



Simplifying the Transfer Process in Alabama

AGSC & STARS

2011-2012 Annual Report



Prepared by Keith Sessions
Executive Director of AGSC/STARS

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LETTER FROM 2011-2012 AGSC CHAIR

Dear Supporters of the AGSC/STARS Program:

The AGSC/STARS program continues to provide exceptional service to transfer students between the public colleges and universities of the state of Alabama. The processes involved in the approval of templates and specific courses, fundamental to the development of the transfer guides utilized by our students, continues to work well. The AGSC/STARS program continues to enjoy a collegial and professional relationship between the member institutions. This relationship is the foundation of the AGSC/STARS program and has flourished since the creation of the program in 1998. We proudly point to the over 880,000 transfer guides that have been viewed and printed through the state's articulation website since the inaugural year of the program (1998) as evidence of the commitment and collegiality of the member institutions.

The success of the AGSC/STARS programs is even more remarkable when you consider the budget cuts that have been experienced over the past several academic years. The AGSC/STARS staff has continued to move the program forward despite major budget cuts due to proration. The staff is to be applauded for their commitment in the face of these daunting obstacles.

We want to thank the faculty who serve on academic committees and to the administrators who support the program on their respective campuses. Without their expertise and commitment we would not be able to keep our curricula contemporary and relevant.

The AGSC and the STARS staff appreciate the Alabama Legislature for its continued support of this critical program and service to the state. Annual funding from our state facilitates the movement of students between all Alabama community colleges and all Alabama public universities each year.

We thank all the individuals, higher education institutions and agencies who continue to support the AGSC/STARS Program. We specifically want to thank the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and Troy University for the work they do and the sacrifices they make in order to improve and maintain the AGSC/STARS Program.

The AGSC and the STARS staff look forward to the new academic year and pledge to continue our collective efforts to offer the best service possible to the citizens of Alabama.

Sincerely,

Dr. B. Keith Harrison

*Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of South Alabama*

AGSC VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES

(as of July 19, 2012)

APPOINTING AUTHORITY	VOTING MEMBER	ALTERNATE MEMBER
Alabama A&M University	Dr. Barbara A.P. Jones Professor, School of Business	Dr. Lloyd Walker Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Studies
Alabama State University	Dr. Sharron Herron-Williams Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs	Dr. Alfred Smith Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Auburn University	Dr. Constance Relihan Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies	Mr. Daniel LaRocque Associate Dean for Academic Affairs College of Liberal Arts
University of Alabama System	Dr. Beth Bennett Professor and Department Chair, Communication Studies (UA)	Dr. Charles Nash Vice Chancellor (UA System)
University of South Alabama	Dr. B. Keith Harrison (AGSC CHAIR) Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs	Dr. Victoria Rivizzigno Associate Dean College of Arts and Sciences
Regional Universities	Dr. William Meehan President Jacksonville State University	Dr. Richard Holland President University of West Alabama
Regional Universities	Dr. John Schmidt Senior Vice Chancellor for Advancement and External Affairs Troy University	Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences University of Montevallo
State Board of Education (2-Year Institutions)	Dr. Gary Branch President Faulkner State Community College	Dr. James Mitchell President Wallace Community College Selma
State Board of Education (2-Year Institutions)	Dr. Mark Heinrich President Shelton State Community College	Dr. Amelia Pearson Interim President Southern Union State Community College
State Board of Education (2-Year Institutions)	Dr. Joe Morris Vice-President Jefferson State Community College	Dr. Kandis Steele (AGSC VICE-CHAIR) Director of Academic Programs Department of Postsecondary Education
EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS		
Alabama Commission on Higher Education	Dr. Gregory G. Fitch Executive Director	Dr. Elizabeth C. French Director, institutional Effectiveness and Planning
AGSC Secretary	Mrs. Deborah Nettles Alabama Commission on Higher Education	
AGSC/STARS Program	Dr. Keith Sessions Executive Director	

IMPACT OF PRORATION AND BUDGET CUTS

While STARS Usage numbers have risen to an all-time high, state funding for this program continues to decline. (SEE BUDGET COMPARISON CHART)

AGSC/STARS Budget Comparison (last four years)

