



# South Georgia State College

## **INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE: WHO WE ARE**

The mission statement of South Georgia State College (SGSC), approved for the institutional consolidation of former South Georgia College and former Waycross College in 2012, is as follows:

South Georgia State College, a state college of the University System of Georgia, is a multi-campus, student-centered institution offering high-quality associate and select baccalaureate degree programs. The institution provides innovative teaching and learning experiences, a rich array of student activities and athletic programs, access to unique ecological sites, and residential options to create a diverse, globally-focused, and supportive learning environment.

SGSC offers 3 associate degree programs (AA, AS, and AS in Nursing) with a total of 23 academic pathways, as well as bachelor's degree programs in 3 disciplines (BS in Nursing, BS in Biological Sciences, and BS in Management). Therefore, the college's completion priorities focus primarily on attainment of the associate's degree, at which level 97% of students were enrolled in fall 2016.

SGSC's mission, completion priorities, and student body demographics are clearly aligned. The institution consistently enrolls primarily "traditional" students (86% fall 2016). However, a variety of student-support services for all students is extremely important at SGSC, where almost two-thirds of all students have been Pell grant recipients (64% average, fall 2012-fall 2016), 38% of entering freshmen have remedial mathematics requirements (fall 2016), and almost one-third (32% average, fall 2012-fall 2016) have been first-generation college students. Such student demographic data has led SGSC to select 6 college completion strategies focusing on helping students to succeed and earn a degree. **The last two strategies described here are new and being reported on for the first time: a strategy to improve student performance in a gateway high-enrollment, high-risk course, and a strategy to engage students in active learning through developing research skills.**

The "Enrollment and Demographic Trends" and "Underserved Enrollment Trends" tables (**Appendix Tables A and B, respectively**) provide a good look at the SGSC student body's characteristics. All demographic data prior to fall 2013 has been combined due to consolidation of former South Georgia College and former Waycross College.

In addition to the data in the tables, it is noteworthy that in the fall of 2016 SGSC enrolled students from 102 of the 159 Georgia counties, from 21 other states and 1 U.S. territory, from 10 other countries, and from 366 high schools. The students represented in these enrollment figures help "to create a diverse, globally-focused learning environment" (SGSC mission statement).

### **1. Institutional Completion Goals, High-Impact Strategies & Activities**

#### **(ALL TABLES AND GRAPHS REFERENCED ARE IN THE APPENDIX.)**

#### **HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #1 (REVISED THIS YEAR):**

##### **GATEWAY MATHEMATICS COURSE SUPPORT:**

**Implementation of the USG's model for co-requisite courses mathematics remediation:** Focus on the USG model this year replaces further SGSC implementation of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's "Quantway" remedial mathematics collaborative, of which SGSC had been a member for the past 7 years, because the USG model accomplishes the same student success goals with far more at-risk students and at no cost to the institution.

##### **RELATED GOAL**

Transform remediation to increase likelihood of degree attainment; shorten time to degree; increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded.

##### **DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT**

Of SGSC's fall 2016 incoming freshmen, 38% required one or more remedial mathematics course(s). With the USG Learning Support co-requisite remedial math policy in place at SGSC since fall 2015, students have a support course process to enhance their opportunities for success.

#### PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY

Dr. Charles Johnson, Dean, School of Sciences, [Charles.johnson@sgsc.edu](mailto:Charles.johnson@sgsc.edu)

#### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

This strategy is fully implemented. Activity highlights include the following:

1. For fall 2015 the former non-STEM Quantway course, MLCS 0099, was renamed and numbered in accordance with the new USG Learning Support policy. The Quantway course is now MATH 0987, "Foundations for Quantitative Reasoning." The course student learning outcomes have remained the same, as has the course design. However, the course now employs a textbook rather than Carnegie Foundation materials.
2. The remedial co-requisite support course for MATH 1001 ("Quantitative Reasoning"), MATH 0997, ("Support for Quantitative Reasoning"), was fully implemented fall 2015 in a lab format using the MyMathLab program. Students receive grades of "S" or "U" in that course.
3. The STEM path remedial math "Foundations for College Algebra" course, MATH 0989, was fully implemented fall 2015.
4. The STEM path remedial co-requisite support course for MATH 1111 ("College Algebra"), "Support for College Algebra" (MATH 0999), was fully implemented fall 2015 in a lab format using the MyMathLab program. Students receive grades of "S" or "U" in that course.
5. Prior to implementation of the co-requisite model SGSC personnel attended USG meetings on how to implement the model, and math faculty met on campus to develop and structure the courses. First-time instructors of these courses are provided training. The course syllabi for both the gateway and support courses are standardized across all sections. While gateway and support courses are taught by the same instructors whenever possible, that is not always the case.

#### MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

##### BASELINE MEASURES

(All baseline data is from fall semester 2015, the first semester of SGSC implementation of the current USG remedial math model): (

1. The MATH 0987 course success rate baseline is the fall 2015 rate of 46.94% **(Table C)**.
2. The MATH 0989 course success rate baseline is the fall 2015 rate of 57.81% **(Table C)**.
3. The MATH 1001 course success rate baseline for MATH 0997 (Support for Quantitative Reasoning) students is the fall 2015 rate of 82.46% **(Table D)**.
4. The MATH 1111 course success rate baseline for MATH 0999 (Support for College Algebra) students is the fall 2015 rate of 79.56% **(Table E)**.

##### INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS:

1. The fall 2016 MATH 0987 course success rate is 48.65%, an increase of 1.7 % over the fall 2015 baseline; the spring 2017 success rate is 86.67%, an almost 40% increase over the same baseline (Table C).
2. The fall 2016 MATH 0989 course success rate is 69.16%, an increase of 11.35% over the fall 2015 baseline; the spring 2017 success rate is 56.76%, slightly under the baseline rate (Table C).
3. The MATH 1001 success rate for students enrolled in the MATH 0997 support course for fall 2016 is slightly below the fall 2015 baseline rate; however, the spring 2017 success rate is 92.31%, almost 10% above the baseline rate (Table D).
4. The MATH 1111 success rate for students enrolled in the MATH 0999 support course for fall 2016 is slightly under the baseline rate; however, the spring 2017 success rate is 88.78%, a little more than 9% above the baseline rate (Table E).

##### MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

"Success" in SGSC's remedial math courses is defined as earning a grade of "S" (satisfactory) or better, while "success" in the credit-level MATH 1001 and 1111 courses is defined as a grade of "C" or better. **SGSC's goal is to maintain at least a 70% course success rate for each course's fall semester student cohort each academic year.**

## LESSONS LEARNED

1. The new USG Learning Support policy appears to be increasing student success across the entire gateway math program. For instance, Table D demonstrates that students required to take the co-requisite MATH 0997 support course along with MATH 1001 (Quantitative Reasoning) are more successful in MATH 1001 than are students who were not required to take the co-requisite remedial course (79.71% versus 77.27% for fall 2016; for spring 2017 the gap is quite significant: 92.31% versus 60%). Table E demonstrates that students required to take the co-requisite MATH 0999 support course along with MATH 1111 (College Algebra) are more successful in MATH 1111 than are students who were not required to take the co-requisite remedial support course (88.78% versus 76.44% for spring 2017). It appears that more students should be served by the support course model, perhaps by raising cutoff scores, and math faculty have discussed this possibility. However, SGSC does not at present have enough math faculty to cover the increased course load and does not have funds to hire new faculty.
2. SGSC began to align support and credit course scheduling whenever possible beginning spring 2017 to optimize student opportunity to take both courses back-to-back and with the same instructor.

## HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #2: MOVE ON WHEN READY

Increase Move on When Ready (MOWR) offerings on area high school and SGSC campuses to help those students graduate in as little time as possible and to facilitate transfer within the USG as a mark of academic success and retention

### RELATED GOAL

Shorten time to degree completion through programs allowing students to earn college credit while still in high school

### DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT

This strategy aims to provide opportunities for academically-qualified high school students to earn college credits while still enrolled in high school, thereby shortening their time to a college degree. The strategy also positively impacts enrollment at SGSC, both while students are still in high school and as a recruitment strategy/incentive to maintain SGSC enrollment after high school graduation. Significantly, MOWR also facilitates and encourages transfer to senior USG institutions.

### PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY

Ms. Ashleigh Stevens, Dual Enrollment Specialist, [Ashleigh.stevens@sgsc.edu](mailto:Ashleigh.stevens@sgsc.edu)

### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

1. MOWR is promoted to high school students and their parents through mail, recruiters at college fairs, high school counselors, and direct contact from the SGSC ACCEL Specialist.
2. MOWR students and percentages are enrolled at the following locations: an SGSC campus only—50%, a high school campus only—44%, at both a college and high school campus—6%.
3. Students are supported by the SGSC Academic Support office, tutors, Enrollment Services office, and high school counselors. Tutoring is available onsite at the Academic Support and STEM Centers on both campuses, as well as online. However, MOWR students constituted only 3.65% of all students utilizing these resources (16 of 439 students) fall semester 2016.
4. **MOWR students are offered free use of loaned textbooks** to be picked up on either of the SGSC campuses or to be distributed on high school campuses by course instructors. Students receive information on the textbook process at least one month prior to the beginning of classes.
5. Students are provided information on continuing enrollment at SGSC after high school graduation, as well as on transferring to other USG institutions (see measure #5 below).

### MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

#### Baseline Measures:

1. The enrollment baseline is 96 students enrolled in fall 2013 (Table F).
2. The credits awarded baseline is 2535 in FY 2014 (Table G & Graph H).
3. The course success rate baseline is 94.03% percent success for fall 2013 (Table I and Graph J).
4. The MOWR course success rates compared to non-MOWR success rates is 94% (MOWR) versus 73% (non-MOWR) for fall 2013 (Graph J & Table K).
5. **A measure new this year is college enrollment post-high school graduation.**

**INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS:**

1. The fall 2016 MOWR enrollment of 350 is a 265% increase over the baseline enrollment of 96 in fall 2013 (Table F).
2. In FY2017 SGSC awarded 5,710 MOWR credits, a 125% increase over the baseline credits awarded of 2535 in FY2014 (Table G & Graph H).
3. The fall 2016 MOWR course success rate of 97.16% is an increase of 3.13% over the baseline rate of 94.03% for fall 2013 (Table I & Graph J).
4. The fall 2016 MOWR/non-MOWR course success rate ratio of 97%:72% is close to the ratio for the fall 2013 baseline semester, as expected at SGSC (Graph J & Table K). The data for all four measures demonstrates that the Move on When Ready strategy at SGSC has been quite successful.
5. SGSC has begun to track continuing college enrollment of MOWR students after high school graduation. Table L demonstrates that for all three academic years shown, over 90% of SGSC's former MOWR students continued their college careers after graduating from high school (a figure that could be higher if all students could be tracked). Also, approximately 89% of those continuing college chose to do so at either SGSC or another USG institution.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS:**

1. Maintain or exceed a MOWR enrollment of 350 for fall 2017.
2. 5000 MOWR credits awarded for FY2017.
3. A MOWR course success rate of at least 92% each semester through fall 2017.
4. A MOWR/non-MOWR course success rate ratio of approximately 92:75 is expected through fall 2017.
5. We will continue to track data on continuing college; however SGSC has no control over this data point to establish a measure of success.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

1. Area high schools are eager to have their better students participate in Move on When Ready.
2. In order to meet accreditation standards, we must ensure that MOWR students on high school campuses have available the same types and quality of support services available to students on the College campuses.
3. Availability of tutoring online and in Academic Support and STEM Centers on both campuses will be promoted more vigorously beginning fall semester 2017.
4. Freeing up full-time faculty and recruiting part-time faculty to teach MOWR courses on high school campuses is a challenge to continued growth in MOWR enrollment.
5. Beginning fall semester 2017 MOWR students will be required to participate in an orientation to the advising process, tutoring and disability services, and other college services.

**HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #3****STEP INITIATIVE**

Increase the persistence and retention of academically at-risk residential students by providing academic support (tutoring, STEM Centers on each campus), a specialized first-year experience orientation course, counseling, and progress monitoring in a comprehensive **"Strategies to Emerge, Progress, and Succeed" (STEPS) initiative**

**RELATED GOALS**

Increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded; shorten time to degree; provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate.

**DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT**

"Strategies to Emerge, Progress, and Succeed" (STEPS) is an effort to increase the persistence and retention of residential students. The profile of those students is as follows:

First-year residential students enrolled in at least one Learning Support course at SGSC and/or who had a high school GPA of  $\geq$  2.5. These "at risk" students who reside on campus are targeted because of underperformance among SGSC's residential student population, proximity, ease of staff contact, and high percentage of Pell-grant recipients and learning support requirements. Of the first-time freshman residential students enrolled fall 2016, one-fourth (25%) were STEPS-eligible; consequently, the STEPS student is not necessarily the "typical" residence hall student.

**PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY**

Ms. Amber Wheeler, Academic Support Director, [amber.wheeler@sgsc.edu](mailto:amber.wheeler@sgsc.edu)

## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

6. STEPS involves student success workshops, Academic Success Center tutoring, STEM Center tutoring, academic coaching provided by faculty and staff members, course grade monitoring throughout the academic year, and other intervention practices.
7. In fall 2015 and 2016 there were two sections of the SGSC 1000 first-year experience course for STEPS students, and again there will be two STEPS sections in fall 2017. Designed collaboratively by a former Vice President for Student Success, the Academic Support Director, and an Academic Support counselor, the STEPS FYE or orientation class differs from other sections of the course in that it is a skills-driven class for at-risk students focused on student resources, goal setting, studying, note taking, testing, time management, financial literacy, student policies and procedures, academic planning, career planning, and “soft skills.” It also focuses on academic advising, academic standards, grade point average calculation, and other topics related to student success. Resources used in developing and delivering the course include “Open Forum for Learning Assistance Professionals” (<https://lists.ufl.edu/archives/lrnasst-l.html>), a listserv developed for those who teach this type course, as well as a variety of other online sources and publications. In addition, the Academic Support Director is researching Open Educational Resource texts to utilize for the fall 2017 cohort.
8. STEPS cohort student achievement for each fall semester is compared to the non-STEPS but STEPS-eligible fall 2013 baseline cohort achievement for data reporting purposes. STEPS students are not “visible” as such to faculty other than their orientation class instructor.

## MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

### BASELINE MEASURES:

Baseline measures for all eight metric/data elements come from the performance of the fall 2013 entering cohort of non-STEPS residential students—those students whose academic performance was not affected by the STEPS strategies initiated with the fall 2014 entering cohort. **All baseline data can be found in Table M.** The baseline measures are as follows:

1. fall 2013 to spring 2014 baseline persistence rate: 87.50% persisted;
2. fall 2013 to fall 2014 baseline retention rate: 48.96% were retained;
3. the fall 2013 baseline grade point average is 1.85;
4. a baseline of 78.13% of students were in good standing at the end of fall term 2013;
5. the baseline course success rate for fall term 2013 is 67%;
6. the spring term 2014 baseline grade point average is 1.51;
7. a baseline of 46.43% of students were in good standing at the end of spring term 2014;
8. the baseline course success rate for spring term 2014 is 50.13%.

### INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS: ALL PROGRESS DATA CAN BE FOUND IN TABLE M.

1. The fall to spring **persistence** rates for the STEPS cohorts are 87.50% (fall 2015) and 92.72% (fall 2016), **the latter demonstrating excellent progress.**
2. The fall 2015 to fall 2016 **retention** rate for the STEPS cohort is 45.45%, **a 3.5% lower rate than that of the non-STEPS baseline cohort.**
3. The **grade point averages** for the STEPS cohorts are 1.99 (fall 2015) and 1.96 (fall 2016), **both of which are higher than 1.85 for the non-STEPS baseline group but needing improvement.**
4. STEPS students remained in **good standing** at rates of 71.88% (fall 2015) and 63.64% (fall 2016), **both below the rates for the non-STEPS cohort (78.13%); however, as is demonstrated in the data for #7 below, by the end of a full academic year the STEPS cohort far out-performed the non-STEPS baseline cohort in terms of remaining in good standing.**
5. The **course success** rates for the STEPS cohorts are 68.42% (fall 2015) and 68.20 (fall 2016), **rates quite comparable to those for the non-STEPS baseline cohort (67%); however, as is the case with end-of-academic-year good standing rates, #8 below demonstrates that by the end of a full academic year the STEPS cohort far out-performed the non-STEPS baseline cohort in terms of course success rates.**
6. The spring term **grade point averages** of STEPS students are 1.89 for both the fall 2015 and fall 2016 cohorts, **well above those of the non-STEPS baseline cohort (1.51).**
7. The percent of STEPS students in **good standing at the end of a full academic year** is 60.71% for the fall 2015 cohort and 62.75% for the fall 2016 cohort, **well above the 46.43% for the non-STEPS baseline cohort.**
8. The **course success rates for STEPS students at the end of a full academic year** are 60.93% for the fall 2015 cohort and 64.68% for the fall 2016 cohort, **well above 50.13% for the non-STEPS baseline cohort.**

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

“Success” for each of the eight measures of progress above is defined as follows: **(1)** a fall to spring persistence rate of 89% for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort; **(2)** a fall to fall retention rate of 70% for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort; **(3)** a fall term grade point

average of 2.15 for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort; **(4)** 79% of the fall 2017 STEPS cohort in good standing at the end of the fall 2017 term; **(5)** a fall 2017 course success rate of 70% for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort; **(6)** a spring term 2018 grade point average of 2.30 for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort. **(7)** 75% of the fall 2017 STEPS cohort in good standing at the end of spring term 2018; **(8)** a spring term 2018 course success rate of 70% for the fall 2017 STEPS cohort.

