



**GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE
UNIVERSITY**

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Mission

Georgia College & State University is Georgia's designated public liberal arts institution. To fulfill that mission, Georgia College emphasizes exemplary teaching, highly intentional student engagement, leadership preparation, and diversity as part of its expansive undergraduate educational experience. Georgia College also offers select graduate programs to address regional needs and professional advancement opportunities. Georgia College strives to gain increasing national attention for its strong academic and transformational programs and become a nationally preeminent public liberal arts university.

Student Body Profile

Overall Undergraduate Enrollment. Georgia College's Fall 2020 undergraduate enrollment is 5,605 students, 44 of whom are from out-of-state and 23 of whom are international students.

First Time Freshmen Admitted. For Fall 2020, Georgia College enrolled a first-time, full-time freshmen cohort of 1358, with an average SAT of 1172 and an average high school GPA of 3.53. We also enrolled 189 new transfer students. Like many colleges and universities, Georgia College's international student enrollment was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; in Fall 2020, we enrolled one new degree-seeking international freshman.

Retention. First-year retention has remained between 83.11 and 85.9% for the past ten years. Despite having a strong, 85.69% first-year retention rate with the Fall 2018 first-time freshman cohort, this year, Georgia College's first year retention rate decreased to 82.33%. The retention rates for second, third, and fourth-year students, however, all increased.

Our first-year retention data for specific members of the Fall 2019 first-time freshman cohort illuminate both successes and areas for additional attention. For example:

- Georgia College continues to retain female students at a higher rate than males, with 84.3% of Fall 2019 first-time freshman female students returning compared to 78.2% of the Fall 2019 first-time freshman males.
- While our Black or African-American first-year retention has been higher than our overall first-year retention for the past several years – including surpassing 90% three times in the past ten years – this year's Black or African American first-year retention rate dropped to 75.56%. The disproportionate rate of COVID-19 among the Black population and the inability to take online courses might have contributed to this decrease; however, we also must continue to examine other possible reasons for this shift, including aspects of access and inclusion.
- Hispanic and Latino enrollment also dropped to 75.93% for the Fall 2019 first-time freshman cohort. For this population, the intersection of race and gender proved to be particularly significant. The retention for Hispanic or Latino females matched the retention for the campus; however, only 65% of Hispanic or Latino males returned for the second year.
- Students identifying with two or more races had a higher first-year retention rate than the overall student body, with 87.76% of students returning for the second year. This is the highest retention rate for multiracial students since 2015.
- The retention rate for first-generation college students dropped from 90.14% for the Fall 2018 cohort to 78.48% for the Fall 2019 cohort. Again, the effect of the COVID outbreak is likely at the root of such a significant decrease.

To help us achieve national preeminence and reach our retention goals, Georgia College continues to strive for a goal of 88% first year retention within the next three years and for a long-term goal of at least 90%.

Graduation. Georgia College celebrated a 51.2% four-year graduation rate for its Fall 2016 first-time freshmen class, a 2.6% increase over the previous year and the first time our graduation rate has passed the 50% mark. In addition, five-year and six-year graduation rates remain strong, at 59.51% and 61.2% respectively. Degrees conferred for the 2019-2020 academic year were also up by 5.4%.

Broken down for specific student populations, we find that some students are struggling to complete a degree in four years in comparison to their peers. This data will guide our graduation goals and strategies in the coming years, with a specific focus on gender as a defining variable. For example:

- There is a significant difference between female and male students' four-year graduation rates, with the male four-year graduation rate for the Fall 2016 class at 39.35% compared to the female rate of 57.79%.
- First-generation college students from the Fall 2016 first-time freshmen cohort had a four-year graduation rate at 46.91%. The four-year graduation rate for male first-generation college students drops to 34.78%, while female students in this group graduate at a four-year rate higher than the study body.
- Black or African-American students also have a four-year graduation rate that is higher than the class rate, with 52.11% of Black or African American students in the Fall 2016 first-time freshmen cohort completing their bachelor's degree in four years. However, again, when separated for gender, Black or African-American males have a four-year graduation rate of 38.46% compared with 60% for women.
- Similarly, Hispanic or Latino students also have a higher graduation rate than the other members of their Fall 2016 first-year cohort. 57.78% of Hispanic or Latino students completed their bachelor's degree within four years. When looking at the intersection of gender and race with this group of students, Hispanic or Latino males achieved a four-year graduation rate of 60.71%, and females achieved a four-year graduation rate of 56.45%. This marks the first time our Hispanic or Latino male four-year graduation rate has been above 43.75%.
- Students who identify with two or more races, while making strides in first-year retention, had a four-year graduation rate of 42.55%, down from 60% the previous year. In this case, accounting for gender, female multiracial students had a four-year graduation rate of 51.85%, while male multiracial students had a four-year graduation rate of 30%.

