



## SECTION I– INSTITUTIONAL MISSION & STUDENT BODY PROFILE

The University of West Georgia, a charter member of the University System of Georgia, is a comprehensive, residential institution providing selectively focused undergraduate and graduate education primarily in the West Georgia region. The University is also committed to regional outreach through a collaborative network of external degree centers, course offerings at off-campus sites, and an extensive program of continuing education for personal and professional development. Opportunities for intellectual and personal development are provided through quality teaching, scholarly inquiry, creative endeavor, and service for the public good.

The University of West Georgia has 106 active programs of study, including 6 certificates of less than 1 year, 2 Nexus, 46 at the bachelor's level, 30 at the master's and specialist levels, 5 at the doctoral level, and 17 at the advanced certificate level. The university conferred 2,915 degrees and awards in fiscal year 2021. This is a 2.1% decrease over the number awarded in fiscal year 2020 (2,978) and a 36.5% increase over the number awarded in fiscal year 2012 (2,136), which is the baseline year for the Complete College Georgia initiative. The university conferred 3,048 degrees and awards in fiscal year 2022. This is a 4.6% increase over the number awarded in fiscal year 2021 (2,915) and a 42.7% increase over the number awarded in fiscal year 2012 (2,136)

There were 12,718 students enrolled in Fall 2021: 9,569 at the undergraduate level and 3,149 at the graduate level. Overall enrollment at UWG has grown 10.6% since the Fall 2009 semester. UWG has a diverse student population: 52.3% Caucasian, 31.8% African-American/Black American, 7.5% Hispanic, 3.8% two or more races, 1.2% Asian, 2.2% did not declare any race, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The student body is 68.2% female and 31.8% male. (Fall Semester 2021)

Ninety-four (94.3) percent of the student body was from Georgia and represented 152 different counties. Carroll, Coweta, Douglas, Cobb and Gwinnett were the five counties with the largest numbers of students at UWG. There were 585 out-of-state students representing 32 of the 49 remaining states. Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee and California were the top states sending students to UWG. Additionally, there were 267 students from 63 countries. Nigeria, India, Ghana, Mexico, and Jamaica were the countries sending the largest number of students to UWG.\*

The University of West Georgia has long been committed to providing access to college for students in the western region of the state, as well as students from across the state of Georgia and the nation. Student success is at the center of UWG's [Strategic Plan](#). The 2021 strategic plan advances UWG's Momentum work by prioritizing essential elements in developing student success: growth mindset focused on a stronger sense of purpose and belonging through engaged mentoring and extra-curricular involvement; experiential / applied learning through High Impact Practices (HIPs) and co-curricular experiences that are connected to students' future personal aspiration and professional goals; stronger alignment and coordination of student support—inside and outside of the classroom—to strengthen recruitment, retention, and graduation. Through the strategic planning process, the university has identified and is now implementing high impact strategies aligned to USG Momentum to help our students successfully obtain a degree. These student success strategies are described in the following report.

\* Geographic counts are by STATE of Origin and Country of Origin (if not USA) in each student's banner record. This 'origin' information may differ from their current residence, mailing address or any other location information.

### Current USG Sector, Peer & Aspirant Institutions

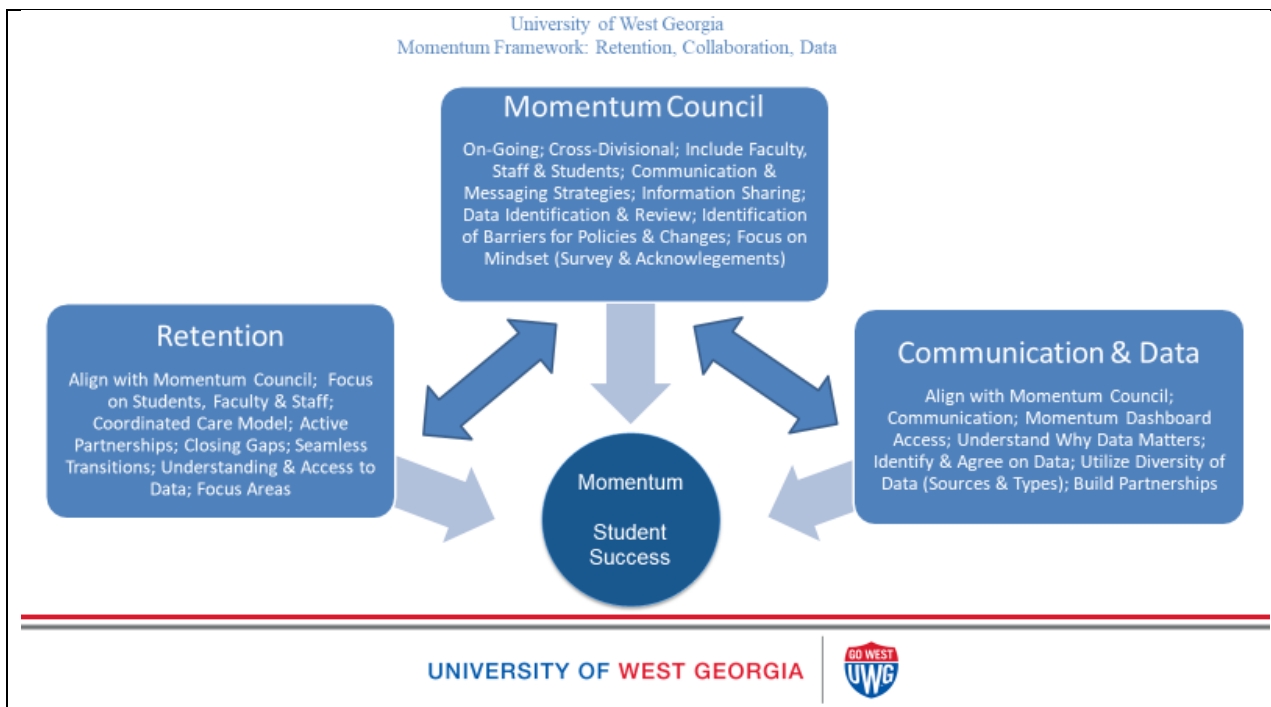
The University System of Georgia (USG) Research and Policy Analysis (RPA), in cooperation with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), devised the methodology and established parameters for clustering IPEDS data for the selection of comparator Peer Institutions for all USG institutions. As a result of this process, UWG identified fifteen (15) peer institutions, as required, and five (5) aspirant institutions. The initial list of institutions was further refined by the UWG Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Team. The selections were reviewed and approved by the UWG President, Research and Policy Analysis at the University System of Georgia (USG) Office, and subsequently approved by the USG Board of Regents in May 2017. An updated list of UWG peer and aspirant institutions appears in alphabetical order below. The institutions are used to benchmark select Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as UWG works to achieve the goals set forth in its strategic plan.

