



Students on campus at Kennesaw State

Campus challenges are inevitable; however, some are more complicated and messy. One contemporary challenge, consolidating institutions, is becoming more common, but there are no clear blueprints outlining ways to execute the mergers. As two Georgia universities learned from their 2015 merger, using the schedule as a strategy with the help of expert consultants can make all the difference.

# Maximizing Academic Resources for Student Success

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Kim West  
Associate Vice President for  
Enrollment Services



Kennesaw State University, the third-largest school in the University System of Georgia (USG), has been expanding undergraduate and graduate programs in Kennesaw, Ga. for 50 years. Seventy-five to eighty widely ranged degree programs are offered to 25,000 students.

Founded 65 years ago with an emphasis on science, engineering and technology, Southern Polytechnic State’s enrollment had increased 36 percent in six years to more than 6,500 students.

In the fall of 2015, the two schools merged to create a single institution, retaining the Kennesaw State University name, with more than 33,000

students, located on two campuses in suburban Atlanta.

Rapid growth and campus consolidation created scheduling challenges for Kim West, associate vice president for enrollment services and Kevin George, director of data management and systems support services.

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The Access to Completion (A2C) Advantage program is a new Ad Astra initiative designed to guide higher education institutions to uncover, analyze and apply their data to achieve measurable student success outcomes. Kennesaw State University was quick to recognize the value of this program and was one of the first partners of A2C Advantage. Partnership in the group offers campuses additional services, measurements, and customized consulting engagements with Ad Astra specialists.

Using Ad Astra's Platinum Analytics™ course demand modeling and strategic consulting services, West and George evaluated course fill rates and classroom capacity to ensure class schedules were designed to accommodate students in their declared majors and meet their need for courses.

"Our work with the Ad Astra consultants also generated other new questions, such as 'How do we account for real-time class demand changes during orientation?'" said George. "The Astra team came up with an approach that made an important difference for us during our high-volume enrollment windows."

General education course offerings at both campuses needed to be balanced properly to cut down on unnecessary commutes between campuses for students and faculty.

"Fine tuning the general education courses was one of our more difficult tasks," said George. "Our

Ad Astra team got us dialed in quickly for the right mix now, as well as for the future."

## Moving Ideas Into Action

When higher than expected growth rates occurred at Kennesaw State in the fall of 2014, the team created a watch list of courses to be flexed during the enrollment and scheduling time period.

"Ad Astra's consultants suggested we focus on registration velocity for core classes and sections so capacity could be adjusted as needed,"

said West. "They helped us rank, order, and manage the classes that were most important for our students and their completion goals."

Overall, West and George's collaboration with Ad Astra enabled Kennesaw to recapture a 25 percent increase in classroom space at the Marietta campus, providing an additional 2,500 classroom seats that when added, created more capacity in high-demand courses.

## Making Room for New Growth and New Students

1. In fall 2015, Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic State merged to create a single institution with more than 33,000 students, located on two campuses in suburban Atlanta.
2. Working with Ad Astra's Platinum Analytics™ software and consulting services, Kennesaw State enrollment and IT executives recaptured a 25 percent increase in classroom space on the Marietta campus, uncovering an additional 2,500 classroom seats that created more capacity in high-demand courses on both campuses.
3. Another 750 seats were removed from course inventory where insufficient student demand existed, which allowed for the reallocation of instructional resources.

Approximately 750 seats were removed from the course inventory where insufficient student demand existed, which allowed for the reallocation of instructional resources. The new capacity alleviates enrollment and scheduling concerns for Kennesaw State as it anticipates more growth in the coming years. As a result of this successful exercise, the watch list has become a standard feature of Platinum Analytics' predictive functionality.

"All demand calculations and predictive analytics for the fall of 2015 enrollment should work nicely based on the changes and adjustments we made with Ad Astra in 2014," said West. "We feel we can better handle future enrollment growth challenges now because we have a greater understanding of the numbers and can model solution scenarios."

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