To help us achieve national preeminence and reach our graduation goals, Georgia College's goal is to maintain a graduation rate of at least 50%, with noticeable increases each year.

Additional Student Body Characteristics. Enrolled Georgia College students are primarily full-time, residential, and in-state. Our top feeder high schools are all from the Atlanta area. The largest number of new transfer students were previously enrolled at Georgia Military College, which is located less than a mile from our campus and with which Georgia College has a long-standing transfer articulation agreement.

Georgia College is a predominately white institution, with 83% of undergraduates identifying as white, non-Hispanic. Increasing and retaining diverse students remains one of our annual admission and retention goals.

Georgia College students benefit greatly from the state's HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship Programs. 65.6% of our students receive the HOPE Scholarship and 14.5% receive the Zell Miller Scholarship. While Georgia College students rank second in parental affluence among USG institutions, 20.5% of our undergraduate students receive the Pell Grant to help cover their cost of attendance and 60.5% of our undergraduate students obtain some form of loan.

Georgia College undergraduates are predominately between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. We have 28 undergraduates over the age of 30, 20 of whom are degree-seeking students.

Over the past five years, we have seen a steady increase in the number of Georgia College students registering with our Student Disability Resource Center and receiving services from our Counseling Center, emphasizing the various concerns that could affect student persistence.

Impact of COVID-19 on the Student Body Profile. Georgia College has experienced some variance in its enrollment in the past year which appears to be directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Enrollment concerns from students and parents included Georgia College's mandatory first-year housing requirement, preferences for face-to-face or online teaching modalities, and student health conditions. Georgia College made concerted efforts to offer as many of its undergraduate classes as possible in a face-to-face format during the Fall 2020 semester. The

only undergraduate classes that transitioned to an online format were changed to accommodate approved faculty health issues. After those courses were excluded, Georgia College offered 80% of its remaining Fall 2020 undergraduate classes fully face-to-face with appropriate physical distancing and the other 20% as face-to-face classes on a staggered attendance schedule with some face-to-face instruction each week for each enrolled student.

Comparison with Peer Institutions

Georgia College's 15 comparative peer institutions include colleges and universities from across the nation that share membership in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) or that have strong undergraduate liberal arts programs, including Radford University, Longwood University, and Winthrop University. Georgia College maintains a competitive reputation among this group. Based on Fall 2019 data, Georgia College ranks third in first-year retention, behind only Ramapo College of New Jersey (86%) and the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo (86%). With a 64% six-year graduation rate and a 17 to 1 student/faculty ratio, Georgia College ranks near the middle, demonstrating both an opportunity for aspirational growth and competitive advantage.

IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES

Georgia College engages in a process of continuous improvement that is focused on strategic planning and unit goals. Recruitment, retention, and graduation is the first goal in our strategic plan and engages every office and department on campus. Specific structural changes in 2019-2020 provided new opportunities for improvement and coordination of services.

At the beginning of the 2019-2020 academic year, Georgia College formed a Transformative Experiences office to coordinate and promote high-impact practices across the institution and to centralize efforts to increase student participation in high impact practices, based on the understanding that these experiences not only lead to critical liberal arts learning outcomes but also improve student retention, graduation, and success. Dr. Jordan Cofer was hired as our first Associate Provost for Transformative Experiences.

Subsequently, in August 2019, Georgia College hired Dr. Michelle Johnson as the new director of our Academic Advising Center. The Academic Advising Center has since adopted and began implementation of an appreciative advising model. Appreciative advising has been shown to have significant impacts on student retention and graduation. It provides the framework for a strong, supportive relationship between the advisor and student and helps the student optimize their educational experiences. Over 300 peer reviewed articles in the past five years have demonstrated how appreciate advising is applicable to almost every subpopulation of students and have documented that it results in increased outcomes. We expect that this process will help students identify additional ways to be a more active participant in their education and also create stronger affective ties with Georgia College. We also believe it will reduce motivational obstacles for students by helping them identify areas of study and experiences about which they are most passionate.

