high school visits and other applicable locations in order to admit and scholarship students in one setting with waive application fees. Eligible students should leave the meeting with an admit decision as well as a scholarship offer.
- Revamp recruitment materials for new freshmen, focusing on the elements identified Goal 2.
- Increase the purchasing of names from test providers from approximately 18,000 to 50,000 or more.
- Strategically re-allocate scholarships in order to increase return on investment. Specifically, attempt to reallocate high school concurrent scholarships to entering freshmen and (and transfer) scholarships.
- Develop targeted recruitment plans for selected freshmen populations and avenues: Hispanic/Latinx, Military, Online, Home and Private School, Non-for-Profits and Public Service Organizations, and Non-Traditional.
- Create and implement a packet to be mailed to all freshman admits that includes admit letter, congratulatory letter from the Chancellor, resource guide, selfie banner, and swag as well as a follow-up letter from the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs with info on key business offices, orientation process, and student organizations/campus life opportunities, etc.
- Increase the number of missing credential e-mails coming out of CRM-Recruit from one to every four weeks until received.

- Increase number of community events attended. These include church services and events as well as community fairs, expos, and engagement opportunities.
- Organize and execute nine on-campus prospective student days for high school seniors and juniors, as well as freshmen.
- Develop and implement a communication plan for high school concurrent students to apply and enroll at UA Little Rock.
- Continue to build relationships and work with superintendents, principles, and high school counselors to ensure productive high school visits for recruiters, as well as on campus visits.
- Coordinate and execute an annual High School Counselors Luncheon. Invite counselors to campus for lunch, give University updates, distribute their student profiles, and present a stackable scholarship for counselors to award to an admissible student of their choice.

Objective 2: Increase the number of new undergraduate transfer students by 15% (1,066 students) by fall 2024.

Strategies

- Implement application days at community colleges in order to admit and scholarship students in one setting with waived application fees. Eligible students should leave the meeting with an admit decision as well as a scholarship offer.
- Begin offering a spring transfer student scholarship. Previously, scholarships are only available to transfer students admitted in the fall term.
- Create and implement a packet to be mailed to all transfer admits that includes admit letter, congratulatory letter from the Chancellor, resource guide, selfie banner, and swag as well as a follow-up letter from the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs with info on key business offices, orientation process, and student organizations/campus life opportunities, etc.
- Obtain graduation lists (or lists of anticipated graduates) from two-year institutions and use that information for transfer recruiting purposes.
- Increase the number of missing credential e-mails coming out of Recruit from 1 to every 4 weeks until received.
- Increase number of community events attended.
- Organize and execute seven on campus transfer events during the fall and spring semesters (Transfer Fridays, Transformation, Transfer Receptions at various locations, and Saturday Spotlight tours).

- Enhance prospective student communication plan to include more in-depth content from the academic areas, birthday messages, holiday messages, etc.
- Use technology to create application and admit days in non-traditional venues such as community centers, churches, non profit organizations and businesses. This technology will include not only laptops, but also hotspots so applications can be completed and students admitted on the spot.
- Begin recruitment efforts in area churches, businesses, community centers, and organizations to better engage non-traditional students.
- Continue to build relationships and work with two-year school administrators to ensure productive 2-year school visits for recruiters, as well as on campus visits.
- Partner with 2-year schools--especially those in central Arkansas--to create a pathway for potential students to visit the campus and participate in on-campus events.
- Improve accessibility to existing transfer course equivalencies to help prospective students understand how their credits will transfer, by leveraging existing IT resources to create a more user-friendly interface for the Transfer Equivalency Guide.

Objective 3: Re-enroll an increasing percentage of undergraduate students who have withdrawn or stopped-out prior to obtaining a credential.

Strategies

- Develop a data-informed understanding of stop-outs and partner with retention initiatives to help re-engage students who have stopped between one and three years.
- For students who have stopped out three or more years, partner with a third-party company to re-engage these students. UA Little Rock has a high percent of students who stop-out and never re-enroll at UA Little Rock or another higher education institution (according to the National Student Clearinghouse.) A third-party provider is often used by universities to outreach to long-term stopouts and re-engage them in a degree plan. This plan should be based on the ability of a third party to successfully re-enroll students whereby the third-party is compensated based on the number of long-term stop-outs that re-enroll.
- Reach out to current students who may need financial help to offer assistance (examples of current programs doing this are CSSC-The Last Mile Scholarship as well as the Rhetoric and Writing Department who contacts their majors who may be in distress.)