Fiscal Year	Allocated Budget	Proration Amount	Operating Budget*
2008-09	\$ 500,000	\$ 88,391	\$ 411,609
2009-10	\$ 399,542	\$ 29,966	\$ 369,576
2010-11	\$ 394,348	\$ 11,831	\$ 382,517
2011-12	\$ 390,486	\$ 0	\$ 390,486

The AGSC/STARS Office continues to work on a annual budget of less than \$400,000. Operating and personnel costs are at the lowest levels they have been since the program was created. While we have made the necessary cuts over the last few years to stabilize the program, additional proration and budget cuts will continue to erode the work that has been done since 1994.

** The operating budget amount does not include deductions for administrative fees retained by ACHE. Each year ACHE retains 2% of the budget to cover their administrative costs. In most years, a portion of this money is un-used by ACHE and later returned to the STARS Office.*

2012-2013 AGSC/STARS BUDGET

The 2012-2013 state allocation for the AGSC/STARS Program has been cut by 4%.

As a result the final allocated budget will be \$374,867. ACHE will retain a 2% administrative fee of \$7,497. **This will result in a FINAL OPERATING BUDGET for 2012-2013 of \$367,370.**

WHILE TIMES ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, THE STARS STAFF REMAINS DEDICATED TO MONITORING EXPENDITURES AND WHEN NECESSARY, MAKING ADDITIONAL CUTS TO ENSURE THAT THE PROGRAM SURVIVES AND MOVES FORWARD.