In November 2019, we contracted with Ruffalo Noel Levitz to evaluate our current retention efforts. Recommendations from this visit included monitoring advisor load, increasing advisor training, and better use of early alerts to identify at-risk students. Although advisor load remains a challenge in light of COVID-19 and restricted hiring processes, changes in advisor training have already been implemented. As Georgia College identifies a replacement for the Educational Advisory Board (EAB) software, easy-to-use early alert options will be a key functionality requirement. The final report also recommended the creation of a campus-wide retention committee.

In January 2020, Georgia College made several organizational changes that shifted primary responsibility for student success and retention to different areas. Offices previously housed under the Center for Student Success – including Academic Advising – were moved to either Enrollment Management, led by Associate Vice President Ms. Suzanne Pittman, or Transformative Experiences. In addition, a First-Year Experience Office, directed by Ms. Erin Weston, was formed to coordinate efforts related to first-year success and retention. These changes resulted in increased collaboration across key areas and allowed us to more holistically address issues such as first-year seminar content, improved onboarding for our GC Journeys transformative experience program, and more coordinated assessment efforts. Strategies that increased success and removed barriers are specifically described in the next section.

Finally, in August 2020, Georgia College formed a Retention Committee that includes representatives from Enrollment Management, Transformative Experiences, Student Affairs, Institutional Research, and faculty from each of our colleges. This committee is charged with making both short-term and long-term recommendations for improving retention. Georgia College's Institutional Research director is a co-chair of this committee, which is appropriate since the IR office provides the majority of the data that is used for decision-making on campus. Through the annual fact book, common data set, and IR website, data on almost every aspect of the university is available to anyone at any time. The IR office works closely with several other administrative offices to ensure that data is correct and timely.

For students facing financial barriers, Georgia College has been proactive in encouraging the use of no-cost or low-cost textbooks. Additionally, the Provost has charged deans with creating a new textbook policy, based at the department level, that would create an equitable process to evaluate and assess textbook use policies within each department. The President has also announced his hope to eliminate all course and laboratory fees by FY 2023.

A Fall 2018 study conducted as part of a National Association of System Heads (NASH) grant found that 81% of Pell-eligible and underrepresented students cited no barriers to participation in GC Journeys, Georgia College's Momentum Year program. However, after identifying areas that were creating barriers and limiting participation in specific areas, additional initiatives were implemented for students in need of financial assistance. For instance, the Office of International Education worked with the Offices of the Provost, Advancement, and Financial Aid in order to create New Horizons, a need-based scholarship. This scholarship is used to help eliminate barriers for study abroad. In a similar approach, the Leadership program created need-based scholarships (based on FAFSA and Pell Eligibility) for the Leadership Academy, which waived all fees. Additionally, using feedback that students from underrepresented backgrounds felt too intimidated for undergraduate research, our office of Mentored Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors teamed up with the First Year Experience office for targeted intervention. In Fall 2020, these interventions include students from the Student Research Circle, a student organization dedicated to undergraduate research.

We also look forward to new improvement opportunities in the coming academic year, including those that were unplanned. The COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges in all aspects of higher education. After a fully online summer semester, bringing students back to a residential, face-to-face environment when there were still many unknowns about the coronavirus made it difficult to achieve our retention goals. To address this, we have developed and implemented new processes to recruit back students who discontinued enrollment during the pandemic, as well as other programs to keep students connected to campus and provide student support.

Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the USG decision to temporarily waive the SAT/ACT requirement for incoming students. When the USG first announced changes to this admission requirement in Spring 2020, Georgia College had already admitted the majority of its freshmen class. Therefore, the Fall 2021 freshmen cohort will be Georgia College's first class that may take advantage of the USG temporary waiver of the SAT/ACT requirement for admissions. We look forward to reviewing the data to see how this impacts our next freshman class composition.

SECTION 3. MOMENTUM UPDATE: OBSERVATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Section 3.1 Existing Momentum Work

GC Journeys, Georgia College's Momentum Year plan, integrates the Momentum Year principles with the university's public liberal arts mission. GC Journeys fosters purposeful choice for students, emphasizing high impact practices, and integrates engaging pedagogies that fit our brand. Through GC Journeys, all students undergo five high-impact practices during their course of study. To meet these ambitious goals, GC invested in restructuring, creating new offices, and hiring new positions in order to aid in student success, as described in section 2.