Objective 4: Increase the number of new graduate students by 20% (433 students) by fall 2024.

Strategies

- Improve the effectiveness of graduate program recruiting by providing a toolkit for program coordinators including on-demand current lists of prospects, bulk emailing options, and scripts for effective recruiting messages.
- Develop a targeted graduate recruitment plan that focuses on high need areas with capacity for growth such as education, business, and social work.
- Create a more robust presence on LinkedIn to promote graduate programs to working professionals.
- Develop a targeted recruitment plan that focuses on UA Little Rock alumni. Currently, only approximately 25% of our graduate students have a degree from UA Little Rock despite the fact that an overwhelming majority of our alumni remain local after graduation.
- Conduct a survey of local businesses and industries to identify employers that provide tuition support for their employees. This will provide the basis for creating intentional relationships/agreements that both supports the local workforce demands and increases graduate student enrollment.

Goal 3: Increase Student Success

Support success for the diverse range of undergraduate students at UA Little Rock.

Helping the students we admit to persist, progress, and attain their educational goals is foremost a moral imperative central to the mission of the institution. The moral imperative is linked to the practical reality that the capacity to support students is dependent on revenue, which in turn is dependent on enrollment. This means that an increasingly competitive market, the rising costs of recruiting new students, the projections of declining enrollment in the near term, and the impact of performance funding make the retention, progression, and graduation of students an ever-more important part of enrollment management.

We have made big strides. The IPEDS 6-year graduation rate for FTIC (first-time-in-college) students seeking a bachelor's degree rose from 19% for the Fall 2008 cohort to 35% for the Fall 2012 cohort. The IPEDS *Overall Graduation* rate (which includes students pursuing any undergraduate credential and is the *Students Right to Know* rate published in IPEDS's college Navigator tool) also increased dramatically, from 27% to 39%.

We have made great progress in narrowing the gap between IPEDS rates for FTIC, bachelor degree-seeking students who self-identified as Black or African American and those who identified as

Caucasian, moving from a difference of 17 percentage points for the Fall 2008 cohort to 2 percentage points for the Fall 2012 cohort.

The IPEDS first-year retention rate for new freshmen pursuing bachelor's degrees has remained relatively constant, hovering around 70%. This stable rate, in conjunction with increasing graduation rates, suggests that while we continue to lose bachelor seeking students after the first year, we have been improving persistence beyond the first year for this population.

However, in benchmarking our IPEDs graduation and first-year retention rates against other institutions, the consulting company Ruffalo Noel Levitz notes that our 5-year average for the first-year retention rate is nearly identical to the national average for similar institutions, while our 5-year average of the 6-year graduation rate is well below the national average for similar institutions. This suggests that it will be difficult to improve the first-year retention rate, but does not mean that we can slacken efforts targeting first-year students; as Ruffalo Noel Levitz notes, the experiences of students in their first year affect their likelihood of persistence in later years.

An increasing number of participants in the national discussion of student success recognize that while IPEDS metrics can be useful, they have severe limitations, and this is true of their use at our institution. More finely grained data and analysis is necessary to better understand the factors that affect retention, persistence, and graduation at our institution, and the Office of Institutional Research and Analytics has increased the availability of such data by an order of magnitude over the last several years. This makes possible the use of additional metrics in some of the objectives that follow. While we will continue to increase the availability of data, we must expand the use of data for both diagnostic analyses and evaluation at all levels of the institution. Some analysis necessarily occurs centrally, but some requires knowledge of nuance and context that is dispersed.

Unmet financial need is the best predictor of attrition among our students. We have already begun to revise our scholarship model, expanding the availability of scholarships for transfer students. We will continue to assess and adjust the scholarship model, work to make sure our students know their financial aid options, and understand the conditions of continuing eligibility of aid they receive, but we will need to use additional means to address the financial insecurity of many of our students.

