

Kennesaw State University: A Profile

Kennesaw State University is an active community of learners dedicated to student success. The third largest institution in Georgia's state university system, KSU currently enrolls over 18,000 [students](#) from many different backgrounds, including 1,500 international students from over 130 countries. Hallmarks of KSU's vision include sustained civic engagement, a focus on interconnected learning, a strong commitment to diversity, and ethical leadership building. Located in metropolitan Atlanta, in the rapidly developing area of northwest Georgia, Kennesaw has made valued contributions to its region while rising in national stature.

Kennesaw State is known for growth and innovation. KSU's [history](#) ranges from opening as a junior college in 1963 to becoming a four-year college in 1978, beginning to offer graduate programs in 1985, being recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as a "rising star" in education in the early 1990s, and achieving university status in 1996. More recently, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Kennesaw State University's "First-Year Experience" as a "Program to Look For" in its "America's Best Colleges 2005" edition spotlighting excellence in higher education.

Kennesaw State's commitment to teaching has remained at the heart of the university's [mission](#) throughout its dynamic history. Students who make KSU their university of choice know they will work with dedicated faculty who are superb teachers and researchers committed to community service. KSU is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) with the Commission on Colleges endorsement. Additionally, KSU holds several national professional accreditations, including from the National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Georgia Board of Nursing and many others.

The seven [colleges](#) which make up KSU's academic units share a strong commitment to the university's mission while exhibiting their own unique strengths. In addition, a growing number of [centers and institutes](#) dedicated to outreach and research help promote KSU's vision for civic engagement at the highest levels. Kennesaw State's [Continuing Education program](#) provides quality lifelong learning opportunities that enrich personal and professional lives throughout northwest Georgia and beyond.

As an engaged member of the American Association of State Colleges and University (AASCU), Kennesaw State is committed to providing a quality education to [students](#) with a wide range of educational goals. From its founding in the 1960s, KSU has served non-traditional students, many of them the first in their families to attend college. (Today, the average age of students attending Kennesaw State is 26.) Increasingly, KSU is providing creative, highly challenging [undergraduate programs](#) for more traditional students, who make KSU their university of choice. In addition, Kennesaw State is offering an rising number of innovative masters-level [graduate programs](#), which draw high-achieving students from the Atlanta area's talented professional population. Consistent with its maturing mission within the University of Georgia system, KSU is developing targeted professional doctoral programs.

Recently, KSU has begun to expand its student body beyond the commuters who are still an active part of the university community to include a growing group of on-campus residents. In state-of-the-art, [apartment-style housing](#), students can now become part of KSU's living-learning communities. Over 100 [student-led organizations](#) and a highly successful [athletics program](#), now competing in NCAA [Division I](#), complement the strong academic experience at KSU.

Kennesaw State's ability to serve an increasingly diverse student body with a wide array of academic programs depends upon an award-winning, growing [faculty](#) from around the world. Consistent with KSU's rising enrollment, the number of full-time instructional faculty has [climbed](#) from about 375 in 2000 to over 550 in 2004, and reliance on part-time faculty is on the decline. Staff support of KSU's programs includes an array of [administrative teams](#) dedicated to professional and personal growth. In particular, KSU has made a commitment to world-class leadership in [instructional technology](#), evidenced not only in technology-based resources and services provided directly to students and faculty, but also in the [KSU library's](#) strategic approaches to expanding its collections and the array of technology-enhanced learning spaces operating on campus, such as the [Presentation Technology Department](#) and the [KSU Writing Center](#).

Crucial support for the university's mission comes from the [KSU Foundation](#), which serves as an advocate for the University, by receiving, investing, accounting for, and allocating private gifts and contributions in support of Kennesaw State. In recent years, Foundation projects have included building on-campus housing and new parking decks, purchasing property to allow for campus growth, an enhanced [faculty awards](#) program, and partnering to help bring the [Anne Frank in the World](#) exhibit to KSU. Another important aid to KSU's increasing resource base is the university's active [Office of Sponsored Programs](#), which supports faculty interested in securing external sponsorship for research, instruction, evaluation, and professional development activities.

Since 1981, Kennesaw State has been led by [President Betty Siegel](#), who was the first woman to head an institution in the 34-unit University System of Georgia, and is among the longest-serving university presidents in the nation. Dr. Siegel's many [initiatives](#) have helped guide KSU through dramatic stages of growth to the threshold of a new era. The current Presidential Search has identified characteristics for the next leader of the university consistent with its proud, if youthful, heritage, while looking ahead to continued advancement of its mission.