LOOKING BACK AT 2011-2012: A STATUS REPORT

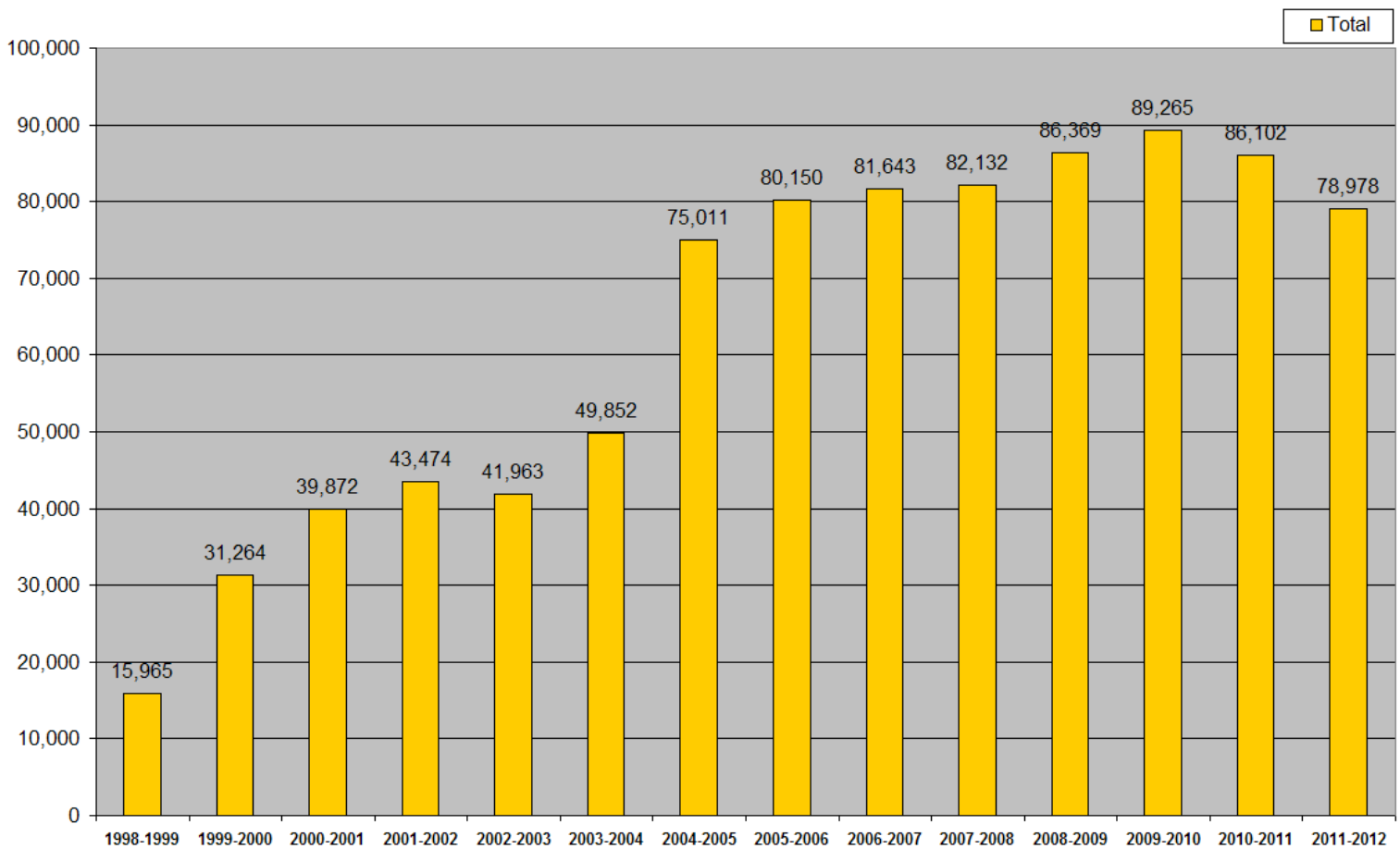
AGSC/STARS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. The AGSC continued to work with and support the STARS staff in an effort to maintain program through difficult financial times.
2. The AGSC voted to discontinue the tri-annual review of previously approved courses. The AGSC will continue to review and approved new courses (those not previously approved by the AGSC).
3. The AGSC initiated a total review of the all discipline committee membership (GACs & PACs) to ensure each institution was represented where appropriate.
4. The AGSC established a new template review schedule. The GACs will conduct a bi-annual review of their templates. The PACs will conduct an annual review of their templates. All "institution only" will be reviewed annually.
5. The AGSC agreed to begin meeting three times per year (Fall, Spring, and Summer) rather than four-times per year as in the past. In doing so, the AGSC agreed that additional meetings could be scheduled as needed.
6. The STARS staff maintained and worked to improve the existing STARS website and transfer guide system. 2011-2012 STARS usage numbers dropped slightly from the previous year. This year 78,975 guides were obtained through the AGSC/STARS website.
7. The STARS staff has almost completed a comprehensive update and re-design of the AGSC/STARS website. The new site will launch during the fall of 2012. Until then, the current site will continue to serve students. The new site is currently in test mode.
8. The STARS staff launched a new voting method via the web for course proposals. Committee members now vote on courses through their web browser. This enables the STARS staff the opportunity to better track voting responses from committee members.
9. The STARS staff worked with the AGSC and the two-year and four-year institutions to update faculty membership on various discipline committees.
10. The STARS staff initiated the annual (and bi-annual) review of AGSC Ratified Templates for various program offerings for both the GACs and the PACs.
11. The STARS staff made campus/site visits/presentations to 15 two-year colleges. We also made campus/site visits to three four-year universities.
12. The STARS staff presented AGSC/STARS programs at in-state conferences (i.e. – ALAC-RAO). We also made presentations (or provided reports) to the Alabama Chief Academic Officers, the Council of Presidents, and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.
13. The STARS Office sent out an electronic copy of the 2010-2011 AGSC/STARS Annual Report the Governor's office and to all members of the Alabama Legislature.

STARS USAGE REPORTS

STARS Transfer Guide Requests Since Fall of 1998

(including requests from July 2011 through June 2012)