We have addressed the first-year experience of students by requiring participation in orientation, implementing centralized advising for most new students, requiring a First Year Colloquium, offering additional student success workshops, implementing a co-requisite model for most students requiring developmental work, and implementing mandatory learning communities for students who do not place into the co-requisite model for developmental writing. We need to develop additional support but, equally important, increase coordination among initiatives, both old and new, and improve business processes that intersect with support programs.

We must provide additional support for students in crisis, regardless of class level, normalize that support so that it does not stigmatize students who take advantage of it, develop more programing for some populations (e.g., students with children and first generation, transfer, and military students), and

work to close completely the equity gap between students who identify as African American or Black and Caucasian.

Increasing student success will require participation across divisions of the university. All levels of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will play a crucial role. The provost, deans, chairs, and directors must be held accountable for making student success a high priority and supporting the efforts of their units. The faculty will need to attend closely to the structure of curriculum (both within courses and across programs) and continue to expand the deployment of active learning strategies in the classroom, as these strategies have proven to increase student success.

The faculty has responded to the encouragement of administration and the demands of students to provide flexible modalities of instruction; online courses now account for 35% of Student Semester Credit Hours. Scholarly Technology and Resources (STaR) within the Office of eLearning has built a robust system of support, providing instructional design, quality assurance, and training for using online tools. The STaR Summer Academy for Online Teaching Excellence provides a summer workshop for faculty focused on theory and best practices for online teaching. However, success metrics for online classes are significantly lower in many online sections by comparison to their F2F counterparts. One-year persistence for all undergraduate students who take all F2F courses is 71%, compared to 66% for students who take only online classes, and 78% for students who take a mix of F2F and online classes. These gaps widen significantly for freshman: 60% for students who take only F2F classes, compared to 39% for students who take only online classes, and 59% for students who take a mix of F2F and online classes. The DFWNC rates for online courses are about 4 percentage points higher than for the same F2F courses. The gap widens to 9 percentage points for freshmen in core courses. We must better understand the contributing factors behind these differences and address them.

Student Affairs also has a central role to play. Leaders of these units have already implemented changes to enhance and increase student engagement outside of the classroom. For example, the Student Experience Center continues to work to remove barriers and unnecessary processes for student leaders and student organizations who play a major role in enhancing the overall student experience. In addition, units such as Campus Living, Campus Dining, Donaghey Student Center, Student Assistance and Transition Center, and the Student Experience Center are working more collaboratively on student programming to maximize limited resources, all while providing more extensive wrap-around support for students. Greater support and expansion of the Fraternity and Sorority community is also a priority, as this can have a positive impact on both the recruitment and retention fronts. Furthermore, the realignment and consolidation of several student leadership and development programs within the Division will produce greater efficiencies and increase access to services and resources for students.

While several important changes are already underway, the Division will need to continue to make data-informed decisions regarding its operations, especially with regard to student programming and activities. For example, all of the units reporting to the Student Experience Center will be undergoing review using Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) assessment guides to ensure alignment with industry best-practices. The Division will also continue to use the data provided by the Office of

Institutional Research and Analytics and data collected internally to develop, implement, and assess the effectiveness of student activities and functions as well as student learning outcomes.

In general, all decisions across the university regarding major changes in infrastructure (from bricks-and-mortar to academic computing) and processes (from the delete process for non-payment to purchasing deadlines) should be made with attention to student success.

The foregoing issues are distilled below into one overarching goal and distributed across five, more specific objectives, along with strategies for achieving them. Some of the strategies are well under way, some have begun but still have aspects to be developed more fully, and others are commitments that still require the identification of responsible parties to flesh out and take the first steps toward implementing them.

Goal 3 Objectives and Strategies

Goal 3: Support success for the diverse range of undergraduate students at UA Little Rock: traditional, nontraditional, transfer, underrepresented, and online.

Objective 1: Increase the Retention Rate for New Freshmen to 73%

Improve the Fall-to-Fall, Full-Time, Bachelor's-Seeking, 1-Year Retention rate for FTIC students (an IPEDS metric) from 68% (2017-2018) to 73% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years.

