

Fiscal Year 2001 CIR Report

A Comparative Analysis of Credit Hour Productivity

*BOARD OF REGENTS
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA*

*OFFICE OF STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS
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CURRICULUM INVENTORY REPORTING SYSTEM
Comparative Analysis of Credit Hour Productivity
Fiscal Year 2001

Executive Summary

One-Year Change

- Credit hour production in the USG increased by 108,066 semester credit hours (SCH) or 2.1 percent from FY2000 to FY2001.
- Semester credit hour production increased at all instruction levels (defined as lower, upper, and graduate/professional) in the last year, with the largest one-year increase at the graduate/professional level.
- The state college sector, which produces the smallest number of SCH, had the largest one-year increase at 10.1 percent, and research universities increased their output by 2.7 percent in the last year. The only sector to decline was the regional universities.
- Funding Group 3 (computer science, engineering, health professions, etc.) had the highest one-year rate of increase, 2.8 percent.

Distribution of Semester Credit Hours

- The proportions of total SCH generated by both instruction level and institutional sector have remained stable for several years.
- The SCH proportions by funding group have shifted, with the Group 1 disciplines (letters, social sciences, etc.) share decreasing, and the proportions for Group 2 (business, communications, education, etc.) and Group 3 (computer science, health professions, biological sciences, etc.) increasing.

Trends From 1998 to 2001

- The overall increase of approximately 187,000 SCH in FY2000 and FY2001 has restored about one-third of the FY1998-FY1999 decrease in USG credit hour production.
- In FY2001, the graduate/professional and lower levels of instruction produced 96 and 95 percent of their respective FY1998 SCH totals, with upper level instruction producing approximately 85 percent of the comparative FY1998 sub-total.
- The Group 1 (letters, social sciences, philosophy, etc.) SCH output in FY2001 was less than 85 percent of the corresponding FY1998 total, while Group 2 (business, communications, education, etc.) generated 102 percent of its FY1998 level.
- The professional medical disciplines (Group 5) have increased credit hour production every year since FY1998.
- Among the institutional sectors, research universities produced almost 100 percent of their FY1998 credit hour total in FY2001, while regional universities remained 12 percent below their 1998 level.

Curriculum Inventory Report

Fiscal Year 2001

Comparative Analysis of Credit Hour Productivity

One-Year Change in Credit Hour Production

The following graphs show the change in credit hour production from FY2000 to FY2001 by USG total and three key measures of curriculum activity: level of instruction, institutional sector, and funding group.

The University System's FY2001 total of 5,242,155 semester credit hours represents an increase of 108,066 or 2.1 percent over the previous fiscal year.

Figure 1
One-Year Change in Total Semester Credit Hours
FY2000 – FY2001

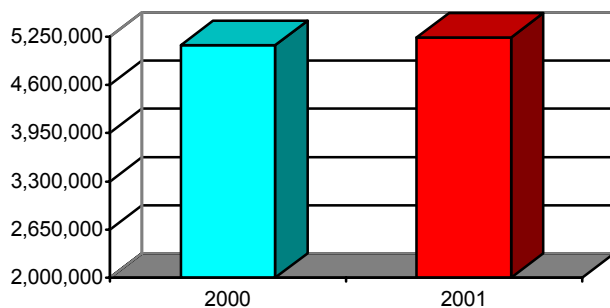


Figure 2 shows that of the three instruction levels, the graduate/professional level produces the lowest number of credit hours, but had the largest percentage growth in the last year. Both undergraduate levels increased by 1.8 percent.

Figure 2
One-Year Change in Credit Hours By Level
FY2000 – FY2001

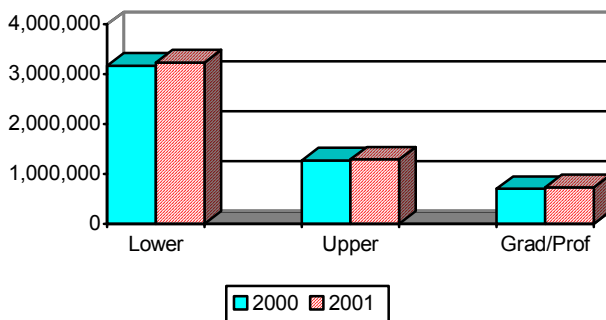


Figure 3 shows that the smallest institutional sector in credit hour production, state colleges, had the largest, 10.1 percent, increase from FY2000 to FY2001. The range among the other three sectors was from -1.2 percent for regional universities to +3.4 percent for two-year colleges.