Data already suggest that our GC Journeys program is successful. Students actively participating in GC Journeys have higher grade point averages than students who are less engaged. We have seen an overall increase in participation in high-impact practices across campus. Georgia College's undergraduate research program was named as a finalist for the Council on Undergraduate Research Top Undergraduate Research program award.

Specific strategies and activities are described below. Many could be applied to more than one Momentum area.

Purposeful Choice

Strategy or activity	Restructure academic advising. Implement centralized appreciative advising model.
Summary of Activities	Georgia College used a faculty academic advising model for several years, using professional advisors only to advise undeclared majors. Because, in part, of the satisfaction undeclared majors reported with advising, Georgia College began moving to a centralized advising model in 2015 and hired several full-time professional advisors to fill the roles once held by faculty. Centralized advising has allowed for more consistent advisor training and student advisement, as well as a more equitable distribution of advisor loads. Academic advisors now teach most first-year seminar courses, with their advisees as students. Advisors are grouped into teams within defined focus areas, allowing them to help a student learn about and pick from a variety of majors within the student’s focus area. Academic advising is also shifting to an appreciative advising model that promotes engaged and intentional student participation in their educational choices.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	Georgia College administers the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey every two years. This survey includes questions about the importance of and student satisfaction with academic advising. Data from the 2019 administration indicate that there is a gap between importance and satisfaction that we still need to bridge. Additional data will be collected after students have experienced the appreciate advising model.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	Because students no longer have faculty advisors, students in some majors have little contact with faculty during their freshmen and sophomore years. Our retention committee is looking for options to increase faculty interaction, knowing that this is not only a characteristic of a public liberal arts education but also an important component of student engagement and success.
Changes because of COVID-19	During the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters, all academic advising appointments were conducted online because appropriate physical distancing could not be achieved in advisors’ office cubicles. The Academic Advising Center created an entire office within Zoom to handle scheduled appointments, assist drop-ins, and triage issues. To accommodate approved advisor health issues, some of the freshmen seminar courses were offered online. We will be able to make comparisons about the effectiveness of that teaching method as the Fall 2020 semester concludes.
Strategy or activity	Implement the career planning milestones program.
Summary of Activities	Georgia College implemented Career Planning Milestones as a high impact practice and a part of the GC Journeys program. The milestones are comprised of four steps – exploration, preparation, planning, and implementation – that align with the student’s classification and that include specific activities at each step. The first two activities are completed as part of the student’s first year seminar. The size of the career center staff was increased to support additional contacts between students and career advisors. The Milestones program also includes a guide for faculty to assist them in integrating this transformational experience into their courses. Milestone completion activity is recorded in Banner. Through this program, students are taught to be intentional with their career planning decisions.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	Student participation in and completion of the career planning milestone program has increased steadily since its implementation, as have consults and appointments with the career center staff. Increasing numbers of students are using these services for internship, career, or graduate school planning.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We miss the opportunity to onboard transfer students, who do not complete a first-year seminar or a student success course, to the milestones program. Also lacking a transfer student organization or similar group, it is difficult to find a way to connect with transfer students to encourage participation.
Changes because of COVID-19	Like most areas, COVID-19 required a shift to virtual appointments and activities during the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters. Data is not yet available for the Fall 2020 semester to determine if this affected participation in milestones activities.

Strategy or activity	Promote the intentional selection of high-impact practices across all majors.
Summary of Activities	The reorganization of services described in section 2 allowed for increased focus on and onboarding for GC Journeys in first-year seminar course. GC Journeys was added to all program maps, providing both a reminder and an opportunity for exploration during schedule planning. As part of purposeful, appreciative advising, each student is encouraged to identify, plan for, and complete two high-impact practices in addition to those offered to all students (first-year seminar, career milestones, capstone). Georgia College is also implementing the Service Opportunity Center software to help students identify and choose high-impact experiences.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	All first-year students receive onboarding for GC Journeys through the first-year seminar, which is reinforced as they create their degree completion plan as an assignment for that course. Student participation in high-impact practices is steadily increasing. The Student Opportunity Center will be live in Spring 2021.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	Continued effort is required to ensure consistency across first-year seminar sections. Transfer students do not receive onboarding for GC Journeys and may not be fully engaging in the program as a result. Additional outreach and discussion of GC Journeys must occur after the first semester through advising interactions.
Changes because of COVID-19	Creative approaches to some high-impact practices have been implemented to allow for student participation despite the pandemic. For instance, study abroad options are now in place that allow students to have international experiences online during the COVID-19 travel ban. Some community-based involvement activities have also been restructured.