<b>USG Sector Institutions</b>	<b>IPEDS ID</b>	<b>City &amp; State</b>
Georgia Southern University	139931	Statesboro, GA
Kennesaw State University	486840	Kennesaw, GA
Valdosta State University	141264	Valdosta, GA
<b>Peer Institutions</b>		
Central Connecticut State University	128771	New Britain, CT
Florida Gulf Coast University	433660	Fort Myers, FL
Indiana State University	151324	Terre Haute, IN
Kean University	185262	Union, NJ
Sam Houston State University	227881	Huntsville, TX
Southern Connecticut State University	130493	New Haven, CT
Stephen F Austin State University	228431	Nacogdoches, TX
University of Central Arkansas	106704	Conway, AR
University of Colorado - Colorado Springs	126580	Colorado Springs, CO
University of Nebraska at Omaha	181394	Omaha, NE
University of North Florida	136172	Jacksonville, FL
Western Illinois University	149772	Macomb, IL
<b>Aspirant Institutions</b>		
Montclair State University	185590	Montclair, NJ
Indiana University of Pennsylvania - Main Campus	213020	Indiana, PA
San Francisco State University	122597	San Francisco, CA
California State University - Fresno	110556	Fresno, CA
Ball State University	150136	Muncie, IN

## **SECTION II–STUDENT SUCCESS INVENTORY FROM MOMENTUM PLAN**

### Overview and Updates

UWG’s 2022 Momentum plan focused primarily on reflection: What has UWG done well over the past four years with the Momentum actions it has implemented? What could UWG do better or change in how it has attempted and implemented Momentum initiatives? What has UWG not done well (or not yet attempted) with respect to Momentum? How do we determine and assess campus areas of strength and improvement and identify priorities for future work? While the campus planning team (see Appendix A) identified specific student success strengths and areas for improvement, the focus this year emerged around broader conceptual, organizational, and strategic explorations that the campus has not had time to adequately reflect upon and develop given the work on previously identified student success initiatives and the overall disruptions caused by COVID. As a result, UWG developed a framework around three interrelated student success priorities:



## II.1–Momentum Council

**Goal:** Expand understanding and engagement with Momentum across all campus divisions.

**Rationale:** Every spring, UWG organizes a campus team to identify student success priorities that are included in its annual Momentum Plan. UWG has had considerable success implementing these student success priorities and has received the Regent’s Momentum Award twice over the past five years for its work: The 2022 Regents’ Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success and the 2020 Regents’ Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Teaching and Curriculum Innovation for Freshmen Math Program. As the campus turns to implementation of these priorities, work often—and sometimes necessarily—becomes compartmentalized as specific units work on specific actions. Throughout the year, updates on Momentum are presented across campus (for example, a presentation was featured at the fall General Faculty Meeting), but there have not been *ongoing, collaborative discussions* about campus work. The Momentum Council will be designed to fill in this gap. The group, which will include campus partners from across divisional units, will focus on campus communication and information sharing; identifying and adeptly resolving student success barriers that emerge, and reviewing data that informs the campus Momentum work. The Momentum Council will connect Momentum Planning that takes place in the spring with the comprehensive Momentum report that is submitted in the fall by facilitating ongoing discussions and collaboration. It will connect together and facilitate the two other assessment priorities for the coming year: Retention and Data Communication.

**Update:** As part of UWG’s implementation of the USG Momentum Approach, a new Momentum Council has been created that consists of leaders from across the institution that meet regularly to provide coordinated response to student success barriers. This Momentum Council recommends the removal of holds, resolves policy/process barriers that hinder student progression, and streamlines student services. This is a tactical team that is part of UWG’s broader approach of holistically solving student issues in the one-stop-shop Momentum Center on campus. The Provost charged leadership from across campus to work collaboratively in the development of the new Momentum Council. The charge included drafting a mission statement, identifying operational priorities, and recommending council membership. This work was completed in May 2022 and was approved by the Momentum Council and the Provost in June 2022. The first council meeting was held in June. In addition to its work on identifying and removing institutional barriers to student success, the council has developed recommendations to improve student participation in the USG Mindset Survey and organized a visit to the UWG campus by Jonathan Hull, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Faculty and Success, which included a campus-wide forum on USG Momentum. The council’s work also connects with UWG’s other two priorities below: Retention (Section II.2) and Communication and Data (Section II.3) below. See Appendix B for the Momentum Council Mission Statement.

## Section II.2–Retention

**Goal:** Expand and deepen campus conversations about retention especially in relation to closing gaps.

**Rationale:** Retention is a priority at UWG, and units from across campus work on issues related to retention throughout the year. As part of this campus work, UWG examines disaggregated data among student populations to address equity gaps. Some of these priorities are identified in Sections 2.2 and 2.4 of this year’s plan. However, campus work on retention is often not coordinated well or widely communicated across units and divisions. Too often, we fall into thinking of retention only in terms of numbers—even when the data is disaggregated. As one member of the planning team reminded us, retention is only an outcome. While we will continue to address retention, the campus planning team recommends that UWG spend time this year looking more holistically at retention. How do we facilitate engaged and sustained conversations about retention that include greater participation from more units and divisions across campus? How do we shift the focus around how campus partners think about retention in relation to their daily work? This rethinking about retention should be connected to the President’s Continuous Improvement Institute which focuses on creating an institution-wide culture of caring, and it should expand retention to include students, staff, and faculty. The two other student success priorities—the Momentum Council and Data Communication—will be instrumental to this work.

**Update:** Efforts to improve retention have become more coordinated and have broadened to include new strategies for student support and on-time intervention for at-risk students. This work has been guided by a new campus-wide retention plan that was implemented in 2022 through the Office of Strategic Enrollment Management. These processes—both new and revised—are described in Section III below.

