



# Georgia College & State University

## INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

**Institutional Mission:** Georgia College remains committed to being an integral part of the University System of Georgia's Complete College Georgia (CCG) initiative for creating a more educated state. The CCG Campus Completion Plan, initially developed by Georgia College in 2012, was built around its mission as Georgia's designated public liberal arts university in which excellence, engagement and innovation are essential components of an educational experience. To this extent, Georgia College continues to refine and improve upon the CCG goals, strategies and objectives previously developed.

### Georgia College Mission Statement

"As Georgia's public liberal arts university, Georgia College offers undergraduate programs of study to talented and motivated students in a residential college setting. Georgia College also provides, at multiple locations, graduate and professional studies that support the needs of the region and create pathways to individual success and personal fulfillment. Its academically engaging, student-centered programs often take learning beyond the traditional classroom and develop the intellectual, professional, and civic skills and dispositions that enable graduates to thrive in an information-intensive and diverse global society. Through its teaching, research and service, Georgia College enriches the lives of students and their local and global communities."

**Student Profile:** Georgia College's enrollment has been stable over the past eight years. First-time-freshmen enrollment (see Graph 1: First Time Freshmen, Appendix A) was initially capped between 2007 and 2010 to support our mission but has experienced modest increases since 2011. Overall undergraduate enrollment also experienced moderate increases from 2006 to 2010 but saw a small decline in fall 2012. The previously experienced upward enrollment trend was reestablished in fall 2013 (see Graph 2: Overall Enrollment, Appendix A). Further enrollment growth at Georgia College is planned for graduate programs while maintaining undergraduate enrollment at its current levels.

The academic profile of the incoming classes has improved in quality as evidenced in the average SAT score which increased from 1125 in fall 2006 to 1162 in fall 2013 (see Graph 3: First Time Freshmen Average SAT, Appendix A) and average high school GPA which increased from 3.29 in fall 2006 to 3.47 in fall 2013 (see Graph 4: First Time Freshmen Average HS GPA, Appendix A). Given the increased quality of the incoming freshmen class coupled with strategies that will be mentioned in this report (intrusive advising and the Math Emporium), there is a reasonable expectation that Georgia College's on-time completion rate will likewise improve.

Georgia College's four-year graduation rate (see Graph 5: Four, Five & Six Year Graduation Rate, Appendix A) has also seen a steady increase and is cause for optimism that many of our CCG goals and strategies might indeed be effective.

The diversity among our student body is illustrated in Graph 6: First Time Freshmen by Ethnicity (see Appendix A) and reviewers will note the trend line for minority students, particularly African-American and Hispanic. While Georgia College has continued to struggle with attracting students from diverse populations, much attention has gone into increasing student diversity. Evidence of this work includes: a recently authored campus diversity action plan; increased recruitment efforts by the Office of Admissions; and the successes of the Georgia College Early College program highlighted later in this report and other initiatives (Call me Mister and Articulation Agreements with two-year institutions) presented in previous CCG reports. Collectively, all efforts to date have the goal of increasing diversity across campus and subsequently retention and graduation rates of these student groups.

Georgia College continues to be committed to its designated public liberal arts mission and the purposeful execution of activities designed to improve retention and graduation rates of its students.

## INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### CCG Goal 1

Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.

**CCG Strategy:** Target increases in access and completion for students traditionally underserved in post-secondary education.

**Strategies** (CCG – Complete College Georgia; GC – Georgia College)

**GC Strategy:** Increase high school completion in GC's Early College program by 5% annually and earning of college credit by the time of high school graduation by 5% over the next three years.