Strategies

- Administer a survey to all incoming freshmen to assess grit, fears, strengths, perceptions of need, openness to help, and readiness to take online classes in order to better target support services; beginning Fall 2020
- More fully integrate onboarding and transition activities (e.g., orientation, Trojan Week events, advising, and First Year Colloquium Courses); beginning Fall 2020
- Review First Year Colloquium Courses to ensure they are aligned with their purpose of providing the necessary components; beginning Fall 2020
- Implement use of a math index that takes factors in addition to test scores into account in order to refine math placement and reduce time to completion of freshmen math; beginning Fall 2020
- Continue to implement the use of CRM-Advise to monitor risk indicators (including alerts and midterm grades entered by faculty teaching lower-level courses) and deploy appropriate interventions

Objective 2: Increase Year One Retention Rates for Transfer Students to 74%

Increase the Fall-to-Fall, Bachelor's-Seeking, 1-Year Retention rate for First-Time Transfer Students (an OIRA metric) from 69% (2017-2018) to 74% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years

Strategies

- Improve onboarding (from orientation to advising) for new transfer students, beginning Summer 2020
- Implement a peer mentoring program in conjunction with the largest community college feeder institution, beginning Fall 2020
- Collaborate with community colleges to ensure curriculum alignment

Objective 3: Increase Persistence of Online Students

Decrease the gap between one-year persistence for students in all online courses and students in all F2F courses by 2 percentage points per year for the next five years for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Decrease the gap between DFWNC rates for online courses and their F2F equivalents by 1 percentage point per year for the next five years.

Strategies

- Increase opportunities for professional development for faculty in the use of online teaching strategies known to improve retention, utilizing in-house expertise when possible
- Provide the opportunity for faculty of review for best practices in design and use of tools in online courses by STaR
- Increase attention to the requisites for success in online classes during advising
- Increase the use of data to better understand the factors that influence persistence and grades in online course and implement additional appropriate policies and interventions.
- Explore increasing the number of classrooms that support mixed-modality courses, in which students can attend a F2F class or participate online (either synchronously or asynchronously)

Objective 4: Decrease Student Success Gaps between Ethnicities

Close the gap between IPEDS rates for FTIC, Bachelor Degree Seeking students who self-identified as Black or African American and those who identified as Caucasian by 2023.

Strategies

- Revitalize the African American Male Initiative and African American Female initiatives

- Ensure that programs that target larger populations (e.g., first generation or transfer students) are designed so that they are welcoming and supportive of African Americans
- Improve the recruitment and retention of African American faculty and staff
- Offer professional development in inclusive teaching and programming

Objective 5: Increase 6-Year Graduation Rate to 44%

Increase persistence rates (rate of students who either return or graduate) beyond the first year and increase the Overall 6-year Graduation Rate for Full-Time, Degree- or Certificate-seeking FTIC students (the IPEDS *Student Right to Know* metric) from 39% (2012-2018) to 44% by 2022-2023, a one percentage point increase per year for the next five years.

Since graduate rates are lagged indicators, persistence rates are more useful for measuring near-term gains. The IPEDS 6-year graduation metric excludes many populations, but it is the published IPEDS *Student Right to Know* metric, and in conjunction with other metrics can be useful. Some of the following strategies to increase persistence and eventually graduation rates target special populations, but all of them address populations broader than the cohorts used for the IPEDS overall 6-year graduation rate.

Strategies

Instruction and Curriculum

- Set targets for persistence by program and class level that are aspirational (by comparison to rolling three-year averages) but achievable, beginning with targets for Fall 2020
- Implement means of sharing successful retention practices
- Implement awards and other means of recognizing the efforts of academic departments to increase retention and graduation rates
- Increase opportunities for professional development for faculty in the use of classroom strategies known to improve retention, utilizing in-house expertise when possible
- Align incentive structures in performance evaluations (e.g., annual review and tenure and promotion reviews) with the importance of retention
- Make retention a regular agenda item at college chairs meetings
- Make retention a regular agenda item at academic department meetings
- Support the redesign of curriculum where necessary to improve scaffolding and integrate with career pathways