### Section II.3–Communication and Data

**Goal:** Develop mutual agreement about data that informs Momentum work on campus, facilitate common points of access to data, and encourage on-going, data-informed discussions and decision-making.

**Rationale:** UWG uses data all the time to drive decision-making and assessment of its student success priorities. The campus is fortunate to have several units (Information Technology Systems and Institutional Assessment & Effectiveness) that support this ongoing work. However, the utilization of data across campus often feels fragmented. Units who need access to specific kinds of data sometimes do not know where to look or who to ask. In the assessment of student success priorities, there is sometimes uncertainty about what data should be included. For example, what data should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of UWG’s current Academic Focus Areas and how do we gather and disseminate this data so that it can inform decision-making. The two other student success priorities—the Momentum Council and Retention— will be instrumental to this work.

**Update:** Efforts to support students have become more closely aligned with on-time, real-time data and the facilitation of communication across campus units. These processes—both new and revised—are described in Section III below.

### Section II.4–UWG Big Idea

In FY23, UWG is defining course templates in the online course management system (D2L) such that each course will have objectives defined with materials and assessments (projects, tests, quizzes, assignments) mapped to course objectives. This standardization of approaches to presenting content, measuring performance of students, and responding to students who are not meeting objectives will improve early intervention and student success across all courses. Further, this standard approach will improve consistency in delivery of courses across UWG.

## SECTION III.1–ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

### Corequisite Learning Support

AY20 was UWG’s first year offering corequisite learning support courses: ENGL 0999, MATH 0997, and MATH 0999. UWG also participated in the Statistics Pathway pilot to offer MATH 1401 (Elementary Statistics) in Area A2. MATH 1401 and MATH 0996 were offered for the first time in F20. In designing learning support courses, UWG followed the USG best practices criteria. UWG corequisite learning support courses are 1 credit hour but 2 contact hours per week. The 1 credit hour ensures that learning support does not negatively impact students financially, while the 2 contact hours provide students with the instructional time they need to support learning in the core course. The core section and the corequisite learning support section are taught by the same instructor. English and Math faculty designed the learning support course following USG guidelines, while professional staff in Admissions, Advising, Registrar, Academic Success, and the Provost’s Office developed processes for advisement and placement of students in learning support. UWG has a designated Learning Support Coordinator and has sent implementation teams consisting of Math and English faculty and professional support staff to each of the USG Learning Support Academies.

This year, corequisite faculty extended ongoing work to support student mindset by implementing the USG Mindset Modules in MATH sections, implementing their own mindset activities, and by actively encouraging students to take the USG Mindset survey. Four First-Year Mathematics faculty members have implemented the USG’s Mindset Modules in CourseDen their fall 2022 courses. All corequisite faculty address mindset in some way in their courses.

The statistical success rates for English and Math for the past year are consistent with the previous two years, which reflect the impact of the COVID pandemic on a number of levels. This is consistent with data from across the USG on the continuing impact of COVID. In Fall 2021, 14% of admitted freshmen were identified as needing Learning Support. In Fall 2022, there was a significant increase to 30% of admitted freshmen needing Learning Support. This is due primarily to the test optional policy for admissions leaving only high school GPA (and potentially ACCU-PLACER) to exempt the Learning Support requirements.

- UWG retained 42.4% of students in Learning Support from Fall 2021 to Spring 2022.
- UWG retained 92.6% of students in Learning Support from Spring 2022 to Fall 2022.

UWG Success Rates for English and Mathematics Corequisite Learning Support Courses

<b>Fall 2021 Corequisite LS Courses</b>	<b>Spring 2022 Corequisite LS Courses</b>																				
ENGL 1101/0999	ENGL 1101/0999																				
Total Enrolled 76 (passed 61%)	Total Enrolled 62 (passed 60%)																				
Non LS pass rate 72%	Non LS pass rate 60%																				
MATH 1001/0997	MATH 1001/0997																				
Total Enrolled 92 (passed 59%)	Total Enrolled 81 (passed 62%)																				
Non LS pass rate 70%	Non LS pass rate 69%																				
MATH 1111/0999	MATH 1111/0999																				
Total Enrolled 91 (passed 66%)	Total Enrolled 19 (passed 37%)																				
Non LS pass rate 75%	Non LS pass rate 69%																				
MATH 1404/0996	MATH 1404/0996																				
Total Enrolled 5 (passed 0%)	Total Enrolled 2 (passed 100%)																				
Non LS pass rate 75%	Non LS pass rate 74%																				
<b>Fall 2021 Enrollment (1439 freshman)</b>	<b>Spring 2022 Enrollment</b>																				
257 students identified as needing LS	164 students identified as needing LS																				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prior Dual Enrollment or Continuing</td> <td>113</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First-Time Students</td> <td>93</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer Students</td> <td>46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Readmitted Students</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ARCHE</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </table>	Prior Dual Enrollment or Continuing	113	First-Time Students	93	Transfer Students	46	Readmitted Students	3	ARCHE	1	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prior Dual Enrollment or Continuing</td> <td>103</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First-Time Students</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer Students</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Readmitted Students</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ARCHE</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </table>	Prior Dual Enrollment or Continuing	103	First-Time Students	28	Transfer Students	30	Readmitted Students	2	ARCHE	1
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Of these students, 109 students (42.4%) were retained for Spring 2022	Of these students, 152 students (92.6%) were retained for Fall 2022
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### Credit Hour Completion in First Year

Credit hour completion has remained relatively consistent since UWG first began to emphasize completing 15/30 credit hours in the first year in 2015. There was a decline in 2021-2022 which appears to be connected to the post-pandemic return to campus (and more in-person classes) after several years of almost exclusively online courses. UWG transitioned to pre-made schedules that include 15 credit hours for entering students in Spring 2019 which has helped with this process, along with more consistent messaging and advising about the value and importance of attempting 15 credit hours each semester.