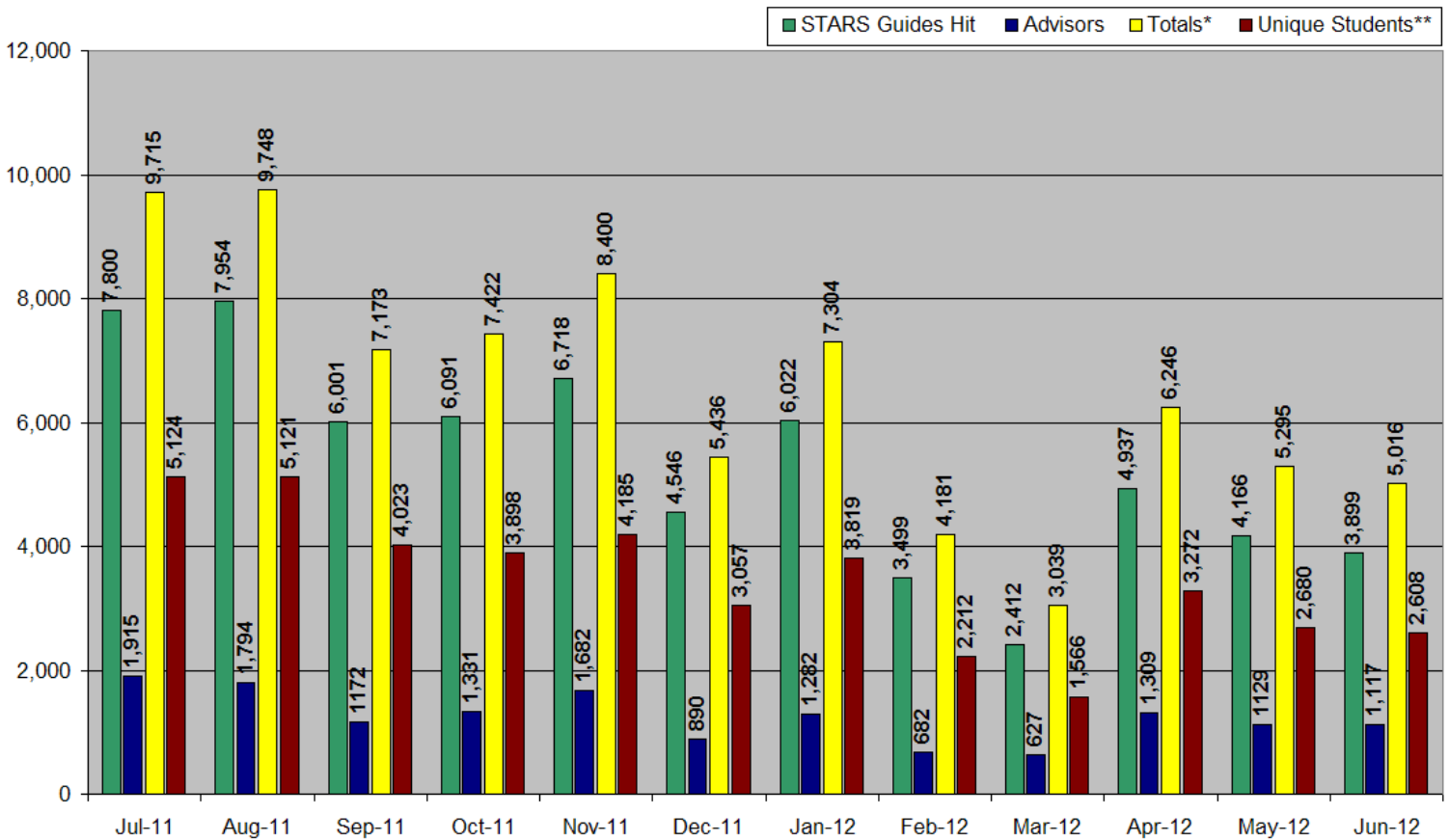


TOTAL REQUESTS SINCE FALL OF 1998 = **882,037**

NOTE: For more detailed reports, please see the STARS website - <http://stars.troy.edu/agsc/reports/reports.htm>.
If you need a specific report for your institution, please contact Mr. Shannon Nichols at snichols@stars.troy.edu.

STARS USAGE REPORTS [continued]

STARS Usage Report by Month for 2011-2012



* TOTALS – This is the total of all transfer guides viewed on screen in the month.

** **UNIQUE STUDENTS PER MONTH** – The unique student totals take into account that many students who use STARS print multiple guides. This number takes out students who print multiple guides in a given major and only counts them one time during a given month. This number should provide a more accurate picture of how many individual students have printed guides in specific majors.

