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information brief

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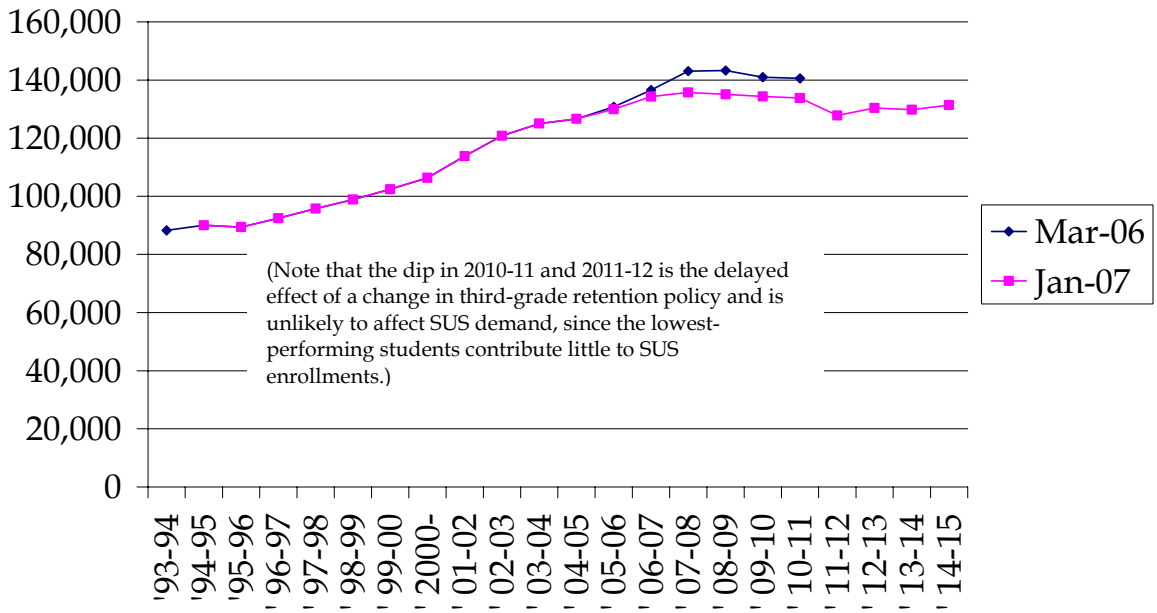
IMPACT OF CHANGING POPULATION, SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE PROJECTIONS ON SUS ENROLLMENTS

Because of lower-than-expected current year public school enrollments, the Department of Education and the Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research have revised downward the projections of public school enrollments and high school graduates. The new high school standard diploma projection is lower by 7,000 graduates annually, or about 5%, by 2010-11. This probably signals an overall deceleration in the state's growth that is not yet reflected in the official population estimates used by the Legislature.

January 2007 FL HS Graduate Projections Compared to Previous Projections



The most recent US Census estimate is also about 200,000, or 1.3% lower than the state's EDR/BEBR estimates and is probably more accurate for the state and most counties.

Urban counties are affected more than suburban and rural counties, some of which actually have higher-than-expected growth; inland and northern counties are also less affected by the apparent slowdown than coastal and southern counties.

How Will SUS Enrollment Be Affected?

Unlike public school or community college enrollments, State University System access is directly controlled by policy and budget choices. BOG staff are working on tools that can later be used in the development of enrollment models that account for different possible policy and budget directions.

Each scenario presented below is possible, depending on the combination of funded growth and financial aid available. The most rapid growth would require funding enrollment growth at the most popular universities to the full extent that those institutions are prepared to accept growth. Financial aid or other incentives could also encourage students to choose institutions where there is already capacity. These may not be students' first choice, or they may be further from home, and therefore more expensive to attend.