Strategy or activity	Encourage the intentional and timely selection of a major.
Summary of Activities	The Academic Advising Center encourages students to explore and declare majors through purposeful, appreciative advising. The advising center also hosts two “Declaration Days” each year, during which the Academic Advising Center is open for students to drop in and discuss major choices, pathways to meet the requirements, and, hopefully, declare their major. As soon as the student declares a major, advisors will refer the student to faculty and upper-class student mentors in their departments to help new student majors navigate requirements and explore co-curricular opportunities. Finally, the Academic Advising Center also hosts an academic expo to give students an opportunity to learn about major options. Faculty from each major program attend to share information with prospective majors. The use of academic focus areas also allows for more targeted schedule planning and helps ensure timely entry into a major program.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	Although undeclared is one of the top five majors for admitted students, the number of enrolled Georgia College students with an undeclared major has steadily declined since the shift to focus areas. As a result, it is easier to steer students toward coursework that will help them obtain their academic goals.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	These activities have been successful to date, and we plan to continue using them in future semesters.
Changes because of COVID-19	This year’s academic expo event was held virtually over the span of three days as a result of the pandemic. Academic departments submitted videos about their programs. As part of their first-year seminar course, incoming students were required to attend. Other students, particularly those who were still undeclared, were strongly encouraged to participate.

Strategy or activity	Track and make high-impact practices more easily identifiable.
Summary of Activities	The Registrar and the Associate Provost for Transformative Experiences, in collaboration with the academic departments, created attributes and activity codes to identify all high-impact practices and track student progress and completion of GC

	Journeys. Some codes were implemented as part of the USG’s high-impact practice business practice. Others are institution specific and are tied to courses or students. As a result, all high impact practices, along with career planning milestones, are tracked directly in Banner. In addition, an audit in DegreeWorks is available to all students and advisors to track their progress toward GC Journeys completion. Advisors review the audit with students during advising appointments. The Associate Provost also coordinated training on high-impact practice coding for each department chair.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	These additions have allowed us to more thoroughly and completely track student participation in high impact practices. They also help students identify activities that apply to these areas.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	In future terms, as we fully implement Banner 9 registration and schedule functionality, we will include course attributes on the semester schedule so students can make intentional choices to participate in courses that use a high-impact practice . In addition, in conjunction with USG initiatives, we will continue to work on operational definitions for high-impact practices.
Changes because of COVID-19	Additional codes were created to identify variants of current practices, such as virtual study abroad programs and online internships.

Transparent Pathways

Strategy or activity	Provide clear paths for students to complete high-impact practices.
Summary of Activities	All program maps/degree completion plans were updated this year and GC Journeys information was included on each. Programs were public posted for every undergraduate program. This allowed students to see how GC Journeys would be included within their major. For example, students who student teach or complete internships as degree requirements complete this high-impact practice as part of their major program. In addition, having this information included program maps not only emphasizes the importance of these high-impact experiences, but it also allows the students to make purposeful choices and plan future participation as part of their complete educational experience. Further, having these practices listed on a four-year program map provides a way for students to clearly see options to participate in GC Journeys while still graduating in four years.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	This project has been completed.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We did not encounter any issues while making these changes. Departments were eager to add this information, and the Academic Advising Center coordinated the changes.
Changes because of COVID-19	As mentioned earlier in the report, COVID-19 has changed the way that some of these high-impact experiences are offered, but students continue to have the option for participation.

Strategy or activity	Track and intervene with seniors to ensure they remain on target to graduate.
Summary of Activities	Students with 90 hours or more have planned, graduation-focused meetings with their advisors each semester to make sure they complete all requirements for graduation. Critical issues discussed during these meetings include completing legislative requirements, maintaining grade point averages, not dropping courses, verifying funds or aid to cover remaining term costs, filing necessary paperwork, and seeking assistance from various campus services when needed. Advisors complete individual reports on all students expected to graduate and conduct intrusive advising follow-ups regarding University requirements. Advisors also call and email students after these meetings to make sure that students are meeting deadlines and getting the help they need to complete all requirements on time. In addition, the Registrar’s Office and the Testing Center repeatedly review and reach out to students who have applied for graduation any time their graduation status changes.