**TOTAL REQUESTS
FOR 2011-2012 = 78,978**

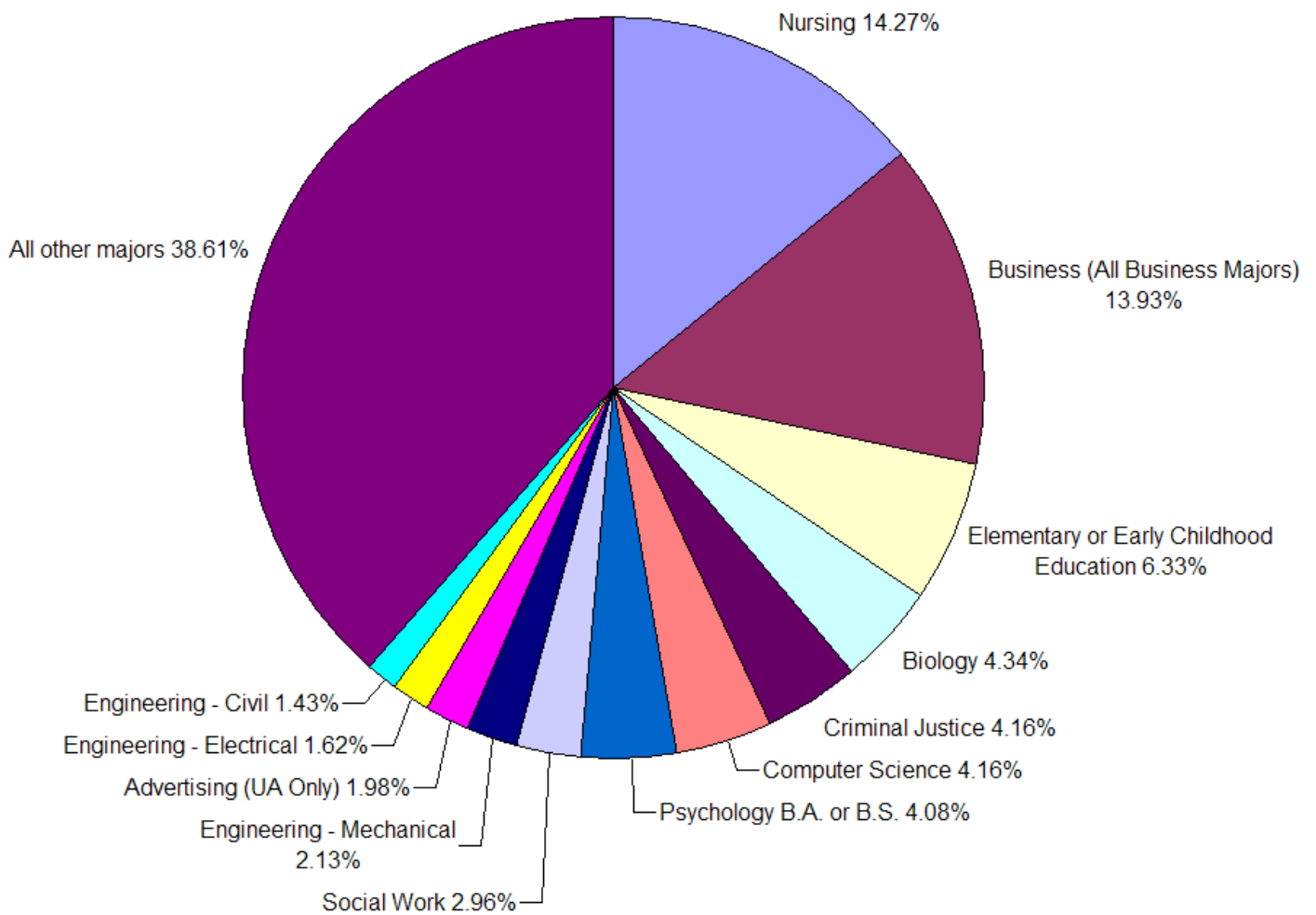
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STARS USAGE REPORTS

[continued]

STARS Usage Report by Major for 2011-2012

(including requests from July 2011 – June 2012)