- Seek funding to increase tutoring (ranging from Learning Assistants in the classroom, Supplemental Instruction, and individual tutoring), especially for courses with high DFWNC rates

Supporting Students Outside the Classroom

- Set shared standards and expectations for academic advising, improve training and professional development, continue implementation of advising dashboards in CRM-Advise, and develop assessment of advising, beginning Spring 2020
- Implement a mandatory academic recovery program for students falling into academic probation, beginning Fall 2020
- Seek funding for two academic coaches and a licensed social worker who can develop and deliver a variety of support programs (including a *care team* to triage students in crisis and coordinate interventions, programs targeting first generation students, and peer mentoring)
- Apply for a federal TRIO-Student Support Services for Military Students grant, Spring 2020
- Collaborate with new Veterans Legal Clinic of the Bowen School of Law to supplement services for students who are veterans
- Apply for the federal Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS) grant, Spring 2020
- Explore drop-off care childcare modeled after services offered by non-profits and some businesses
- Explore implementing a *dead hour* on campus to allow time for organizations and clubs to meet, carry out tabling events, and host social gatherings
- Implement means of recognizing the efforts of classified and professional staff to increase retention and graduation rates
- Improve the quality of information about the variety of support services available and awareness among all faculty and staff about how to assist students in taking advantage of them

Financial

- Utilize Sodexo contract and scholarships to supplement efforts of the Food Pantry to address food insecurity
- Implement a robust financial literacy program, beginning Fall 2020
- Streamline process for awarding emergency funds
- Streamline process for Last Mile scholarships to assist students completing the last hours of their programs

- Encourage use of open educational resources in lieu of commercial textbooks
- Pilot Barnes and Noble First Day textbook program

Data

- Continue to improve the use of data to better understand the factors that contribute to retention and persistence in order to implement appropriate policies and programs
- Improve the use of data to measure progression (progress toward degree rather than enrollment alone)
- Improve the evaluation of retention strategies in order to maximize resources
- Monitor reasons cited in online withdraw form for useful data
- Monitor request for transcript for useful data

Enrollment Projections

Although overall enrollment projections for fall 2020 indicate further decline, the university has reason to be optimistic. Enrollment in fall 2019 reversed a steep decline for new undergraduates, which will have a positive impact in subsequent years. As of December 4, 2019, the number of new undergraduate applications for fall 2020 is 1,597, an increase of 49.7% from the equivalent time for fall 2019. Undergraduate admittances for fall 2020 is up to 934, an increase of 113.7% over the equivalent date for the prior year. More encouraging, both applications and admittances for new freshmen and new transfers have increased substantially for fall 2020.

Currently, a university-level headcount projection of negative six percent exist for fall 2020. This represents a three percent improvement from the nine-percent headcount loss from fall 2019. Fall 2020 through fall 2024 projections take into account the objectives specified in the SEMP. In particular, targets were set based on goal two (increase in new freshmen, new transfer and new graduate students) as well as goal three targets (increase in retention rates).

Based on early indicators, a leveling-off in headcount change is projected by fall 2022, followed by an overall increase in headcount for fall 2023 and fall 2024.

Completion of a full enrollment cycle under the new recruitment and onboarding processes will enable refined enrollment projections. Enrollment projections will be revised yearly.

Fall 2020 through fall 2024 enrollment projections by student type are provided in figure 27.