## LESSONS LEARNED

1. The SGSC Office of Institutional Effectiveness is analyzing data to identify potential causes of the current trend in STEPS cohort course success and retention rates, as well as poor performance in academic standing, in order to develop an action plan for fall 2017.
2. Rubrics are needed to assess STEPS FYE/orientation course assignments with more clarity and accuracy.
3. The STEPS FYE/orientation course is definitely scalable to other communities/institutions. In fact, portions of the course have been used in academic success workshops offered campus-wide, and components of the course have been inserted into the FYE/orientation course for the general student population.
4. There is a need for a full-time, dedicated Residential Retention Specialist, since many of that person's duties are not currently related to retention.

## HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #4

### ACADEMIC ADVISING

Use academic advising as a means of increasing student progression, retention, and graduation—through advisor training, mentoring, use of DegreeWorks, program mapping, a first-year experience course advising module, and ongoing assessment of advising

### RELATED GOAL

Provide academic advising orientation and the advising process to keep students on track to graduate; encourage shortening of time to degree by emphasizing "15 to Finish"; decrease excess credits on the path to completing a degree.

### DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT

SGSC's significant at-risk and Pell grant student population needs accurate and helpful course selection advice and needs a solid grasp of the advising process as a learning tool to facilitate academic success.

### PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY

Dr. Charles Johnson, Dean, School of Sciences, [Charles.johnson@sgsc.edu](mailto:Charles.johnson@sgsc.edu)

### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

1. Advising vision and mission statements, as well as guiding values, goals, and outcomes for academic advising, have been created.
2. An academic advisement session is a feature of the college's first-year experience course, SGSC 1000, a course in which all first-time, full-time students enroll each semester. The session uses academic program maps from senior institutions to match with SGSC academic pathway maps to help students complete an assignment to plan their entire course of study at SGSC while also emphasizing "15 to Finish" as the best means to achieve academic goals. Another focus of the advisement session is to help students understand their own roles and responsibilities in degree completion.
3. During the major orientation and registration days, academic advising, financial aid processes, and registration take place in one location to keep students from having to trek across campus for various services.
4. All academic program maps, available on the SGSC website, have been revised so that students have a ready guide for program completion. Academic deans are responsible for maintaining and updating program maps.
5. Advising "tip sheets" for advisors have been created for academic programs in specialized areas, such as pre-nursing, STEM pathways, and education, as well as on learning support policies and rules. Tip sheets include points to remember, comments on program maps, potential impediments to graduation, and FAQ.
6. Training and mentoring opportunities in advising for faculty members have been established, including opportunities prior to orientation and registration sessions, as well as throughout the academic year.
7. **Beginning fall semester 2017 SGSC will have in place two professional academic advisors to assist students, train and collaborate with faculty advisors, assist with advising assessment, and maintain student records and reports. One of these advisors will be assigned to each campus.**

### MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

**BASELINE MEASURES:**

1. The baseline one-year retention rate for FTFT freshmen is 48.63% for fall 2013 (**Table N**).
2. The baseline percentage of students enrolling in 15 or more credit hours is 21.33% in fall 2013 (**Table O**).
3. The baseline percentage of students successfully completing 15 or more credit hours is 46.99% for fall 2013 (**Table P**).
4. The three-year graduation rate baseline is 9.99% for the fall 2011 cohort (**Table Q**).
5. The baseline for degrees conferred by degrees offered is 266 for FY2014 (**Table R**). This baseline year is chosen in order to reflect realistically the newly-consolidated institution, rather than a melding of data for two formerly separate institutions.

**INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS:**

1. The one-year retention rate for FTFT freshmen for fall 2015 is 44.95%, a 3.68% decrease from the fall 2013 baseline (Table N) and a 6.7% decrease from the previous fall (2014).
2. The percentage of students enrolling in 15 or more credit hours for fall 2016 is 24.11%, a 2.78% increase over the fall 2013 baseline (Table O).
3. The percentage of students successfully completing 15 or more credit hours for fall 2016 is 46.74%, a .25% decrease from the fall 2013 baseline and a 3.53% decrease from the previous fall (2015) (Table P).
4. The three-year graduation rate for the fall 2013 cohort is 11.96%, a 1.97% increase over the fall 2011 cohort baseline (Table Q).
5. The number of degrees conferred by degrees offered is 326 for FY 2016, a 26.5% increase over the FY 2014 baseline (Table R).