Term	# Fall FTF enrolled in less than 12 hours	# Fall FTF enrolled in 12-14 hours	# Fall FTF enrolled in 15 or more hours	Total Fall FTF enrolled	Percentage
Fall 2019	75	975	802	1852	43.3%
Spring 2020	124	716	818	1658	49.33%
Fall 2020	138	724	959	1821	52.66%
Spring 2021	161	604	756	1521	49.74%
Fall 2021	106	746	693	1545	44.85%
Spring 2022	129	635	565	1329	42.5%

### Academic Advising and Academic Success

As part of Momentum Planning in 2019-2020, UWG consolidated all advising units across campus into one unit under an executive director. This unit is now housed in University College and also includes the Center for Academic Success as part of the new Department for Student Success. Since these organizational changes occurred last year during the COVID pandemic, many of the organizational transitions were not completed until this past year (2020-2021). Reorganization of Advising--which was guided by NACADA recommendations--resulted in several student-oriented improvements: hiring additional academic advisors to reduce advising workloads and to provide advising staff with more time and opportunity to work with and mentor students; improving consistency among advising processes across campus; and developing more effective and consistent hiring, training, and mentoring processes for advisors. As a result of this transformational work, the Department of Student Success received last year the University System of Georgia Momentum Award.

The Advising Center has worked to create a more efficient communication structure for students throughout the advising process. EAB Navigate and Wolf Watch are two systems that are used to enter advising and student tracking notes to help guide future discussions with students. Some comments are only visible internally while others are visible to students. At the end of each advising session, UWG advisors enter notes into both for their future review and also so that students are clear on plans and summaries of the discussion/advising session. Any advisor and student affairs and academic affairs leader can review notes and provide holistic support for students (i.e., past notes can be scanned quickly at the beginning of any student interaction to make the support contextualized and most meaningful).

### Supplemental Instruction

In the Center for Academic Success, Supplemental Instruction (SI) focuses on supporting “high risk courses” that have 20-25 percent or more DWF rate. Once these courses are determined, Supplemental Instruction is available to students enrolled in these courses. Students who attend at least two to three (2 to 3) SI sessions per week significantly outperform non-SI participants. In an

effort to support our adult learners who may not be able to attend SI sessions on campus, each SI leader offers online support and hosts at least one session each week virtually. Student Success also makes this SI available to dual enrollment students.

While SI supports core courses and covers many more courses than those listed below, the following courses were identified as high impact with strong improvement ranging from nearly one and a half letter grade improvement to one fourth letter grade improvement. Retention rate of students receiving Supplemental Instruction Fall 2021/Spring 2022 is 91% and exceeds the UWG average retention rate.

Course	Mean Grade	SI Mean Grade	Non-SI Improvement
<b>ACCT 2101</b>	2.81	1.39	1.42
<b>BIOL 1107</b>	2.70	1.70	1.00
<b>ENGL1101</b>	3.21	2.33	0.88
<b>MATH1111</b>	2.66	2.21	0.45
<b>HIST 1112</b>	2.50	2.26	0.24

### Student Success Markers

In AY22, EAB Navigate Analytics identified 1,604 students with at least one Missed Success Marker. Success Markers are determined by the faculty from each program and loaded into EAB Navigate. Faculty determined that specific courses need to be completed at certain points in order to keep students on progression. Students with missed success markers are advised to register for missed courses and their schedules will be audited after the close of registration.

### Course Alerts

Course Alerts are a primary tool for identifying students at risk of not being academically successful during the specific reporting period of the academic semester. 2205 unique students appeared in 4468 course alerts were identified in fall 2021 and spring 2022. Of these uniquely identified students, 1431 (or 65 percent) engaged with our Student Success Services. Currently, increasing this percentage of student interaction/engagement with any and/or all success services is a paramount goal for the Department of Student Success. Follow up interactions based upon Early/Course Alerts include:

Academic Support Area	Students Utilizing Services	Total Number of Visits
<b>Academic Coaching</b>	703	1463
<b>Tutoring</b>	403	1,119
<b>Supplemental Instruction</b>	247	672
<b>University Writing Center</b>	78	141

Based upon course alerts, 74% of this high-risk student population was retained for Fall 2022 (1632 of 2205).

### Academic Recovery Program (ARP)

ARP is available to students who have a cumulative grade point average between 1.49 and 1.99. This initiative is from UWG's Peer Coaching program and is designed to identify barriers that prohibit students' academic performance and aid in building self-efficacy to remove these barriers. It is a semester-long commitment from students that focuses on accountability and preparedness. This year (AY23), we targeted 124 students, and as this was an opt in-program, 25 students responded. The department's target was 15 students. We are currently monitoring these students for any Early/Course Alerts and keeping them on the ARP schedule. Students in this program meet with a coach once a week. The UWG goal is 100% retention of students who complete the Academic Recovery Program.

### Unenrolled Campaign

This program encourages continuing students to enroll and continue their progress toward graduation. Below we present the number of students contacted, the open rates, and the number of students that enrolled as a result of the campaign. This provides us strong evidence of what information students will open and act upon. This campaign ran from April - August, 2022.

Total Number of Students Campaigned	3155
Number of Links Clicked	333
Number of Emails Opened	1640
Average Click to Open Rate	19%
Total Number of Students Enrolled from Campaigns	1176
Percentage of Enrollment Increase	37%

### Data Analysis of Student Success

Each year, student performance in courses is reviewed, including pass rate and DWF/fail rates on a per section basis. These data are used to review and improve delivery of course content and assess appropriateness of assignments. Department chairs and deans utilize this data on a regular basis. Most recently, these data were used to inform comprehensive curricular changes to improve student success. A shared Google Drive system was created to report student success and course pass rates, and faculty teams reviewed the data and made suggested modifications to courses, including program adjustments to update pre-requisite courses, improve flexibility and choice (especially in mid-program course offerings) all in an effort to improve progression and time to graduation for students. This continuous improvement approach also feeds into regular regional and disciplinary accreditation work at UWG.

### Google Drive Collaboration to Facilitate Communication and Data Sharing

Student support collaboration has been enhanced beginning Fall 2022 to regularly share student success markers and report updates on academic initiatives. Chairs, Deans, and other leaders across UWG use shared folders to provide evidentiary materials and status reporting documents (using a standard template) that allows for reporting up and down the UWG organization. This enhanced approach has been useful thus far in FY23 to highlight achievement and accolades in academic programs as well as track curricular improvement and new academic program development. Within Academic Affairs, this shared drive system guides regular (weekly/monthly) status updates and ensures all are tracking lead indicators toward successful annual goals and outcomes.