Figure 3
One-Year Change in Credit Hours By Sector
FY2000 – FY2001

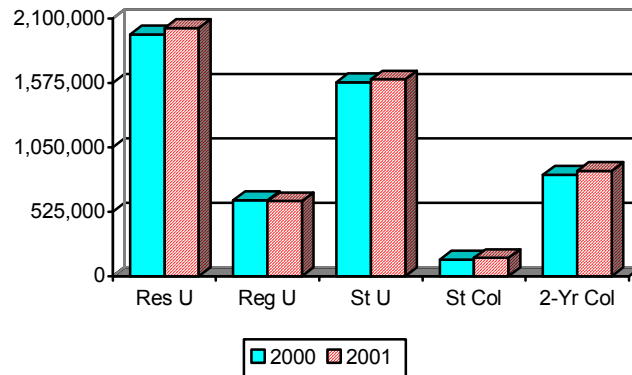
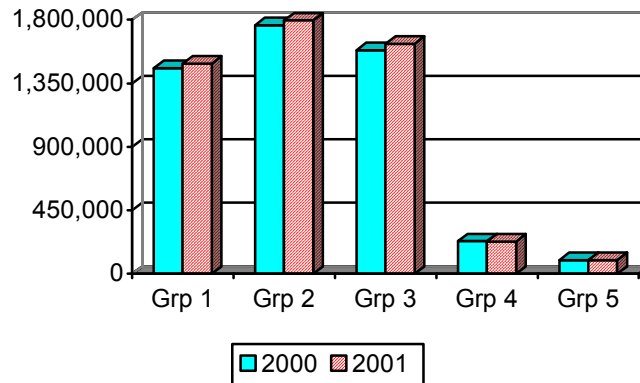


Figure 4 provides comparisons by funding groups. Of the 5 funding groups, 4 generated more credit hours in FY2001 than in the previous fiscal year. The greatest one-year growth, 2.8 percent occurred in Group 3, which includes computer science, engineering and health professions. Group 4, consisting of learning support courses, is decreasing its credit hour production in response to the Board of Regents 2001 admissions policy, including the impact of the required College Preparatory Curriculum on incoming freshmen.

Figure 4
One-Year Change in Credit Hours By Funding Group
FY2000 – FY2001



Credit Hour Proportion by Level, Sector and Group

The proportions of total credit hours generated by level and institutional sector, illustrated in Figures 5 and 6 for FY2001, have remained stable over the last several years.

Figure 5
Credit Hour Proportion By Level
FY2001

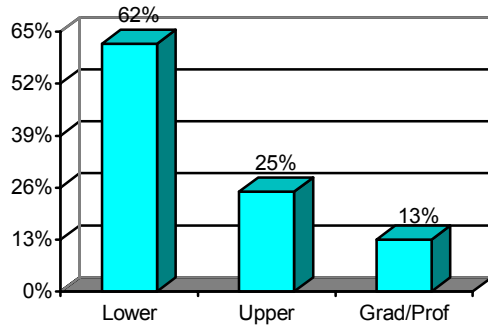
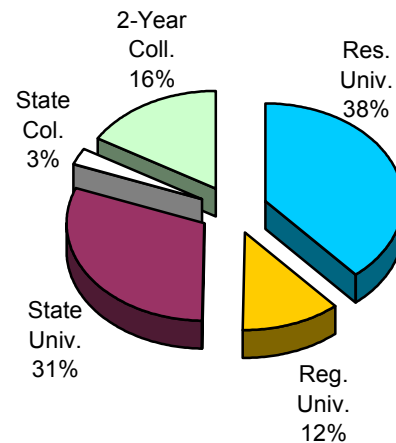
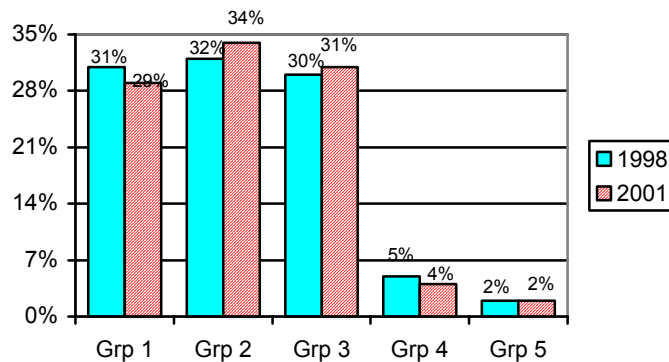