### Discussion

Attainment of this goal and strategy will result in greater access to Georgia College for a traditionally underserved group in the Middle Georgia area. Furthermore, because these students will enter GC with awarded college credit, there is a greater potential for these students to complete their degrees in four years. Readers should be cognizant of the fact that the Georgia College Early College (GCEC) program is only one strategy among many to help achieve CCG completion goals with specific reference to traditionally underserved populations. The GCEC example is highlighted in this report

because of its apparent success and because it could be replicated by other institutions hoping to make improvements. Once again, however, the program should be considered along with other strategies (Call me Mister, Articulation Agreements, Dual Degree Programs) and the collective value that programs have had in increasing access and success of traditionally underserved populations. With respect to incoming African-American freshmen students enrolled at GC, recent data suggests improvements have been realized: fall 2012, 48; fall 2013, 44; & fall 2014, 65, as a result of the strategies enlisted.

Challenges for GCEC students attaining the goal are identified below with steps to remedy the situation:

**1. MENTORSHIPS:** Most GCEC students do not come from environments that support them in furthering their education. Their lack of knowledge and reluctance to ask for help causes a series of negative events to occur when they begin their college courses. GCEC offers college support classes, and teachers are asked to monitor students. However, because of the day-to-day demands of teachers, there is often inadequate time for them to provide adequate mentoring.

**Step:** GCEC principal will work with Georgia College academic and support programs to develop mentorship programs with GC students. These efforts will mirror the existing relationships with the GC Multicultural Center and the Male Connection Program.

**2. COLLEGE RIGOR/CONTENT COLLABORATION:** GCEC has two academic challenges: making sure students master the state's common core standards and making sure students are ready for college content. Although GCEC students master state standards, they are not always ready for the rigor of college courses. GCEC needs more scheduled collaborations with college instructors to ensure GCEC students are ready for college content.

**Step:** The GCEC principal will engage in ongoing and collaborative discussions with GC administration and faculty to determine ways that college instructors can best assist GCEC students with content knowledge.

**3. FUNDING COLLEGE BOOKS:** In Academic Year 2015-16, GCEC will not have the Access Challenge Grant to pay for students' college textbooks; and this will cause a hardship for parents. This may lead to students leaving the dual enrollment program. GCEC needs funds to offset the cost of dual enrollment students' college textbooks.

**Step:** Beginning Fall 2014, GCEC is asking parents for an annual \$100.00 donation. Of the \$100.00, half will be placed in GCEC's general account for student services (college textbooks, registrations fees, etc.) and half will be given to the GCEC Scholarship Foundation. GCEC will continue to fundraise and search for grants.

In addition, GC is involved in the Affordable Learning Georgia Initiative and will work with faculty to provide open textbook and other options for GCEC students to lower their costs and, thereby, make dual-credit courses more accessible.

## CCG Goal 4

Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.

**Strategies** (CCG – Complete College Georgia; GC – Georgia College)

### GC Strategy

*Use predictive analytics (EAB: Student Success Collaborative) to help identify students who are off track and to help students understand their likelihood of success in particular programs.*

## Discussion

The Student Success Collaborative (SSC) provides predictive information to academic advisors to identify students who, though in good academic standing, may be in danger of not graduating in their intended major. SSC performs these analytics by comparing students' performance in key courses with those of students who have been successful in the same major. It also helps to identify majors that are strong matches in the event students are not performing adequately in their first choice.

The SSC is now a major asset to intrusive advising at GC. The Collaborative allows academic advisors to monitor student retention risk levels, missed courses and missed course-timing markers. For declared and undeclared students alike, the system allows advisors to record meetings and other contacts, to keep track of meeting and contact notes and to assign select students to a "watch list" for additional monitoring and follow-up. Advisors can also prepare and push tailored messages to targeted groups of students, whether it's concern over midterm grades or email "congrats" to praise a successful semester. This powerful tool, especially in conjunction with our academic advisors' weekly contact with the vast majority of freshmen in their first year academic seminar, allows advisors to be proactive and in contact with students early when issues and pitfalls might be developing. Therefore, Georgia College hopes to build upon its healthy Y1:Y2 rates and move its retention needle even higher.