### General Education Faculty Fellow

Regular and ongoing student success analysis is conducted each semester with emphasis on first year and general education courses. UWG supports a General Education Faculty Fellow who is responsible for coordinating analysis and reporting of general education courses and providing feedback to departments responsible for these courses. Further, UWG conducts analytics on student performance in courses. Each course (across all academic programs) has a designated Course Coordinator, a faculty member responsible for reviewing student performance, currency of materials, and updating courses through shared governance—initiating updates through departmental, college, and university-level reviews.

## SECTION III.2—STUDENT SUPPORT AND PLACEMAKING

### Momentum Center

UWG opened its signature Momentum Center (MC) in the heart of campus in September 2020 to ensure that students have one central location to visit in order to get the help they need to be successful. At the MC, the service expectation is that UWG staff take ownership of the student’s problem and create a hardwired service culture on campus. The Momentum Center continues to change and evolve in response to student needs and removing barriers. In the Momentum Center, students can access support services from Academic Advising, Center for Academic Success, Registrar, Financial Aid, Student Accounts and Billing Services, Career and Graduate School Connections, Campus Services (formerly Auxiliary Services), and the Student Solutions Team. The center continues to utilize flex spaces so that offices can be present in the Momentum Center during peak times for their services. Phone, in-person, and live chat from the website represent the many ways that students, faculty, staff, and community can connect with the MC. Over 3000 unique students called or came into the Momentum Center in FY22. Not all of our interactions are limited to students. We had over 27,000 interactions with our community in the last year to direct to appropriate resources, answer general information about UWG, and answer specific student questions.

### Day One Access/WilloLabs Course Materials Collaboration (Update)

Day One Access is a *collaborative* UWG initiative that allows the institution to capitalize on economies of scale in order to negotiate the best possible pricing on online textbooks and other course materials and provide students with access on day one of class, in addition to providing easy access to open-source, free or low-cost resources for our students via our learning management system (LMS Brightspace by D2L, branded CourseDen). The Day One Access collaboration led by the UWG Bookstore but heavily supported by UWG Online and the Office of Student Accounts and Billing (OSAB), has now saved UWG students over 1.3 million dollars.



USG Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Library Services and Executive Director of GALILEO met with the UWG Bookstore and UWG Online, Oct 25th, to discuss the UWG Day One Access textbook model powered by Willolabs. The USG reps expressed amazement regarding our only 1% opt-out rate which is unheard of among other USG schools using similar models. The USG reps mentioned that ours is the most collaborative approach of the many USG schools they had already interviewed on this topic; they said that our collaborative approach was unique and as a result of our feedback they will be changing their recommendation report back to the BOR. The Bookstore/ UWG Online/ OSAB/ DIA Willolabs collaboration has produced the following student success outcomes:

UWG Online’s LMS administrators no longer integrate individual online textbook providers’ offerings directly within CourseDen, requiring the vendors to use DIA’s Willolab partner integration instead. This strategy leverages the negotiating power of the institution as a whole instead of relying on individual faculty to negotiate pricing for their class materials.

UWG Online’s high level of access within the LMS allows for more efficient and effective support when needed for students and faculty. Key Bookstore staff and UWG Online staff share the responsibility of responding to a single DayOne@westga.edu so that the appropriate representative can respond without delay. For example, UWG Online administrators can log in and see what the students or faculty sees in order to best guide them when they are lost or confused in accessing or implementing their materials. Further, the collaboration has provided UWG Online administrators with more direct access to the vendor support representatives so that troubleshooting issues can more quickly be resolved than in the past.

UWG OSAB applies the materials charges directly to the students’ accounts so that financial aid can be more easily utilized and access on day one is ensured. Students are provided the opportunity to opt-out; the collaborative team ensures this is done without negatively impacting the student. For example, a student may accidentally opt-out not initially understanding that the materials are required for participation in the class. UWG Online or Bookstore reps check with the student first in order to ensure that an opt-out is truly wanted, explaining the requirements for the class, before advising the OSAB to process the refund.

Using Willolabs ensures that students’ privacy is protected. Students within the program are not prompted to agree to sometimes questionable vendor user-agreements, provide detailed personal information, or make a direct purchase with their debit or credit card as is the case with vendors not yet included in the Day One Access initiative.

#### UWG Day One Student Access Cost Savings (UWG Bookstore)

Semester	Number of Students	Original Pricing	Day One Pricing	Students Save	Average Saving Per Student
Fall 2022	3,854	\$686,362.00	\$253,954.00	\$432,408.00	\$112.20
Summer 2022	588	\$114,080.00	\$39,928.00	\$74,152.00	\$126.11
Spring 2022	3,326	\$613,869.00	\$220,993.00	\$392,876.00	\$118.12
Fall 2021	1,864	\$293,170.00	\$113,693.00	\$179,477.00	\$96.29
Summer 2021	467	\$69,044.00	\$24,528.00	\$44,516.00	\$95.32
Spring 2021	1,392	\$285,581.00	\$95,187.00	\$190,394.00	\$136.78
Summer / Fall 2020	644	\$112,598.00	\$44,908.00	\$67,690.00	\$105.11
<b>Total / Average</b>	<b>12,135</b>	<b>\$2,174,704.00</b>	<b>\$793,191.00</b>	<b>\$1,381,513.00</b>	<b>\$112.85</b>

#### Bookstore to the Rescue

To help students who face financial hardships, the UWG Bookstore and the Office of Financial Aid implemented the [Bookstore to the Rescue](#) initiative that helps students purchase their books earlier at the start of the semester using their financial aid refund.