Outcomes/Measures of progress	This program was used for the first time with the Fall 2016 freshman class. Their four-year graduation rate was the university's highest.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	While most faculty and staff would assume that a student is on track to graduate once they achieve senior status or the graduation application is filed, students benefit from having careful, individual guidance and occasionally nudges to prevent graduation issues once the term is complete. Even seniors need a clear pathway to degree completion to ensure they complete all their requirements.
Changes because of COVID-19	None. We have been able to continue these meetings virtually.

Academic Mindset

Strategy or activity	Help students acculturate more fully to the college environment.
Summary of Activities	The First-Year Experience Office was formed during the 2019-2020 academic year. Initially housed with the Center for Student Success and then moved to the Transformative Experiences division, the first-year experience director helps shape students' understanding of what it means to be an engaged college student through orientation and Week of Welcome activities and through programming throughout the first year. The director coordinates the GC Reads program, which provides incoming freshmen with the opportunity to meet with faculty and discuss academic works. The director works with students to promote engagement on campus. In addition, peer mentors (described more in the next item) share information, provide support, and model engagement for new students. The director, along with the academic advisors, also plays a key role in distributing and encouraging participation in the mindset survey. The director also coordinated our "GC Keeps Learning" initiative.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	This was the first year of official programming using this model. Initial observations indicate that this program has been a successful addition to our campus. A survey of students' satisfaction with first-year experiences is currently in progress.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	It is clear from our interactions with students this term that having peer mentors is key to helping students engage in the campus community and understand what a college student "looks like." This can be particularly important for students who do not have older siblings who attended college or who are first-generation college students.
Changes because of COVID-19	Some of the first-year experience programs were moved online, collaborating with Student Activities to provide programming virtually.
Strategy or activity	Provide examples of what it means to be an engaged college student.
Summary of Activities	The Office of First Year Experience recruited, trained, and assigned "First Year Guides," to each first-year seminar section. Guides are peer mentors, predominately sophomore and juniors, who facilitate activities in the seminar classes, lead FYE student experiences, run separate "GroupMe" accounts to communicate with students, distribute weekly personalized newsletters, submit weekly reflections, and meet individually with 7-10 students each week. The guides also partnered with the Learning Center to offer student success workshops focused on topics such as: managing test anxiety, critical reading for STEM courses, and note-taking skills.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	Although we are still in the first semester of this program, initial observations from advisors, who teach the first-year seminars, students, and other academic staff indicate that this program has been quite successful.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We plan to continue this program in future terms. Several first-year students have already expressed interest in serving as a first-year guide next fall.
Changes because of COVID-19	Some of the first-year experience programs and some of the seminar classes were provided virtually when physical distancing could not be maintained. It also filled a critical need due to the lack of connection some students experienced as a result of the pandemic.

Strategy or activity	Align our core curriculum with the AAC&U Essential Learning outcomes to foster further student success.
Summary of Activities	The Office of Institutional Effectiveness took the lead on this project and worked with the departments on curricular alignment. Georgia College students take core courses that embed essential skills such as written communication, critical thinking, global learning, inquiry and analysis, ethical reason, and quantitative literacy. To support faculty offering these skills, the Center for Teaching and Learning hosts a variety of workshops each semester aimed at the Essential Skills. All department chairs emphasized the importance for faculty to take these courses.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	Student artifacts were submitted to the AAC&U Value Institute, where we found that in most categories, our first-year students were exceeding the first-year benchmarks (with 3% scoring at capstone levels). In the skill of Written Communication, for instance, the majority of our students are either progressing, target or mastery, while in Quantitative Literacy, even though the majority of students meet the expected benchmarks, 14% do not meet expectations and 9% are developing.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	Georgia College will continue this assessment in upcoming terms. Data generated will be used to assist academic departments and faculty in developing additional strategies or approaches to help all students succeed at benchmark levels.
Changes because of COVID-19	None.