Full implementation of SSC occurred at the end of Spring semester 2014. All academic advisors and department chairs now have access to the platform and are using it. Challenges to the successful implementation of the SSC include the ongoing training needed for campus users as well as ensuring the platform works seamlessly with other tools used in academic advising. Training uses are being addressed through the development of a training manual for new users. The seamless integration of processes is being addressed by including the SSC into the single sign-on process now being utilized with DegreeWorks, our degree audit system and Banner self-service.

## CCG Goal 6

Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment.

**Strategies** (CCG – Complete College Georgia; GC – Georgia College)

**GC Strategy**

*Participate in dual enrollment programs for high school students.*

*Award credit based on assessment of prior learning via CLEP scores.*

**Discussion**

Any college credit that students can earn while still enrolled in high school not only shortens time to degree but also serves as preparation for postsecondary education after high school.

Georgia’s Accel Program provides funding to assist with the cost of tuition, but some families struggle with the cost of mandatory fees.

Georgia College has been able to waive mandatory fees for first generation dual enrollment students who are part of our Early College Program. This allows these students to take college courses with no out-of-pocket cost with the exception of textbooks.

Though Georgia College actively promoted the use of CLEP credit to incoming students, the number of students taking advantage of this opportunity has declined. Georgia College went from 30 courses exempted through CLEP for fall 2013, to only two courses exempted through CLEP for fall 2014.

Challenges to the promotion of CLEP for advanced credit include the choice of most students to use Advanced Placement (AP) credit instead of CLEP and the lack of high school preparation in subject areas of CLEP outside general education. This challenge is being addressed by shifting focus to the promotion of AP credit versus CLEP.

COURSES EXEMPTED THROUGH CLEP

Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
42	30	2

**CCG Goal 8**

Restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and student success. CCG Strategy: Implement alternative delivery models such as emporium-model instruction.

**Strategies** (CCG – Complete College Georgia; GC – Georgia College)

*GC Strategy: Increase course completion rate by 5% in core mathematics courses using the Math Emporium redesign process.*

**Discussion**

College Algebra Emporium, MATH 1111, was designed to improve success and completion rates of non-STEM students taking their Area A Math course. Prior to the introduction of the College Algebra Emporium, students took MATH 1101 Math Modeling.

MATH 1101 MATH MODELING

Grade	AB	DFW	W
AY 09-10	56%	25%	12%
AY 10-11	57%	23%	12%

The corresponding rates for the first three years of the Emporium:

MATH 1111 COLLEGE ALGEBRA

	AB	DFW	W
AY 11-12	55%	24%	13%
AY 12-13	67%	20%	9%
AY 13-14	71%	16%	7%

Challenges in achieving this goal included: identifying optimum class time; adjusting assessment strategies; determining the best mix of laboratory versus class space; and instructors adjusting how best to use instructional time.

Note: The steps for addressing these challenges are provided on page 10 in the Summary of Activities for the College Algebra Emporium.

**SUMMARY OF GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

**CCG Goal 1**

**GC Goals:**

**Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions**

*GC Goal #1: Increase graduation rates – In particular, by FY15, Georgia College seeks to achieve a 6-year graduation rate of 62%, approximately 7 percentage points higher than current benchmark data. By FY16, a 6-year graduation rate of 63% and by FY17 a 6-year graduation rate of 63.5%.*

&

*GC Goal #3. Increase enrollment of students from traditionally underserved populations – In particular, by FY 15, Georgia College seeks to increase enrollment of students from traditionally underserved populations by 3% over current benchmark data with similar percentage increases in FY16 & FY17 (see below):*

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total Minority	206	212	219
Black	67	70	73
Hispanic	76	79	82

**High Impact Strategies Summary of Activities**

Increase high school completion in GC’s Early College program by 5% annually and earning of college credit by the time of high school graduation by 5% over the next two years. Data presented below demonstrates a dramatic increase in students graduating from GCEC between 2012 and 2014 and, subsequently, the number of students opting to enroll at Georgia College. While there was a slight dip in college credits earned from 2012 to 2013, the number increased in 2014 with a range of 15-37 credits. GCEC students electing to enter GC have completed between five and 12 three-credit hour courses, which will put them on track to graduate in four years, some in likely less.