### SECTION III.3–STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT ONLINE

#### UWG Online

Quality online offerings and support still remain critical factors in student success and in degree completion. Despite returning to on-campus post-pandemic learning, the credit hours earned online in Fall 2022 remained high at nearly 60% (versus pre-pandemic rates averaging 30% Fall and Spring semesters). Further, roughly 9500 (80%) of UWG students take *at least one entirely online course*, and 4989 (41.87%) of UWG students take courses *exclusively online* (live Fall 2022 Banner Data 10/10/22). [\[link to Interactive DataStudio Dashboard\]](#)

As a result, [UWG Online](#) continued expanded support services, including the high-touch UWG Online REACH Intervention Initiative (Reach out Encourage Advise Collaborate Help), texting outreach, the online searchable Knowledgebase, and expanded hours of operation (until 8pm) via phone, web, live chat, Google Voice, and screen share sessions. Smarthinking virtual tutoring and writing center service hours continued to be offered to all students (not just those in online classes); the campus-wide Grammarly Premium license was promoted; a Bot was purchased and added to existing GeckoLiveChat channels across the university so that students can get answers quickly after-hours with primary build-out and maintenance responsibility for the entire campus on the shoulders of UWG Online. UWG Online is collaborating with UWG Information Technology Services to extract data analytics pertinent to providing data key to informing student success, in addition to the successful DayOne collaboration with the UWG Bookstore (saving students nearly \$500K since start-up last year) and other data analytics projects underway with the College of Education (TK-20). These Success Tools are summarized in our online [KnowledgeBase](#). Despite the sustained jump in online enrollment and demand on our help desk, survey responders still rate UWG Online’s service with an average of 9.9 (out of a possible 10). Further, UWG Online staff averaged among the best response time across all campus live chat teams, averaging as fast as 20 seconds during our busiest month of August 2022.

## UWG Online REACH Intervention Initiative (Reach out Encourage Advise Collaborate Help)

One significant change to the UWG Online REACH processes has yielded positive results, raising the average of students reengaged within five days of our initial REACH efforts (Reach out Encourage Advise Collaborate Help) for each call cycle so far this semester from 26% last year to 54% so far this year. The change meant that the mentor piece was abandoned due to low engagement and replaced with a new two-way text support process. Instead of merely texting identified at-risk online students with messages of support, the messages now ask questions and respondents receive real live-person answers from one of our staff members. For example:

How are things going? [Reply 1,2,3,4]
[1]: I am great and on top of things!
[2]: I'm logging into CourseDen often but I have questions.
[3]: I am lost and don't know if I can catch up.
[4]: I need help with something not related to my UWG Online classes.

The timing of these messages is coordinated with the Center of Academic Success in order to not over-contact students, as well as the fact that our messaging is typically only being sent to approximately 300 at-risk online students as opposed to the whole student body. Since January 2022, UWG Online staff have sent 42,729 emails to registered students, welcoming the student to online learning and providing tips for success. 3,714 students who were identified as not having logged on to the learning management system by a prescribed date were identified as *at-risk* and sent targeted emails and text messages. Following those messages, students who still had not logged on within 1-2 days were contacted by phone 872 phone calls. Additionally, all 53 available check-out laptops and 50 Chromebooks are in use by in-need online students, via the related EQUIP collaboration with the UWG Library and ITS.

## CircleIn: A Collaborative Student Success Initiative

Academic Affairs, UWG Online, and ITS continue to collaborate on expanding access, promoting, and supporting the [CircleIn](#) student collaboration application integrated within CourseDen (UWG’s branded D2L LMS) and now available to all students for Fall 2022. CircleIn is free to UWG students and helps them study remotely, collaborate with peers, access tutors, ask questions, and stay productive. CircleIn transforms the class into a community and creates the space for students to brainstorm together, just like they would in a coffee shop or a library. CircleIn offers a mobile app that can be used on any mobile device and a web version that can be used on our laptop or computer. Students earn points by sharing helpful resources, collaborating with classmates, and studying within the app. Points can be redeemed for gift cards and other rewards. Last year, CircleIn was implemented as a pilot initiative with a limited number of courses participating. In fall 2022, all courses have access to the platform, and the results and feedback have been promising. As November 2022, 2475 course sections have had students participate in CircleIn, with a 18,141 of 80,285 enrollments electing to participate in CircleIn (22.6%). There are now 1099 unique courses using CircleIn as compared to Fall 2022 when there were 43. A total number of 3,144 UWG students (up from 414) have downloaded CircleIn since September 2021.

For Fall 2022 alone, 2029 students or faculty have opted to use the tool to create and share study materials with no direct course-related incentives provided: 2,447 flashcard sets have been created (up from 596); 2,645 tasks created (up from 519), with 1,452 tasks completed (up from 236) and 730 tasks progressed (up from 141); 438 notes uploaded (up from 214). As far as social interaction related to the use of CircleIn: 199 flashcard sets have been studied by other classmates (compared to 52); 936 posts viewed (compared to 93); and 188 appreciations posted (compared to 38). Also new this semester, 10 CircleIn teaching and learning “communities” have been created organically, with the most active one having 694 messages from August to November 2022. Additional planning in

advance of the spring semester is underway to further expand adoption of CircleIn since it supports student learning, academic mindset, and placemaking.

## **SECTION III.4—CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM MAPS AND CAREER PATHWAYS**

### **Co-Curricular Program Maps**

UWG identified revisions to program maps as part of its Momentum planning. The focus has been on consistency of design, pressure-testing, inclusion of co-curricular options, high impact practices, and accessibility. These revised maps focus on providing students with an aesthetic branded map to guide them through the courses they should take each semester on a four-year plan. For co-curricular options, these were designed with less rigidity: instead of by semester on a four-year plan, we have provided suggestions for first year, middle years, and last year. This design allows for all students—from first-time freshmen to adult-learners who transferred midway in their college career to follow the guide for co-curriculars suggestions for six action-focused areas: Crush your Coursework (narrative recommendations for course order and foci), Find your Place (extracurriculars on campus including student groups and research), Broaden your Perspective (diversity, inclusion, cultural competency, and belonging), Connect Off-Campus (work, internships, volunteering, connecting with professionals in the field), Take Care of Yourself (recommendations for physical and mental wellbeing), and Pave your Path (career-centered recommendations).

In Fall 2022, every UWG academic program published a co-curricular map showcasing activities beyond the course requirements for the program. These guide students into activities that they will engage in each year, starting with their first semester through their graduating semester. Further, these co-curricular maps outline market analysis with workforce demand, salary expectations, and other meaningful statistical points to best inform students of academic choice. See Appendix C for examples of UWG co-curricular program maps.