**Measures of Success: (1)**

1. a one-year retention rate for FTFT freshmen of 55% for fall 2017;
2. 30% of students enrolling in 15 or more credit hours for fall 2017;
3. 60% of students successfully completing 15 or more credit hours for spring 2017;
4. a three-year graduation rate for the fall 2015 cohort of 18%;
5. a number of degrees conferred by degrees offered of 360 for FY 2018

**Lessons Learned**

1. From the baseline semester of fall 2013 to the present approximately half of all students enrolled in 15 hours successfully completed 15 hours (**Table P**). Academic advisor and early alert intervention is indicated, and the addition of two fulltime academic advisors will help.
2. Average excess credit hours per fiscal year for each SGSC degree program can be determined using data in **Table S** to assist SGSC in addressing that issue by degree program.
3. There is some anecdotal advisor evidence that Move on When Ready students do not understand the academic advising process because they have not been required to enroll in the first-year experience course. **Beginning fall semester 2017 they will be required to participate in an orientation** to the advising process, academic program mapping, tutoring and disability services, and other college services.
4. Effective academic advising and grade monitoring are essential to high-risk students' success.
5. Study of **FTFT freshmen one-year retention rate** data has led to further planning for change.

**HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #5 (NEW FOR THIS REPORTING YEAR):****GATEWAY TO COMPLETION**

**Implementation of Gardner Institute/USG Gateway to Completion (G2C) Collaborative** to improve student performance in a foundational high-enrollment, high-risk course through course redesign, use of predictive analytics, and improved teaching and learning pedagogy.

**RELATED GOALS**

Increase number of undergraduate degrees awarded; shorten time to degree; use predictive analytics; restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and student success.

**DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT**

At SGSC, BIOL 2107 is a high-risk course for many students (third highest DFWI rate). G2C provides faculty with processes, instructional and curricular guidance, and analytics tools to redesign teaching, learning, and success in gateway courses. The USG is invested in G2C through a system-wide commitment to and application of the G2C process at ten USG institutions, among them SGSC.

**PRIMARY POINTS OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY**

Dr. Robert Page, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, [Robert.Page@sgsc.edu](mailto:Robert.Page@sgsc.edu)  
 Ms. Dani Sutliff, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, [Dani.Sutliff@sgsc.edu](mailto:Dani.Sutliff@sgsc.edu)

**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES**

SGSC is one of 10 USG institutions partnering with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate education to improve teaching and learning in gateway courses. Currently concluding work on every component of Year 1 (Analyze and Plan) of the 3-year G2C process, SGSC has been involved in the following actions:

1. creation of a steering committee
2. completion of Gateway Course Analytics Inventory and identification of a gateway course, "Principles of Biology I" (BIOL 2107), based on the Analytics Inventory evidence
3. administering of the Student Assessment of Learning Gains survey (3 times)
4. completion of Review of Principles & Key Performance Indicators
5. creation of an Initial Action Plan (Phase II Plan) and an Implementation Team
6. participation in Analytics Process Collaborative and faculty workshops at G2C conference
7. participation in G2C Teaching and Learning Academy and Community of Practice Meeting
8. administering Learning Analytics Readiness Instrument to selected faculty and staff
9. Implementation of new BIOL 2107 classroom pedagogy summer semester 2016

In addition to the Year 1 actions above, SGSC will be engaged in BIOL 2107 course redesign in the summer and fall of 2017, including action items such as design and implementation timeline, costs analysis, assessment and evaluation, and development of a status report. The new course is to be launched spring semester 2018 as a pilot **to be replicated with other gateway courses.**

**MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS**

(all baseline data is for academic year 2014-2015)

1. The baseline overall DFWI rate for BIOL 2107K is 44.2%.
2. The baseline DFWI rates by gender for BIOL 2107K are 54.3% (male) and 38.2% (female).
3. The baseline DFWI rates by full-time and part-time status are 46.8% and 36.1%, respectively.
4. The baseline DFWI rates for the most at-risk race/ethnic groups are 50% (Hispanic or Latino) and 64.4% (Black or African-American).
5. The baseline DFWI rate for Pell-eligible students is 49.4%.
6. The baseline DFWI rate for first generation students is 41.7%.
7. The baseline DFWI rate for non-first generation students is 44.8%. **NOTE: All G2C measures are selected by the Gardner Institute. All data is in Table T.**

**INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS:**

N/A; to be established after spring semester 2018

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

In development; TBD after G2C Steering Committee analyzes baseline data

**LESSONS LEARNED:**

None thus far; strategy implemented just this year in what has been a planning and organizational year for G2C implementation.

**HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGY #6 (NEW FOR THIS REPORTING YEAR):  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH**

Implementation of the SGSC Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on Undergraduate Student Research in select Bachelor's Degree courses, to be followed by implementation in select Associate's Degree general education courses

**RELATED GOAL**

Help students develop a solid foundation of research skills while engaging in active learning (and critical thinking); restructure instructional delivery to support educational excellence and student success.

## DEMONSTRATION OF PRIORITY AND/OR IMPACT

The vast literature on developing undergraduate research skills suggests that **active learning, critical thinking, and the student experience in general are all significantly served through such activity.** Students engaged in research are more likely to understand and develop skills necessary for success at their current educational level, as well as at future higher levels such as graduate school or a career. **The QEP reflects SGSC's commitment to enhance student skills for academic success.**

## PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY

Dr. Frank Holiwski, Quality Enhancement Plan Director, [Frank.Holiwski@sgsc.edu](mailto:Frank.Holiwski@sgsc.edu)

## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

1. **The QEP was implemented in 8 B.S. in Nursing (BSN) courses fall semester 2015 through spring semester 2017 to establish assessment data baselines and evaluate/validate assessment rubrics for the 9 QEP student learning outcomes (resulting in rubric redesign). Course redesign has been minimal,** because for the first three years of QEP implementation only courses in bachelor's degree programs have been selected for inclusion. Part of the rationale for limiting the initiative to these courses is that they already included research components. For example, NURS 4111 included a requirement that students collect data using a "windshield survey," and NURS 4110 required students to give group presentations on their research. Thus, instructors of these classes were simply asked to review the QEP SLOs rubric to make sure their existing assignments completely aligned with the relevant SLO(s). In some cases this involved tweaking the existing assignment, but in no case has course "redesign" been extensive. **Once the QEP expands to associate degree courses in year four (AY 2018-2019), there will likely be a need for more significant course redesign.** In anticipation of this, the QEP Coordinator has created an online GeorgiaVIEW course to allow faculty of potential associate-level QEP courses to participate in the development of appropriate assignments. Having the faculty included in collaborative development of the assignments at an early stage should increase the likelihood that the assignments will align with the QEP SLOs. Currently, five faculty members have joined the course; they represent the disciplines of economics, accounting, history, political science, and psychology.
2. **The QEP Coordinator provides training for all faculty teaching QEP-connected courses prior to, during, and after their inclusion in the QEP.** Faculty are provided with the SACS COC-approved QEP plan, the SLO rubrics, and various foundational articles to help orient them to the QEP from the moment their courses are selected for inclusion. In the case of Nursing courses, training conducted by the QEP Coordinator and the Dean of the School of Nursing began prior to the beginning of the implementation semester and included application of the SLOs to course content, intentional design of assignments, assessment of SLOs, and anticipation of problems or concerns. After the courses are evaluated by the QEP Assessment Committee, the QEP Coordinator and the Dean of the School of Nursing again meet with faculty to provide feedback on course assignments and further training in course development.
3. **Courses in the Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (BSBS) curriculum become part of QEP implementation fall semester 2017.** In the spring of 2017 the QEP Coordinator met with BSBS faculty and the Dean of the School of Sciences to provide training on the development of appropriate QEP assignments. A GeorgiaVIEW course was also created in the spring semester 2017 so that these faculty could receive further training, gain access to helpful reading materials and training tools, and participate in collaborative development of course assignments.
4. **Faculty who will be engaged in general education QEP courses also will be provided training opportunities developed by the QEP Coordinator.**
5. All QEP-infused courses include a research component or components. **Assignments vary depending on the instructor, the SLO(s) being assessed, and the course content.** For example, students may be required to reflect in a written assignment on one or more of the 9 QEP SLOs by analyzing research data from published sources, or they may be required to collect their own data, apply inferential statistics to the data, and present results to a class or college-wide audience. In both cases the student is engaging in "active" learning; however, the two cases vary significantly in personal investment actions.
6. When associate degree general education core courses become part of the QEP in year four of the initiative, it will be difficult or impossible to standardize the number of such courses a particular student will be enrolled in during any given semester. **To manage student workload it is highly likely that QEP general education associate degree-level courses will be limited to a single QEP SLO per semester. However, the training of faculty will emphasize engaging students in active research assignments.**
7. The QEP Implementation Committee met weekly fall semester 2015 and monthly spring and fall semesters 2016 and spring semester 2017.
8. The QEP Assessment Committee has met regularly to evaluate rubric evaluator reliability.
9. In addition to using QEP direct assessment rubrics developed as part of the plan, indirect surveys of student opinions about the QEP process were administered spring semester 2017.