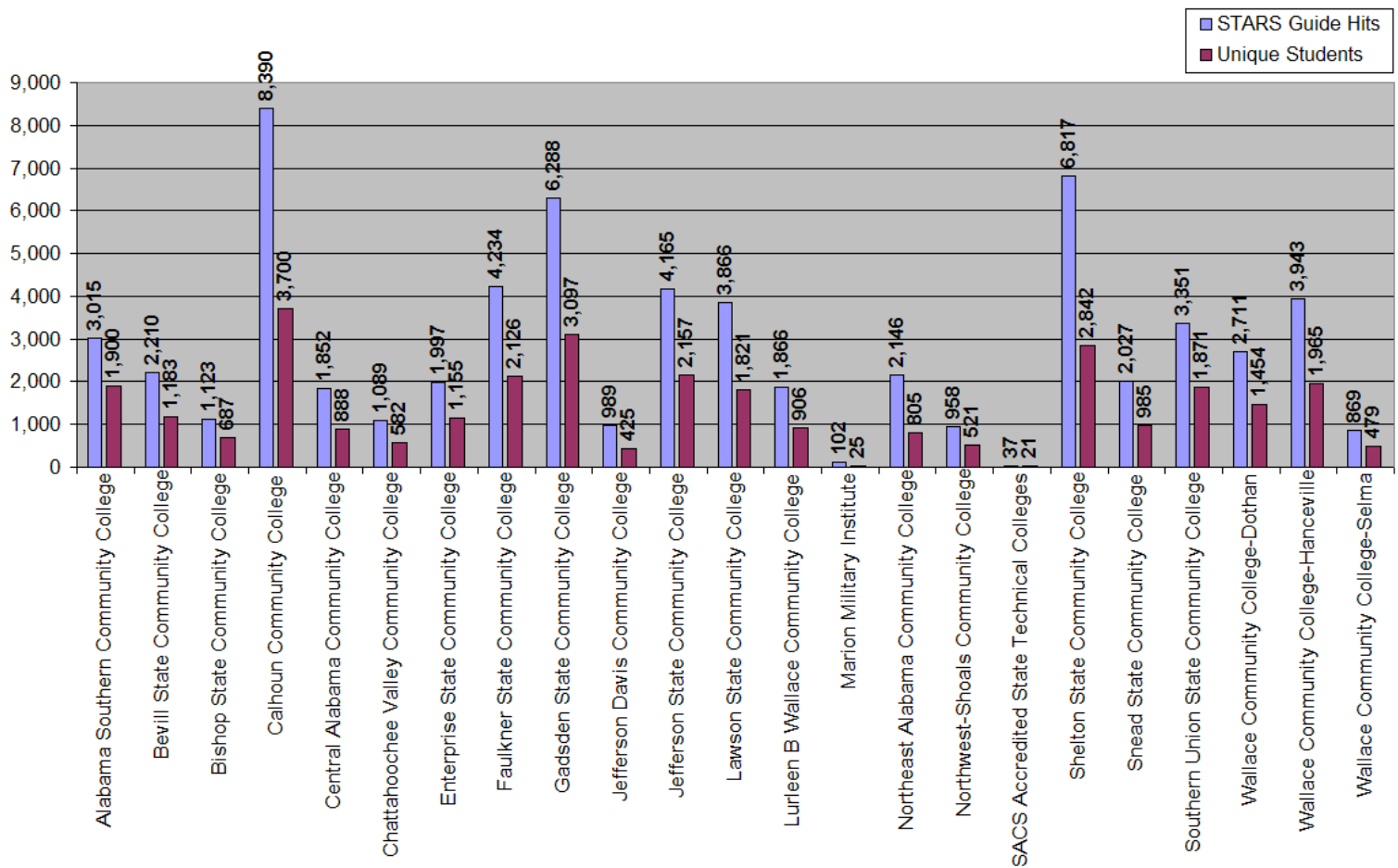


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STARS USAGE REPORTS [continued]

STARS Usage Report by Two-Year Institution for 2011-2012

(including requests from July 2011 – June 2012)