Figure 27: Fall 2020 through Fall 2024 Headcount Projections*

Enroll Status	Actual Fall Enrollment			Headcount Projections					
	2017	2018	2019	Fall 2020		Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
				#	% Change from Fall 2019	% Change from Fall 2020	% Change from Fall 2021	% Change from Fall 2022	% Change from Fall 2023
UNDERGRADUATE									
First-Time in College Undergraduate	766	601	584	672	15%	6%	6%	4%	4%
First-Time Entering Transfer Undergraduate	969	911	927	946	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Total New Undergraduates	1,735	1,512	1,511	1,618	7%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Continuing First-Year Student (FTIC W/O Sophomore Status)	302	306	239	187	-22%	Estimated under Total Continuing Undergraduate/Other			
Continuing Undergraduate	4,051	3,891	3,661	3,445	-6%				
High School Dual Enrollment	-	-	2	2	0%				
Re-Admitted Undergraduate	596	619	489	386	-21%				
Post-Baccalaureate	531	571	495	429	-13%				
Pre-Baccalaureate	143	126	133	140	6%				
Transient Undergraduate	26	16	8	4	-50%				
Total Continuing Undergraduate/Other	5649	5529	5027	4,593	-9%	-2%	0%	2%	3%
Total Undergraduate	7,384	7,041	6,538	6,211	-5%	0%	2%	3%	3%
GRADUATE									
First-Time Entering Graduate	489	390	316	256	-19%	Estimated under Total New Graduates			
First-Time Entering Doctoral	42	49	45	41	-8%				
First-Time Entering Graduate Transfer	38	43	4	0	-91%				
Total New Graduates	569	482	365	297	-19%	4%	13%	14%	10%
Continuing Graduate or Doctoral	1,199	1,170	1,037	919	-11%	Estimated under Total Continuing Graduate/Other			
Re-Admitted Graduate	132	125	97	75	-22%				
Post-Baccalaureate Graduate Student	-	29	21	15	-28%				
Total Continuing Graduate/Other	1,331	1,324	1,155	1,009	-13%				
Graduate Total	1,900	1,806	1,520	1,306	-14%	-13%	-5%	3%	6%
Combined Undergraduate & Graduate	9,284	8,847	8,058	7,517	-7%	-3%	0%	3%	4%
LAW									
Law First-Time Entering Doctoral	138	135	154	154	0%	Estimated under Law Total			
Law First-Time Entering Graduate Transfer	-	2	3	3	0%				
Law Transient Undergraduate	-	-	-	-	-				
Law Continuing Graduate or Doctoral	256	274	278	278	0%				
Law Re-Admitted Graduate	6	12	11	11	0%				
Law Total	400	423	446	446	0%				
HIGH SCHOOL CONCURRENT									
High School Concurrent	1,940	1,245	1,077	1,077	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
UNIVERSITY TOTAL									
University Total	11,624	10,515	9,581	9,040	-6%	-2%	0%	2%	3%

*Note these figures are based on the official data submitted to and accepted by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE). Although the university-level headcounts are typically consistent between the eleventh day of classes (census day) and data reported to the ADHE in October of each year, the number of students reported in any given enrollment status (i.e., first-time in college, first-time entering transfer undergraduate, pre-baccalaureate, etc.) may vary due to differences in data quality and regulatory business rules.

Chancellor's Call to Action

UA Little Rock is at a critical point in its history. Only with swift and strategic action to address recruitment of new students and retention of existing students will we be able to navigate the enrollment challenges we face as an institution. The UA Little Rock community understands the importance of these efforts, as is evidenced by the new level of collaboration and engagement around enrollment issues from all corners of the campus.

The Faculty Senate has put forth their thoughts on recruitment and retention in a report from their ad hoc retention committee. The February 2019 report from the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and findings from the Chancellor's Retention Committee and Recruitment Committee demonstrate the need for the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP). Feedback from these bodies have helped to inform the development of the plan.

Success in implementing this ambitious plan will require commitment and accountability from the whole campus. This SEMP must be a living document that we will discuss and debate, assess and revise, and that will lead us to sustainable growth and a more secure financial footing.

Key to the full implementation of the SEMP is the establishment of an organized accountability structure that includes clear expectations, assigned accountability, and regular reporting. Now that we have enrollment goals, objectives, and strategies, an enrollment accountability plan will be developed in the coming months to ensure continuous progress on the execution of this plan.

This moment demands action. UA Little Rock continues to be a transformative institution for our students, both traditional and non-traditional, and we must do what it takes to ensure that their education is accessible and effective. We have the people and tools necessary to succeed. UA Little Rock is coming up on its centennial in 2027. The work we do now and in the coming months will position us for a dynamic future as we begin our second century **Trojan Strong**.

Christina S. Drale
Chancellor
University of Arkansas at Little Rock