### **First-Year Seminar (Cornerstone)**

UWG's Cornerstone course (First-Year Seminar) was one of the first initiatives UWG developed as part of Momentum in 2017 to support student success and to help students in their transition to college in the first year. It is also the first High Impact Practice that UWG developed and built to scale, drawing on broad, collaborative partnerships from across campus. From its inception, the Cornerstone course has focused on multiple strategies to improve academic mindset. These seminars, each with a unique academic focus, are aligned with the USG Momentum Approach and are designed to help students develop the academic and growth mindset necessary for college success. In the first year (F17), UWG piloted 28 sections of the Cornerstone Course. In fall 2022 there were 50 sections (approximately 1,100 or 85% of FTFT first-year students enrolled). In addition to the focus on an engaging academic topic, each seminar incorporates academic success experiences—in the form of online exploration modules and course presentations—that include career exploration, growth mindset, academic advising, writing, and peer mentoring/tutoring. Faculty and credentialed staff from across campus have been actively involved in developing and teaching the course, and they participate in a summer course design workshop that includes information on academic mindset. Students who take first-year seminar are retained at a higher percentage across most demographic categories, including first-generation and Pell-eligible students.

As part of UWG's First-Year Seminar (Cornerstone) course, first-year students now complete a career inventory assessment through YouScience. Students also have an opportunity to complete the Focus2 Career Inventory as part of the admissions process. The inventory in the Cornerstone course includes a follow-up assignment administered by the Academic Transitions staff where students reflect on potential majors and careers / jobs connected to different majors. Staff from Career Services also meet with students to process the career inventory. So far this fall, 475 students have completed the career inventory process. While this career inventory is valuable for all students, it is particularly targeted toward students in academic focus areas (who have not declared a major) and students who have declared a major but might transition to another major during the first year. The career inventory data is shared with support staff (including career services and academic advising) so that students are supported in developing a purposeful pathway. In the Cornerstone course, first-year students also complete a Growth Mindset Assessment, in addition to the Mindset Survey administered through the USG. So far this fall, 458 students have completed the assessment. As with the Career Inventory, the results of the assessment are shared with each student and with student support staff so they can help.

In 2022, the lab component was revised to include an orientation to the advising and course registration process to help students better understand 1) how the course selection process works, 2) how course registration works, 3) and how to maintain adequate degree progress. To deliver this information, undergraduate students designed a workshop to share with each individual section of the course (50 sections in total). After sharing the presentation, students each complete a review assessment to make sure they understand key barriers to registration (e.g. can you register without meeting with an advisor).

## Market Alignment Pathways to Support Student Success

The University of West Georgia utilizes data-driven academic analysis and planning for existing and future academic programs. As examples of aligning industry needs and future academic program offerings, UWG added four new academic programs in the past year and is currently developing four more for implementation in FY23. The newly-launched and planned academic programs meet high-demand areas within the national and Georgia workforce analysis, including:

- Nexus (2-year, career-focused) in Computing: Completely online (and in-class if desired) degree to target “some credit, no degree” students throughout Georgia who want to upskill in better paying jobs and enter the computing field.
- Bachelor of Science in Computing: Accessible academic program that does not require specialized math/science courses in general education and allows students to focus courses in networking, software/app development, cyber security, and data analytics.
- Masters of Science in Digital and Social Media Communications: Met initial enrollment projection of 24 students starting fall 2022.
- Master of Science in Integrative Health and Wellness: Students who complete the program and its related assessments will also be eligible to take the National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching (NBHWC) certification exam.
- Master of Science in Applied Business Analytics - Evolving from existing MBA program and analytics courses within the MBA program, this new degree (being proposed to the BoR) will allow students to focus in a high-demand area in Georgia.
- Master of Science in Cybersecurity and Information Management: Evolving from the existing MBA and cyber courses in the MBA program, this new degree (being proposed to the BoR) will meet high-demand jobs with midpoint salary at one year after graduation of \$71k.
- Nexus (2-year) in Supply Chain Management: Fully embedded into the existing BBA degree program at UWG, this 2-year degree supports students who are 1) either in the supply chain field to extend their credentials and progress in their careers or 2) would like to enter the supply chain field with minimal time to employment.
- Nexus (2-year) in Digital Entertainment, Esports, and Game Development: Fully embedded into the existing BS in Sports Management and the BS in Film and Video Production degree programs at UWG, this 2-year degree supports students who are 1) either in the digital entertainment field to extend their credentials and progress in their careers or 2) would like to enter the digital entertainment field with minimal time to employment. The degree is being offered under the Georgia Film Consortium Cooperative Academic Arrangement.

All of the proposed and new academic programs rely upon external industry partner input to define content and include market analysis from US Census Bureau Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes, USG Qlik portal data, O-Net, USG Georgia Degree Pays, and external business partners.

## SECTION III.5 – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

### QEP on Experiential Learning and Career Preparation

In Spring 2022, UWG approved its new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). UWG’s next QEP will seek to increase opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to engage in high quality experiential learning opportunities at West Georgia through the following institutional priorities: 1) supporting and expanding equitable access to experiential learning courses within the academic curriculum; 2) implementing institutional structures to support co-curricular and extra-curricular experiential learning activities; 3) strategically connecting experiential learning to professional and career preparation; and 4) utilizing experiential learning to recruit and retain students.

### High Impact Practices (HIPs)

West Georgia continues to serve as an engaged institutional partner in efforts to develop and expand opportunities for students to engage in High Impact Practice (HIPs). UWG has had a campus-wide HIPs Steering Committee in place since 2016, and work on HIPs / experiential learning has been integrated into UWG’s new strategic plan and the new Quality Enhancement Plan. Among the results of this work has been UWG’s signature First-Year Seminar (Cornerstone) courses that are aligned to HIPs First-Year Experience criteria and that support UWG’s Momentum work in the first-year around mindset and career pathways.

Campus planning around HIPs was prominently included in UWG’s Momentum Plan in spring 2021 and focused on developing a campus process and criteria for Banner course attributes. Last fall, the HIPs Campus Steering Committee worked with the Faculty Senate to draft and approve a ([HIPs Criteria Process Proposal](#)) that resulted in the approval of HIPs criteria documents for Undergraduate Research, Work-Based Learning, Service Learning, First-Year Experience, and Study Abroad / Study Away. In spring 2022, faculty and academic programs began submitting course proposals and syllabi aligned with the approved HIPs criteria to receive HIPs course attributes. That process is continuing this year. This fall 42 UWG courses were approved to receive the Undergraduate Research High Impact Practice attribute. Work in the next stage of implementation will focus on Capstones, Global & Diversity Learning (apart from Study Abroad / Away), Writing Intensive courses, and courses with ePortfolios.