Strategies that have helped achieve this objective have included:

- Intrusive advising by the GCEC administration and staff
- Constant efforts by the GCEC administration to maintain communication between GCEC and GC (particularly the College of Education)
- Constant efforts by GCEC administration to connect with parents and caregivers.

**Interim Measures of Success**

GCEC graduated its first class in 2012. The high school graduation rate at GCEC increased by 72.7% from 2013 to 2014. On average, there was a slight decline in the number of college credits earned in dual enrollment from 2012 to 2013 but a sizeable increase from 2013 to 2014.

	Total GCEC Enrollment	Graduating High School (Attended GC)	% of Original Class of 55	Continuing @ IHE	Dual Enrollment Range of College Credits Earned by GCEC graduates
2011-12	168	10 (1)	18.2%	10	15-29
2012-13	194	11 (0)	20%	11	13-26
2013-2014	229	19 (5)	34.5%	19	15-37

**Measures of Success**

Percentage of students graduating from GCEC compared to original class enrollment  
 Number of college credits awarded to GCEC graduates in each of the past three years

Provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate

**CCG Goal 4**

**GC Goal**

***GC Goal #2. Increase retention of first-year students – In particular, by FY15 Georgia College seeks to attain an 86% rate of retention of students from the first year into the second year, representing a 3-percentage point increase over current benchmark data.***

**High Impact Strategies Summary of Activities**

Increase retention rates by 0.5% for Y1:Y2 and 1% for Y2:Y3 annually for five years by implementing a centralized advising system utilizing professional advisors for first-year and second-year students.

The expansion of the Center for Student Success (CSS) into a centralized advising center to serve the vast majority of first-year and second-year students is a recent development. The GC CSS was previously composed of four advisors who served undeclared students at Georgia College. In 2011, two full-time advisor positions were added; and three part-time advising positions in the departments of Biology & Environmental Science, Psychological Science and Mass Communication were augmented to full-time and brought under the CSS umbrella. In January and February of 2012, the advisors from Nursing, Business and Kinesiology joined CSS as well. While it may be too soon to see an effect on retention data from this initiative, year-one retention increased from 83% (Fall 2010) to 85.93% (Fall 2011). In Fall 2012, there was a slight decline to 84.69% but still higher than Fall 2010 (83%). Data will be analyzed in subsequent years to better determine the impact of CSS.

The implementation of the Student Success Collaborative provides academic advisors with a predictive tool to identify students who may be performing in good academic standing but not at the same level as former students who were successful in their chosen major. This tool allows advisors to act intrusively earlier in honing student study skills or choose another academic path if necessary.

For FY’14, Georgia College made the decision to expand the scope of professional advising; and the Center for Student Success was allocated funding to hire seven (7) new “Upper Level” academic advisors. GC students now have a professional advisor for all four years, and GC faculty are free from the administrative aspects of academic advising. Faculty can now focus on mentoring their major students – shepherding them through their upper-level courses, conducting undergraduate research with students, and helping to develop the students’ plans for graduate school, professional school, or the career world. The addition of “upper level” advisors has now brought intrusive advising to juniors and seniors at GC, and advisors can focus on details that many faculty were often stretched too thin to monitor or that may have been administered with great variance from faculty member to faculty member, if at all. Examples of intrusive advising at the upper-level include:

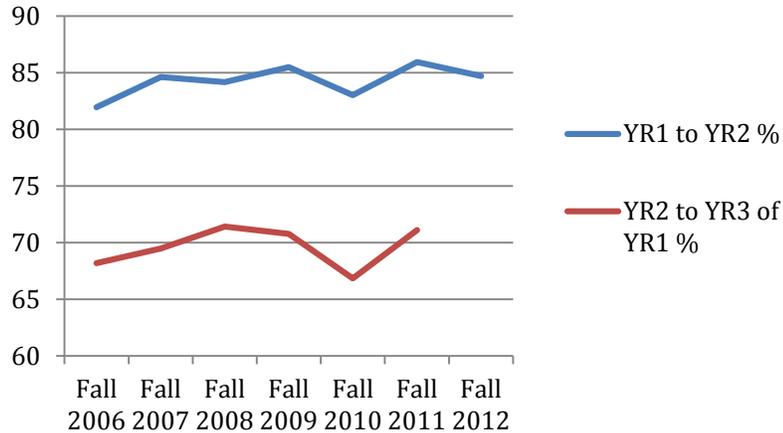
- Encouraging early academic advising appointments and any other needed visits with the academic advisors (who, unlike faculty, are available each work day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

- Monitoring academic standing and offering strategies and referrals to help the student regain stability and remain on track academically
- Checking for issues with major course pre-requisites to help eliminate “bottlenecks” and promote progression in the major
- Early monitoring and encouraging satisfactory completion of state legislative requirements
- Assisting the students with graduation applications and any revisions needed as the students begin their initial approach to graduation

Overall, GC hopes to make gains with Y2:Y3 retention by expanding professional academic advising into the junior and senior years and, therefore, continuing a higher level of attention and support to our students.

**Interim Measures of Success**

**GC - Y1:Y2 and Y2:Y3 Retention Rates for First Time Freshmen**



**Measure of Success** Retention rates for Y1:Y2 and Y2:Y3 annually for five years

**CCG Goal 6** Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment.

**GC Goal** GC Goal #1: Increase graduation rates – In particular, by FY15, Georgia College seeks to achieve a 6-year graduation rate of 62%, approximately 7 percentage points higher than current benchmark data. By FY16, a 6-year graduation rate of 63% and by FY17, a 6-year graduation rate of 63.5%.

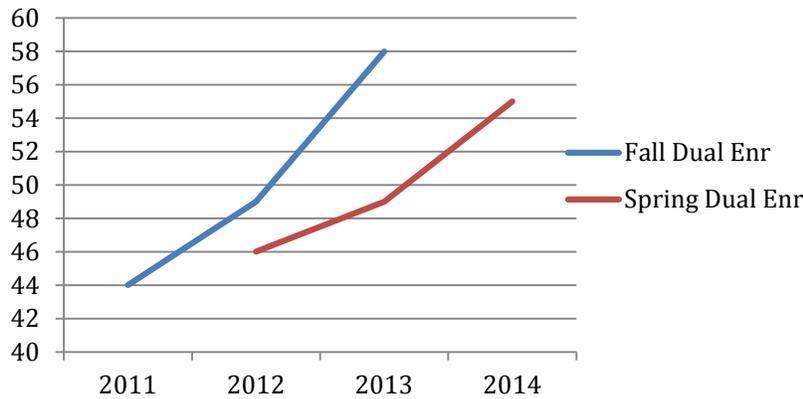
**High Impact Strategies Summary of Activities** Increase the number of dual-enrolled students taking GC classes and earning college credit prior to high school graduation

Georgia College Office of Admissions has reached out to local schools to offer assistance for students enrolling dually in high school and college. Admission Counselors also work with high school counselors to encourage students all over Georgia to take advantage of dual enrollment opportunities in their local communities to gain advance credit but also improve their admission portfolio when considering application to Georgia College.

Similar to the GCEC example previously highlighted in this report, the strategy of increasing the number of dual-enrolled students should be considered in concert with other strategies (GCEC, Math Emporium, Call me Mister, Articulation Agreements) and the collective value these programs have in shortening time to degree completion. Individually, there is insufficient scope for discrete programs to have an institutional impact, but combining efforts and the impact, is much more pronounced.