Figure 6
Credit Hour Proportion By Sector
FY2001



However, there has been a shift in credit hour production among funding groups from FY1998, the last year of the quarter system, to FY2000, as illustrated in Figure 7, below.¹ The FY2001 percentage of credit hours produced by Group 1 (Letters, Social Sciences, etc.) has decreased, while Group 2 (Business, Communications, Education, etc.) and Group 3 (Biological Sciences, Computer Science, Health Professions, etc.) have increased their proportions of total hours compared to FY1998.

Figure 7
Credit Hour Proportion By Funding Group
FY1998 and FY2001



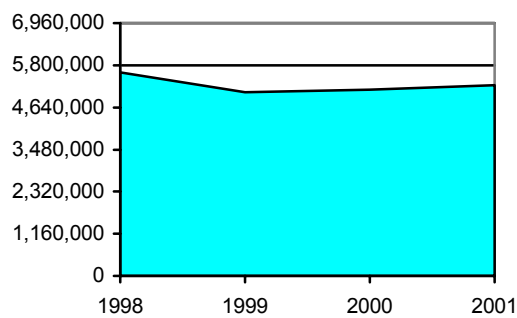
¹ All quarter credit hours produced in the USG in FY1998 and by Georgia Tech prior to Fall 1999 have been converted to Semester Credit Hours (SCH) at a rate of two SCH for every three QCH.

Four-Year Trends in Credit Hour Production

The growth in credit hour production in the last year represents a snapshot of USG progress following the temporary lag in credit hour production that accompanied semester conversion and the cap on hours required for degrees. The next series of graphs analyzes the four-year trends in credit hour production from the last fiscal year of the quarter system to 2001.

The first graph shows the overall 10 percent drop from FY1998 to FY1999 as well as the steady growth in SCH production from that point to the present. In the last two years, 187,000 SCH or approximately one-third of the original decrease has been added back to the USG credit hour total.

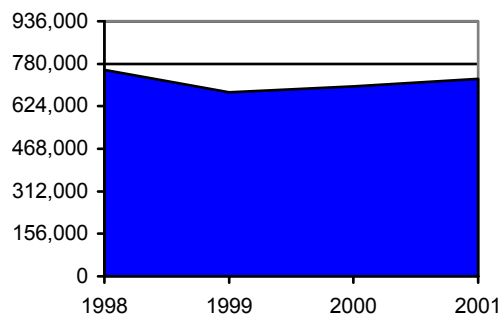
Figure 8
Total Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



Instruction Level

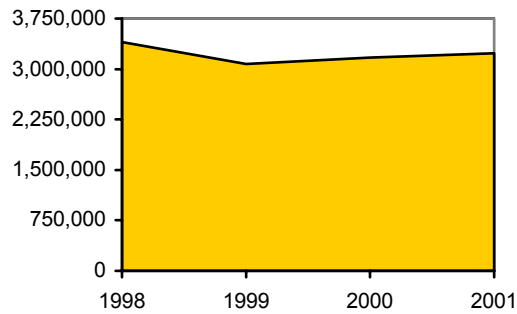
The four-year trends in credit hour production by level of instruction can be seen in the graphs below and on the next page. Graduate/professional level SCH production decreased about 9.5 percent the first year, but it has increased in the two years since semester conversion to 96 percent of its FY1998 level.