Scenario 1: Growth from continuing students only, with no growth in the number of new students

	2005	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Grand Total	287,375	294,016	*298,271*	*299,827*	*300,214*	*300,166*	*300,061*	*299,989*
Lower	87,846	88,082	*86,692*	*85,813*	*85,525*	*85,446*	*85,426*	*85,421*
Upper	134,652	140,144	*144,655*	*146,325*	*146,446*	*146,124*	*145,841*	*145,676*
Beg Grad	39,351	40,752	*41,638*	*42,162*	*42,538*	*42,762*	*42,867*	*42,897*
Adv Grad	11,405	11,854	*12,076*	*12,256*	*12,397*	*12,510*	*12,600*	*12,668*
Unclassified	14,121	13,184	*13,210*	*13,270*	*13,308*	*13,324*	*13,328*	*13,327*

Explanation: Based on current rates of retention, progression, and graduation, these are the enrollments the system could expect if it enrolled the same number of new students each year as it did in fall 2006. The number of students entering the system annually grew rapidly in the last 10 years. Even if the number of new students coming in levels out, it takes time for growth currently in the pipeline to finish working its way through the system, as each crop of graduating/departing students is replaced by a larger cohort coming up behind it.

This scenario assumes no change in system-wide retention rates. This scenario would reduce the level of access relative to the population.

SCENARIO 2: NEW STUDENT GROWTH IN PROPORTION TO CURRENT POPULATION PROJECTIONS.

	2005	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Grand Total	287,375	294,016	*300,499*	*305,688*	*310,423*	*314,957*	*319,352*	*323,671*
Lower	87,846	88,082	*87,658*	*88,226*	*89,338*	*90,455*	*91,411*	*92,276*
Upper	134,652	140,144	*145,392*	*148,420*	*150,475*	*152,421*	*154,516*	*156,689*
Beg Grad	39,351	40,752	*41,933*	*42,982*	*44,022*	*44,982*	*45,840*	*46,638*
Adv Grad	11,405	11,854	*12,110*	*12,358*	*12,607*	*12,864*	*13,126*	*13,387*
Unclassified	14,121	13,184	*13,405*	*13,702*	*13,981*	*14,234*	*14,460*	*14,681*

Explanation: This scenario maintains the current level of access relative to population in the age groups served by the SUS, regardless of whether or not that population is more or less qualified for entry into university. It also assumes no change in retention rates.

SCENARIO 3: NEW STUDENT GROWTH IN PROPORTION TO REDUCED POPULATION PROJECTIONS.

	2005	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Grand Total	287,375	294,016	*299,550*	*303,044*	*305,532*	*307,422*	*308,912*	*310,153*
Lower	87,846	88,082	*87,232*	*87,072*	*87,339*	*87,570*	*87,625*	*87,580*
Upper	134,652	140,144	*145,101*	*147,539*	*148,672*	*149,417*	*150,126*	*150,803*
Beg Grad	39,351	40,752	*41,807*	*42,624*	*43,361*	*43,967*	*44,430*	*44,800*
Adv Grad	11,405	11,854	*12,093*	*12,309*	*12,506*	*12,694*	*12,870*	*13,032*
Unclassified	14,121	13,184	*13,317*	*13,500*	*13,653*	*13,774*	*13,860*	*13,937*