**Interim Measures of Success**

**GC - Dual/Joint Enrollment**



**Measures of Success**      Number of students in the dual-enrollment program.

**CCG Goal #8:**      **Restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and student success**

**GC Goal**      **GC Goal #1:** *Increase graduation rates – In particular, by FY15, Georgia College seeks to achieve a 6-year graduation rate of 62%, approximately 7 percentage points higher than current benchmark data. By FY16, a 6-year graduation rate of 63% and by FY17, a 6-year graduation rate of 63.5%.*

**High Impact Strategies Summary of Activities**      Increase course completion rate by 5% in core mathematics courses using the Math Emporium redesign process.

The College Algebra Emporium was piloted in Fall 2011. Since then, the program has been assessed on an annual basis with modifications made to improve its effectiveness. Evidence of the program’s success is provided in the chart below (MATH 1111 College Algebra), which shows increases in ABs and declines in DFWs and Ws across the three years.

While modifications to the program have occurred across all three years, specific activities engaged in this year included:

- Increasing the number of minutes from 50 to 75 minutes thus giving instructors more time to engage in hands-on activities and to design more comprehensive tests
- Adjusting homework, quizzes and tests to place more emphasis on problems with which students generally struggle
- Moving from one large laboratory space to a small classroom configuration to provide an instructional setting in which students, instructors and undergraduate learning assistants could better interact
- Instructors using strategic gaps or pauses in instructional sets in order to give more time for discussions and interactions with students.

**Future Strategies**

Because of Georgia College’s strong commitment to student success, retention and graduation of students, an organizational leadership change is planned for Fall 2014 with the creation of an Associate Provost for Student Success

position. This will allow Georgia College to provide focused attention on student success by enhancing campus collaboration from both faculty and staff and ensuring the use of effective best practices in this area.

**OBSERVATIONS**

**What strategies and activities have been most successful?**

**Math Emporium:** As evidenced by data provided in this report, the Math Emporium model continues to be one of Georgia College’s greatest instructional delivery successes. The Mathematics Department has worked diligently to develop a model that has led to increases in students’ performance. To their credit, the Math Department has utilized sound assessment practices by creating a data driven

mechanism to provide them with evidence to make informed decisions. In turn, the Office of Academic Affairs has provided the necessary resources to build facilities, provide equipment and assign the necessary human resources.

**Georgia College Early College Program:** Data presented illustrated a dramatic increase in students graduating from GCEC between 2012 and 2014 and, subsequently, the number of students opting to enroll at Georgia College. While there was a slight dip in college credits earned from 2012 to 2013,

the number increased in 2014 to a range of 15-37 credits. GCEC students electing to enter GC completed between five and 12 three-credit hour courses, putting them on track to graduate in four years, some likely less.

**What have been least effective?**

Georgia College’s promotion of CLEP credit as a method for students to receive advance credit has not been effective. Because so many Georgia College students bring with them Advanced Placement (AP) scores that exempt them from courses, the majority of our general education courses are already being addressed. The remaining courses where CLEP may be available are not ones where students are receiving significant preparation in the high school curriculum. The cost of testing involved with CLEP is also a deterrent.

**Has your institution made adjustments to completion activities over the past three years? If so, please explain why.**

**GCEC Program:** Strategies that have helped achieve the GCEC successes over the past three years have included:

- Intrusive advising by the GCEC administration and staff
- Constant efforts by the GCEC administration to maintain communication between GCEC and GC (particularly the College of Education)
- Constant efforts by GCEC administration to connect with parents and caregivers.

**Center for Student Success:** Because of Georgia College’s success with professional advising for Year 1 and Year 2 students through the Center for Student Success, we have extended this program to include professional advising for all undergraduate students with faculty in the major serving as mentors. The Learning Center is a component of the Center for Student Success and offers not only personal tutoring but also supplemental instruction in STEM areas and broadly in other disciplines. While still in the beginning stages, the Student Success Collaborative provides Georgia College’s professional advisors with a tool to identify students who, while in good academic standing, may not be performing well in their intended majors.

**Math Emporium Model:** Modifications in the amount of time per session, size of space, assessment strategies and instructional strategies have been made across the three years of operation, which has resulted in increases in ABs and declines in DFWs and Ws.