Strategy or activity	Provide robust peer tutoring programs in multiple areas, as well as a highly-regarded supplemental instruction program, focused on academic success.
Summary of Activities	<p>The majority of our peer assistance programs are housed in the University Learning Center, which provides tutoring for all STEM disciplines as well as Psychology and Economics. The Learning Center offers an average of 50 peer tutors for the STEM disciplines. The Learning Center has offered increased programming, such peer assisted study sessions, designed to provide exam reviews prior to major exams in classes that do not have supplemental instruction. As part of the STEM 3 grant initiative, the University Learning Center added after hours STEM tutoring in 3 different locations, as well as online after hours tutoring. The University Learning Center also offers Supplemental Instructional support for specific courses. Georgia College’s SI program includes an average of 55 SI. These leaders receive additional training, are embedded in faculty members’ courses, and offer weekly SI sessions for the students enrolled in the course. The SI Leaders also often act as a conduit to connect faculty and students.</p> <p>Other peer learning programs include the Writing Center, the Foreign Language Lab, and First Year Guides (described earlier). The Writing Center provides peer tutoring with a mix of 8 graduate and 2 undergraduate tutors. The Writing Center offers support for writing in the biological sciences, music, psychology, criminal justice, history, and nursing as well as traditional composition classes. The Writing Center also offering outreach to faculty teaching any writing courses. The Department of World Languages and Cultures offers a language lab staffed by a full-time staff member and 15-20 volunteer peer tutors.</p> <p>The Director of the Learning Center helps coordinate the Gateways 2 Completion (G2C) initiative at Georgia College, which is embedded in the Economics and Math departments. Georgia College identified four gateway courses with the high DFWI rates and high cumulative number of students enrolled: MATH 1113, MATH 2600, ECON 2100, and ECON 2106. Faculty collaborate with the Center for Teaching and Learning to redesign the courses with an aim on retention.</p>
Outcomes/Measures of progress	All three of these programs consistently receive positive feedback from both faculty and students. The Learning Center recently re-certified their College Reading and

	Learning Association (CRLA) Level 3 accreditation. Our supplemental instruction program is accredited by the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Students who participate in tutoring from the Learning Center obtain grades, on average, one point higher than students who did not participate in tutoring, with incremental gains from participation in multiple tutoring sessions.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	Georgia College plans to continue these successful programs.
Changes because of COVID-19	This year, the Learning Center began offering virtual tutoring for the first time. The Writing Center also moved all of its tutoring online. We will continue to offer those options as we navigate through the next stages of the pandemic.

General Overview and Observations

Georgia College's GC Journeys program is rooted in purposeful choice and high impact practices, which creates an ideal pairing with the USG Momentum initiative. We have taken several steps to create a structure and a culture that supports these activities for all students, reduces barriers, and promotes student success. Three consistent themes in our work are the importance of faculty buy-in and involvement, the role that students play in their peers' success, and the importance of collaboration and communication among offices. Knowing that we have significant differences in the retention and graduate rates of male and female students means that we need to target additional time and effort to address this issue. COVID-19 also reinforced the importance of face-to-face interaction on our campus. While we continued to hold face-to-face instruction and activities with appropriate physical distancing whenever possible, we know that students and their families expect a "high touch" experience from our institution.

Section 3.2 Follow up from Momentum Summit III - "Campus-Wide" Momentum Approach Activities (Beyond the Classroom)

Making a Purposeful Choice & Attempting a Fuller Schedule of a Clear Pathway

Priority Work	Ro-do advising sheets
Description of Activities	Please see information provided in section 3.1.
Activity status and plans for 2020	
Lessons Learned	

Priority Work	Identify faculty to speak at first-year seminars
Description of Activities	First-year seminar instructors coordinated class visits from department faculty for declared majors. Faculty also provided information to students through the academic expo, described in section 3.1.
Activity status and plans for 2020	We continue to be concerned that first and second-year students are not connecting with faculty in certain disciplines. This will be a continued focus of the first-year seminar courses and the university's retention committee.
Lessons Learned	Students appreciate increased interaction with faculty in their disciplines.

Priority Work	Create a Degreeworks audit to track GC Journeys
Description of Activities	Please see information provided in section 3.1.
Activity status and plans for 2020	
Lessons Learned	

Priority Work	Host a symposium for faculty on GC Journeys
Description of Activities	Transformative Experiences hosted monthly sessions to share GC Journeys information with interested faculty members. In addition, this office, in conjunction with the Center for Teaching and Learning, also offered a course for faculty on how to implement GC Journeys in their courses. Mini-grants were also provided for faculty implementation of GC Journeys, and the Center for Teaching and Learning created a GC Journeys learning community for faculty to learn about high-impact practices.
Activity status and plans for 2020	Georgia College plans to continue these efforts in the coming year.
Lessons Learned	These venues provide needed opportunities to engage faculty and to help them understand the GC Journeys program.

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