Figure 9
Graduate/Professional Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



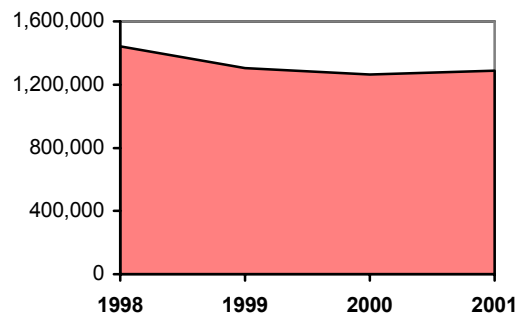
Lower level SCH production also decreased about 9.5 percent the first year, and by 2001 it had returned to 95 percent of its pre-semester level.

Figure 10
Lower Level Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



Upper level credit hours decreased the most, 10.7 percent the first year, followed by a 3.2 percent decrease in the second year. An increase of less than 2 percent in the last year has brought upper level SCH production to 89 percent of its FY1998 level.

Figure 11
Upper Level Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



Funding Group

The funding groups on the next two pages can be compared graphically in the same manner as instruction levels. In comparing funding groups, it is also important to consider the fields of study that each represents. A brief key to the fields in that group is provided with each graph.

As noted above, the Group 1 share of total credit hour production has declined since 1998 while those of Groups 2 and 3 have increased, a phenomenon that is probably more the result of career and economic factors affecting student choice than semester conversion, *per se*. The Group 1 decline in credit hour production is reinforced by the fact that its recovery from its FY1999 decrease has been the slowest (other than Group 4, learning support) among the funding groups. By 2001, the SCH production of Group 1 is less than 85 percent of its FY1998 level, while Group 2 generated almost 102 percent of its FY1998 total, and Group 3 over 96 percent.

Figure 12
Group 1 Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001

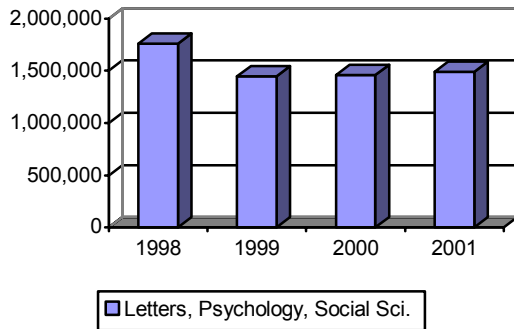


Figure 13
Group 2 Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001

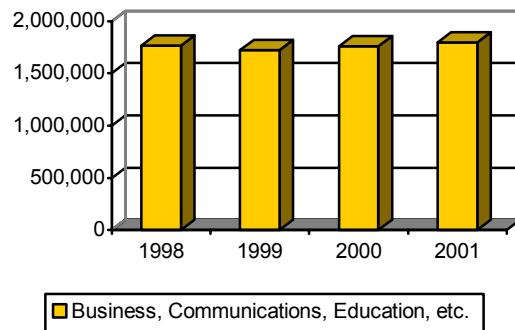
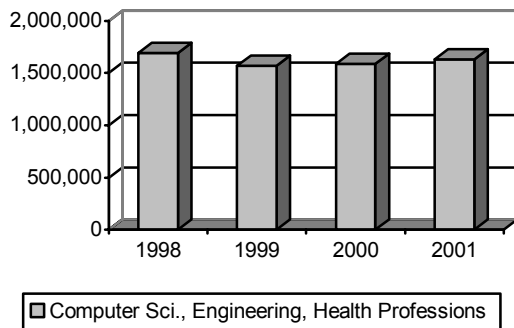


Figure 14
Group 3 Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



Group 4 (Figure 15), which includes only learning support/developmental studies credit hours, decreased 23 percent in FY1999, increased about 2 percent in FY2000 and then decreased again between 2000 and 2001 to a level 22 percent below FY1998. That decrease is most likely attributable to the 2001 admissions policy, including effects of the required college preparatory curriculum (CPC) and the phasing out of LS programs at USG research, regional, and state universities for traditional freshmen

Group 5, consisting of the medical disciplines for professional students only, experienced no decrease at semester conversion and grew in SCH production by approximately 11 percent between FY1998 and FY2001, as illustrated in Figure 16.