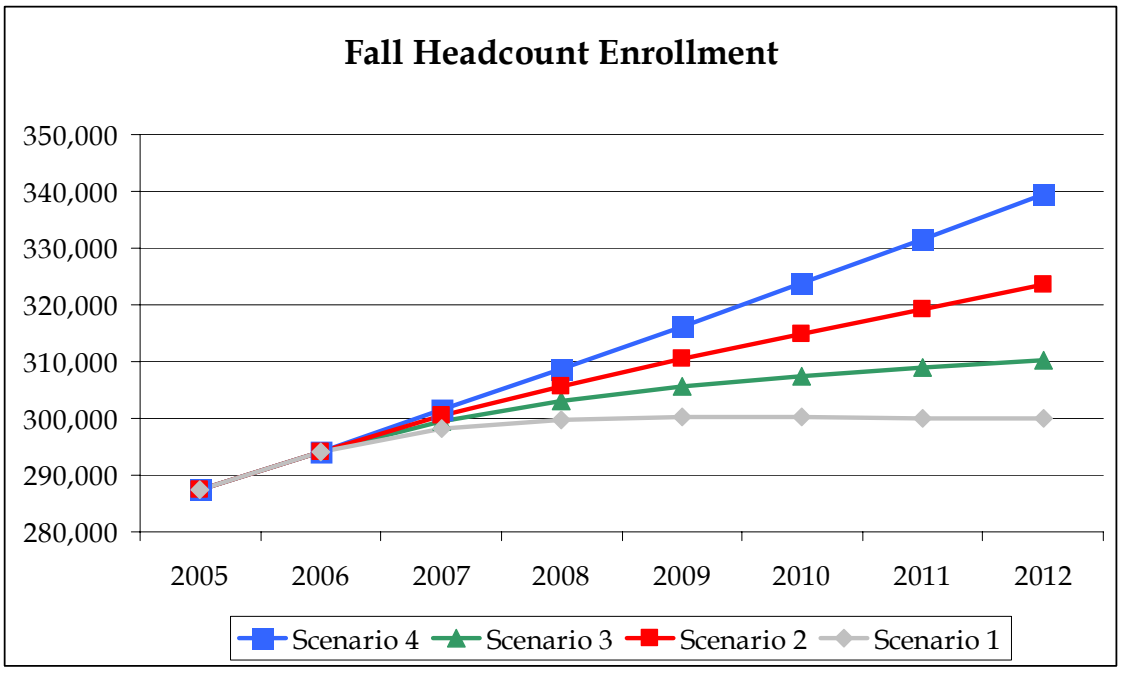
Explanation: Current K-12 enrollments and projections for the next few years suggest that the current population estimate may be slightly overstated and that the projected population growth rate may be overstated by 0.5-1.5 percentage points. Anecdotal evidence from around the state also suggests lower-than-expected growth. The table above illustrates enrollment with new students increasing at a rate one percentage point below current population estimates for the relevant age groups.

SCENARIO 4: INCREASE 0.5 PERCENTAGE POINTS FASTER THAN POPULATION PROJECTIONS WITH 1 PERCENTAGE POINT INCREASE IN GRADUATION RATES EACH YEAR UNTIL 2012.

	2005	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Grand Total	287,375	294,016	*301,638*	*308,826*	*316,185*	*323,796*	*331,595*	*339,557*
Lower	87,846	88,082	*88,090*	*89,315*	*91,177*	*93,091*	*94,872*	*96,583*
Upper	134,652	140,144	*145,979*	*150,130*	*153,753*	*157,594*	*161,816*	*166,279*
Beg Grad	39,351	40,752	*42,000*	*43,187*	*44,433*	*45,657*	*46,828*	*47,979*
Adv Grad	11,405	11,854	*12,118*	*12,383*	*12,659*	*12,954*	*13,264*	*13,584*
Unclassified	14,121	13,184	*13,451*	*13,810*	*14,163*	*14,500*	*14,815*	*15,131*

Explanation: This scenario expands access relative to the population in the relevant age groups. The Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research projects that the number of students eligible for Bright Futures will increase faster than the number of high

school graduates. Students performing at the minimum Bright Futures level—college prep curriculum, 3.0 GPA, minimum test scores—are typical of four-year students in the Cal State schools, SUNY, CUNY, and many other states. They are much more likely to complete bachelor degrees when entering the SUS directly than when attending community college first.



There are also many students in the state who could be attending the SUS but are not. Statewide, only about 64% as many high school graduates go to the SUS as qualify for Bright Futures. In some high schools, the proportion is much lower. At Lafayette High School, for example, none of 19 Bright Futures-eligible graduates went to the SUS. If all such high schools sent Bright Futures-eligible graduates students to public university at the state average rate, there would be 3,500 additional freshmen each year, or a total of 14,000 more students by 2012, even with zero population growth.

A weaker economy could also lead to greater demand for graduate, professional, and some undergraduate programs.

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