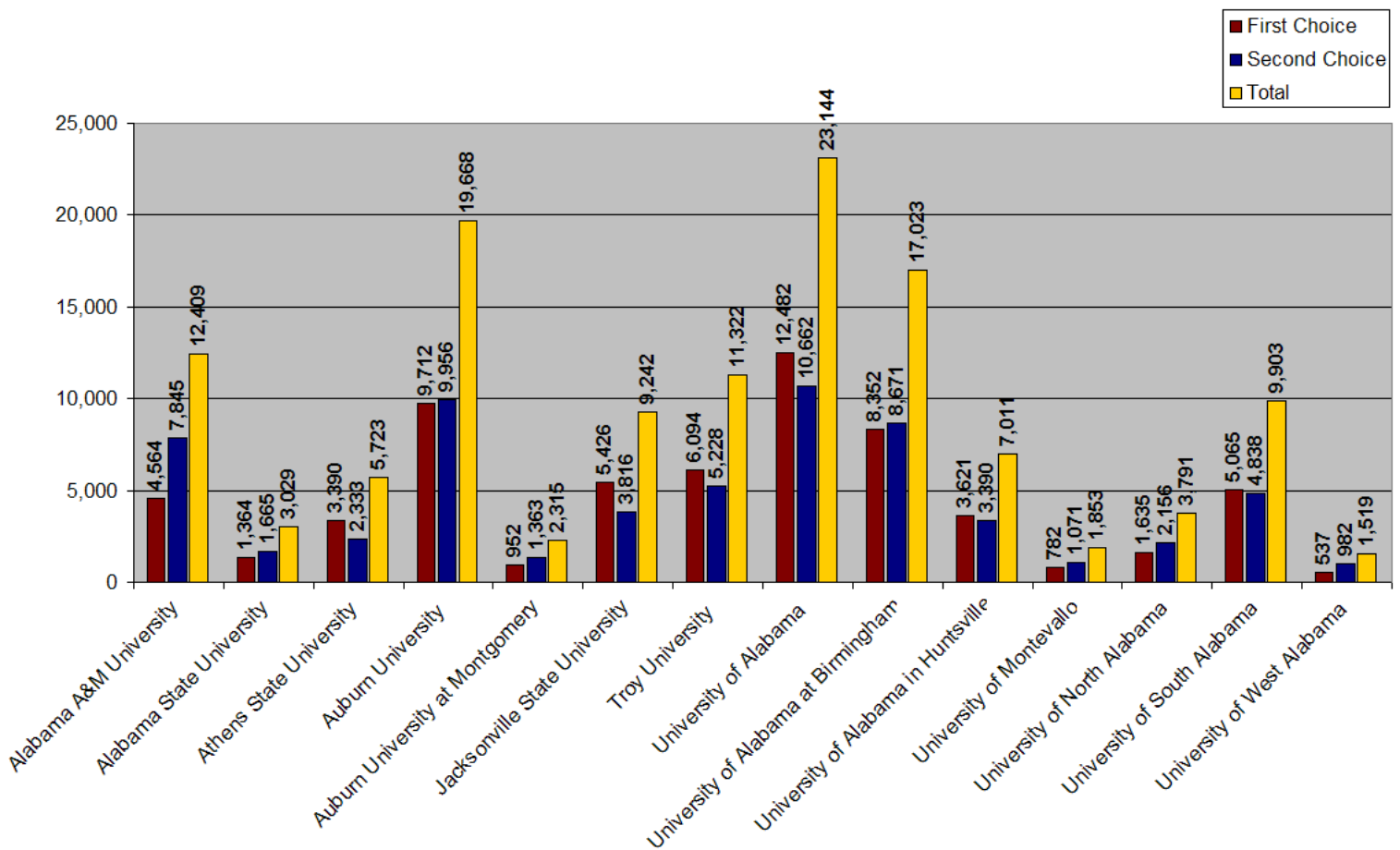
UNIQUE STUDENTS – The unique student totals take into account that many students who use STARS print multiple guides. This number takes out students who print multiple guides in a given major and only counts them one time. This number should provide a more accurate picture of how many individual students have printed/obtained guides.

NOTE: For more detailed reports, please see the STARS website - <http://stars.troy.edu/agsc/reports/reports.htm>. If you need a specific report for your institution, please contact Mr. Shannon Nichols at snichols@stars.troy.edu.