## SECTION IV: LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

A number of lessons were identified by the UWG Campus Team through a campus survey conducted as part of the Momentum institutional planning process in the spring. The responses below reflect common points of agreement as well as different perspectives from across divisions.

I. What changes has UWG made in practices / programs / operations because of the Pandemic that have improved its effectiveness and that will be maintained or built upon?

- Students have access to a greater variety of course delivery formats (f2f/hybrid/online), especially online courses. Offering more remote learning and programming with dual modality has helped.
- Faculty are more adept at utilizing and mixing different learning environments. New technologies were installed in almost all classrooms across campus to support multi-modal learning.
- Faculty and staff are more comfortable with and adept at meeting and working with students in virtual settings for office hours, advising, student support, etc. Work processes have changed to support working with students in virtual formats, including placing more documentation and processes online. Offering support services such as Supplemental Instruction, Tutoring, and Advising in virtual options has been helpful, especially as UWG expands to meet the needs of non-traditional students.
- Faculty and staff are more accommodating in their willingness to go the extra mile to reach out to and support students. Standards and expectations remain high, but more consideration is given in how students are supported. More than ever, faculty and staff say that they can really see how students are struggling to balance classes and outside commitments (family, work, etc.).
- UWG is providing more resources and support to students who need essential technology or technology support in both virtual and face-to-face settings.
- The Bookstore's DayOne Access Collaboration initially started as a way to save students money while making immediate access to their virtual textbooks possible. The program was most helpful during the pandemic when it became difficult to get physical books to the students quickly. The program has grown and has saved UWG students hundreds of thousands of dollars.

II. How has your communications with students shifted since the Pandemic?

Communication to students from faculty and staff increased during the pandemic. Many units have focused on messaging that prioritizes care. Faculty and staff report that students respond to different communications in different ways. Students receive more text messages and the perception is that they prefer this form of communication. Chatbots, which are relatively new to UWG, have helped and provide students with a forum for feedback. Email does not always seem to be as effective. Students have also found additional ways to connect with each other such as creating a GroupMe to ask questions.

Course communications to students have increased and become more diverse. In-person office hours and course lectures have been supplemented by virtual office hours and review sessions (often recorded) that make it easier for students with busy, complicated lives to utilize.

Student support units also have expanded and adapted how they communicate with students. This includes periodic phone calls to students reported as not engaged to check on them. Work has been done on how to communicate (changes in scripts). There are many more virtual sessions and live chats and the virtual platforms seem to work really well (e.g., screenshare and walk students through steps).

We have become more proactive and action-oriented in communication to students, but the problem often is that communication only extends to information sharing, and sometimes not all of the information is clearly communicated or understood. Many students end up missing or not understanding information that is needed to be successful in college. Some students need more than information; they need mentoring and guidance. This includes virtual courses. Students often need help not just with the content but how to navigate these new virtual learning environments.

While many of these changes in communication are positive, there are some challenges. Some students— even residential ones—only communicate virtually (e.g. email, apps, chat). There is hesitation to visit campus locations in person without having a prior relationship with someone they know. There is a need to regroup to personalize the experience for students. Many departmental "hearthths" are not as active or vibrant as they were before the Pandemic. Having physical spaces where students, faculty, and staff interact remains important in making the university feel like home for everyone.

III. In what ways, if any, are the students at UWG today different from the students who were enrolled before the Pandemic? What are the implications for success work and for campus functions in general?

Many students today have heightened levels of anxiety and depression. They have more family obligations and / or job commitments. We are encountering many more need-insecure students (food, housing, finances, etc.). Prioritizing wellness, mental health and self-care seems more necessary now. Students need more support, but we should not see this as a failure on their part.

Many students today experienced less socialization with family, educators, and friends for more than two years. They bring to us a basic level of comprehension of online learning, but often they still do not have the skills they need to succeed in college. How do we create diverse learning environments for them to engage socially and academically, especially when some prefer and do better in virtual settings while others do not?

The Pandemic affected the social and academic mindset of many students. They can be less-confident in their ability to learn and succeed and give up more easily (lack persistence). They are uncertain how to interact with others and are reluctant to seek help when they need it. They can struggle with basic learning and social skills. They are uncertain about the future and that impacts their dedication to success in the present moment. We have to understand these dynamics and make changes if we want to help them succeed.

IV. What issues, challenges, or questions are still being addressed to support students in the aftermath of the Pandemic?

- How changes resulting from the Pandemic impact how we think about student retention and academic mindset.
- How to extend and enhance the positive advancements with hybrid course delivery and virtual student support.
- How to re-engage and reconnect everyone (students, staff, and faculty) on a residential campus.
- How to address an increased demand for online courses even when that modality does not match many students' learning preferences.
- How to demonstrate the return on investment for a four-year degree when the pandemic has shown students there are many shorter, less expensive career preparation pathways.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

UWG achieved virtually all of its Momentum goals for 2021-2022 and continues to make strong, evidence-based progress toward its 2022-2023 goals as well, supported by a new executive leadership team and a new strategic plan. While the challenges created in the aftermath of COVID often have created additional challenges, dedicated faculty and staff continue to learn and adopt new skills and discover new ways to support students. As a result, more faculty than ever are knowledgeable and better equipped to teach in dynamic ways that support students. Support services offered by staff have done similar work in the formation of the Momentum Center and in organizational changes in Advising, Academic Success, Orientation, and New Student Programs to better support student success. Finally, but certainly not least, UWG celebrates our students who have shown remarkable resiliency and dedication to learning during these unprecedented challenges. They have helped us learn how to continue to be an institution that values learning and embraces community during challenging times.

Many academic and student support units, administrative leaders, faculty, and staff at UWG contributed to this report, either in writing specific sections or providing data as supporting evidence. Members of the committee who drafted the final report were Jill Drake, Jennifer Jordan, Carrie Ziglar, and David Newton.