Figure 15
Group 4 Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001

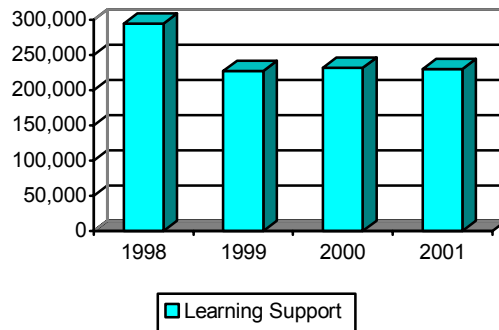
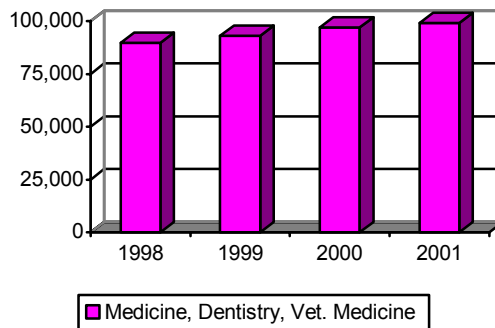


Figure 16
Group 5 Credit Hours
FY1998 – FY2001



Institutional Sector

The comparative change in credit hour production by institutional sector is also relevant to understanding USG productivity in the semester system. Figures 17 – 20 illustrate those trends below and on the following page.

The research universities have increased total SCH production by 2001 to 99.7 percent of the corresponding FY1998 level, followed by the state colleges with over 98 percent of their 1998 level by 2001. The two-year college growth rate has been slower, producing 93 percent of that sector's 1998 total by 2001, and state universities increased the most gradually, attaining 89 percent of their FY1998 credit hour production by FY2001.

Figure 17
Research University SCH
FY1998 – FY2001

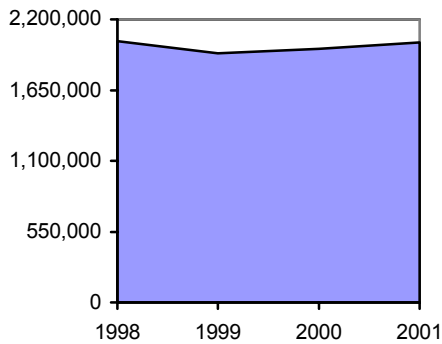


Figure 18
State College SCH
FY1998–FY2001

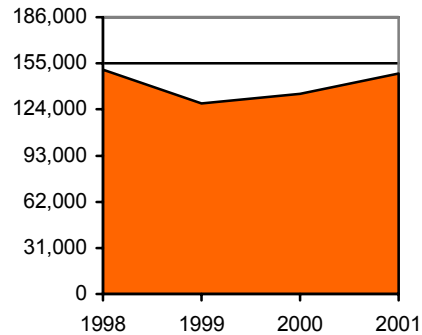


Figure 19
Two-Year College SCH
FY1998 – FY2001

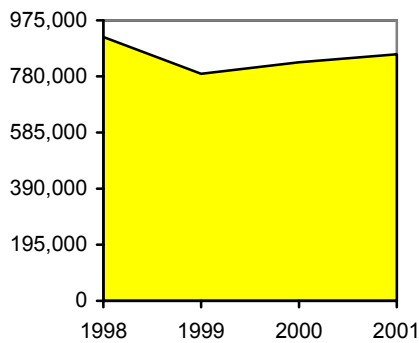
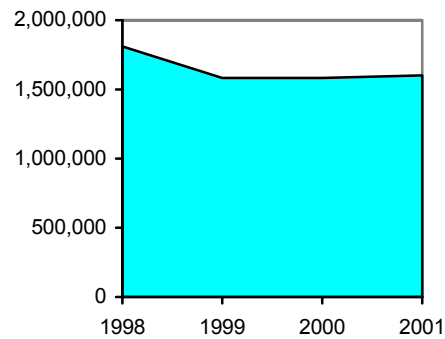


Figure 20
State University SCH
FY1998 – FY2001



The regional university sector decreased credit hour production by approximately 11 percent in the first year of the semester system and remained at that level the next year. In 2001, both Georgia Southern (-1.8%) and Valdosta (-0.4%) produced fewer SCH than the previous year, falling to almost 12 percent below their collective pre-semester level.

Figure 21
Regional University SCH
FY1998 – FY2001