STARS USAGE REPORTS [continued]

Transfer Institution Choices by Two-Year Students for 2011-2012

(including requests from July 2011 – June 2012)



NOTE: For more detailed reports, please see the STARS website - <http://stars.troy.edu/agsc/reports/reports.htm>.
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LOOKING AHEAD TO 2012-2013: AGSC PRIORITIES

1. Strengthen communication with Presidents at both the two-year community colleges and the public universities in Alabama.
2. Increase publicity, communication, and re-education efforts across the state.
3. Complete the re-design of AGSC/STARS website during fall semester of 2012. Launch by January of 2013.
4. Improve online training opportunities through new website.
5. Develop a one-page informational piece that can be sent to all legislators in Alabama.
6. Promote AGSC/STARS accomplishments through local news publications (focus on different regions of the state).
7. Continue to assess impact and effectiveness of the program. Look for ways to improve even during difficult budget times.
8. Increase visibility on two-year and four-year campuses.
9. Continue template review and clean-up.

AGSC/STARS LEGISLATION – ACT 94-202 – Section E

"The computerized advisement system for students operated by Troy State University which includes a comprehensive undergraduate program and course information for all public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education, existing on the effective date of this amendatory act, shall ensure students at each two-year institution accredited by the Southern Association's Commissions on Colleges, the opportunity to enter into a contract with a four-year institution guaranteeing the transfer of credit earned for courses taken at the two-year institution pursuant to the terms of the contract provided the student is admitted to the four-year institution. Under this contract, all agreed upon credits transferred from a two-year institution to a four-year institution shall fulfill degree requirements at the four-year institution as if they were earned at the four-year institution. Information regarding this advisement and contracting program shall be included in the official catalog of each institution of higher education. All public two-year and four-year institutions in the state accredited by the Commission on Colleges shall participate in this system.

"In addition, there is created an articulation and general studies committee which shall consist of ten members composed as follows: two representing the state's regional universities, three representing the state's two-year colleges (one of whom shall be black), one representing each of the following: Auburn University, the University of Alabama System, the University of South Alabama, Alabama State University, and Alabama A&M University. The Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and the Director of the computerized advising system operated by Troy State University shall serve as nonvoting members.

"Unless provided by the governing board of the respective institution, the representatives to the articulation and general studies committee shall be selected in the following manner: The presidents of the state's regional universities shall select the two representatives of these institutions on the committee. The State Board of Education shall select the representatives of the state's two-year colleges on the committee. The Chancellor of the University of Alabama System and the Presidents of Auburn University, the University of South Alabama, Alabama State University, and Alabama A&M University shall each select the representative of their institutions on the committee. It is the intent of the Legislature that women be represented on the committee. This committee, utilizing whatever resources and task forces it deems appropriate, shall develop no later than September 1, 1998, a statewide freshman and sophomore level general studies curriculum to be taken at all colleges and universities. Nothing herein shall be interpreted as restricting any institution from requiring additional general studies courses beyond the statewide general studies curriculum.

"This committee shall also develop and adopt no later than September 1, 1999, for the freshman and sophomore years, a statewide articulation agreement for the transfer of credit among all public institutions of higher education. Under this articulation agreement, all applicable credits transferred from a two-year institution to a four-year institution shall fulfill degree requirements at the four-year institution as if they were earned at the four-year institution. The committee shall further examine the need for a uniform course numbering system, course titles, and descriptions.

"A four-fifths vote of the entire voting membership of the committee shall be required for the adoption of the articulation agreement and general studies curriculum. Upon adoption of the articulation agreement and general studies curriculum, this committee shall continue its duty and authority prescribed herein. The committee shall meet at least annually, or at other times as convened by the chair. The committee shall elect annually a chair from its membership. The chair of the committee shall rotate annually between a representative of the four-year institutions and a representative of the two-year institutions.

"In case of problems in the administration or interpretation of the articulation agreement or the general studies curriculum, institutions shall present the problem to the articulation and general studies committee for resolution. A majority decision of the committee shall be final and binding.

Questions and/or comments regarding this document should be sent to:



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