## MEASURES OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

### BASELINE MEASURES

Measures are from only those student learning outcomes on which 50% or more of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the outcome rubrics, and all baseline data is from summer semester 2016)

1. On ability to identify research objectives (SLO 4b) 50% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the outcome rubric **(Table U)**.
2. On ability to identify a hypothesis’ relationship to a research question (SLO 4c) 69.57% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the rubric **(Table V)**.
3. On ability to identify a hypothesis’ relationship to literature review (SLO 4d) 60.87% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the rubric **(Table W)**.
4. On ability to determine tools available for their research (SLO 5a) 60.87% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the rubric **(Table X)**.
5. On ability to identify a plan or methodology most appropriate to their research question or hypothesis (SLO 5c) 56.52% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the rubric **(Table Y)**.
6. On ability to identify the population from which their research sample will be selected (SLO 5d) 60.87% of students achieved “poor or marginal” on the rubric **(Table Z)**. **On all six baseline measures fewer than 50% of students achieved a rubric rating of either “Good” or “Excellent.”**

#### INTERIM MEASURES OF PROGRESS:

QEP assessment data from fall semester 2016 and spring semester 2017 is currently being collected and analyzed and is not available for reporting at this time.

#### MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

By the end of fall semester 2019 no more than 30% of students will achieve a combined rubric rating of “Poor” or “Marginal” for each of the six baseline measures identified in this report. Therefore, at least 70% of students will rate as either “Good” or “Excellent” on the rubric.

#### LESSONS LEARNED

1. It is difficult to align discipline-specific course assignments with rubrics intended to be generic. **The rubrics have been redesigned** and are now accompanied by suggestions on how to apply rubric SLOs to different types of class assignments.
2. It takes longer to analyze assessment for a single course than had been anticipated. After the first semester’s **analysis the Assessment Committee now assesses a sample of student work, rather than all the work for an entire class.**
3. Students enter classes which emphasize research skills with vastly differing research abilities. GeorgiaVIEW courses have been created so that assessment committee members can comment on student work not explicitly measured by rubrics in order to capture additional qualitative data.
4. After collecting and analyzing initial data on “where our students are” in relation to QEP outcomes, **we will focus on redesigning pedagogy to improve student competency over time.**
5. While the SGSC QEP predates our becoming a Georgia Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) institution, **the QEP employs LEAP-related principles of “Essential Learning Outcomes, High-Impact Educational Practices, Authentic Assessment, and Students’ Signature Work” that are integrated into the QEP initiative.**

## REFLECTIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

#### REFLECTIONS:

- While there is need for improvement in some strategy areas, our data demonstrates that all of our ongoing college completion strategies continue to be effective.
- The addition of two new completion strategies this year will provide significant opportunities for academic skill development for students of all degree levels.

#### OBSERVATIONS:

- **One challenge to SGSC’s college completion efforts is the institution’s need for additional technology and research personnel** to support the generation and analysis of data needed to assess and inform completion strategies, particularly as SGSC strives to develop a predictive analytics model.

#### PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR:

- **We have implemented the pilot year of an academic early alert system** utilizing tools available internally (BanWeb Faculty Feedback Form, Discoverer reports, Tutor Track, and Excel). The Director of Academic Support, who oversees

the early alert program, is analyzing data and writing a report to identify how to broaden the program to a wider student population next year.

- **We will promote academic support resources, especially tutoring opportunities, more deliberately with MOWR (dual enrollment) students.**
- **We will assess the new orientation requirement for MOWR students** and make necessary changes to improve student understanding of college policies and processes.
- **We will more clearly define the duties of the Residential Retention Specialist** to better align that position with the goals of the STEPS strategy and residential retention as a whole.
- **Two new full-time academic advisors will be in place beginning fall semester 2017** to serve at-risk students and collaborate with faculty advisors on both SGSC campuses—with an advisor assigned to each of the two campuses.
- **The pilot BIOL 2107 high-risk, high-enrollment course targeted for Gateways to Completion (new strategy #5) will be redesigned** summer and fall of 2017 and will be launched spring semester 2018.
- **We will collect data on initial Interim Measures of Progress for the Gateway to Completion (G2C) strategy.**
- **We will establish Measures of Success for G2C.**
- **We will redesign QEP course pedagogy in accordance with data analysis (new strategy #6).**
- **WE will analyze additional student learning outcomes, baseline measures, and assessment data for the undergraduate research strategy (new strategy #6)** for possible inclusion in next year's report.