



# GEORGIA COLLEGE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

## SECTION 1: YOUR INSTITUTIONAL MISSION & STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Provide a brief overview of your institutional mission and student body profile. Please briefly describe enrollment trends, demographics (for example, % Pell grant-eligible, % first-generation college students, % adult learners), and how your institutional mission influences your completion work’s key priorities. In this section, report on your benchmark, aspirational, and competitor institution(s).

### Section 1- Overview:

Georgia College is Georgia’s designated public liberal arts institution. As a residential institution, home to a largely traditional age college student, GCSU aims to offer students highly experiential and high-impact experiences. GCSU is still committed to its student success/Momentum Year plan, GC Journeys, and was lucky to experience a 24.8% increase in students participating in these experiences—largely explained by the decrease in Covid 19 cases and the return to face-to-face experiences.

We experienced an enrollment drop due the hangover effects of Covid-19 and Georgia College’s status as test required for Fall 2022 (we had over 1,000 incomplete applications that we couldn’t act on). Despite this, we saw an increase in retention and our four year graduation rates hit an all-time high (54%), which suggests that we are doing an excellent job supporting students and offering transformative experiences once they enroll at Georgia College.

We have been focused heavily on retention, with a University Retention Committee made up of administrators across the campus. That said, we are looking at the future as well. This summer, President Cox convened an Academic Innovation Taskforce, as well as a Graduate Taskforce. These two groups studied trends in higher education and made recommendations to better position GC for the

First Year Experience	1642	1519	1537	1684	+147
Career Milestones	452	324	520	826	+306
Capstone	1053	1118	1021	1287	+266
Leadership	584	602	776	792	+16
Undergrad Research	1318	2325	1737	2437	+700
CbEL	477	728	466	297	-169
Internships	1076	1086	962	1420	+458
Study Abroad	255	203	3	23	+20
<b>Total Student Participation</b>	<b>6857</b>	<b>7905</b>	<b>7022</b>	<b>8766</b>	<b>+1744</b>

future. Below is our participation data in our Momentum Plan (GC Journeys).  
  
GC Journeys Participation Data

### Section 1- Enrollment Trends:

#### Student Body Profile:

- Undergraduate: 5,265
- Graduate: 1050
- Total enrollment: 6,315

*Student Body Demographics:*

Demographics	Undergrad	%	Total Enrollment	%
American Indian	7	0.1%	9	0.1%
Asian	86	1.6%	101	1.6%
Black or African American	182	3.5%	466	7.4%
Hispanic	332	6.3%	379	6.0%
Native Hawaiian or PI	5	0.1%	6	0.1%
Non Resident Alien	48	0.9%	58	0.9%
Two or More Races	167	3.2%	184	2.9%
Unknown	76	1.4%	84	1.3%
White/Caucasian	4362	82.8%	5028	79.6%
<i>Total Student</i>	5265	100.0%	6315	100.0%

Other:

- Pell Eligible Students: 856 students (16.25%)
- First-Generation College Students: 311 students (5.9%)
- Adult Learners: 27 students (0.51%)

**Section 1- Institutional Priorities:**

Georgia College & State University’s institutional priorities have been driven largely by our mission as the state’s designated liberal arts university. As such, Georgia College & State University’s priorities have been focused largely on undergraduate education, offering a residential and high-impact educational experience, with a focus on experiential learning and high-impact practices, which has been the focus of our Momentum Year Strategy. However, with the upcoming demographic shift, Georgia College & State University is also looking to expand graduate programming, and reach new student populations. This is why GCSU has also hired a new Executive Director for the School of Continuing and Professional Studies to help partner with the graduate school and the community to find new educational opportunities, while not taking away focus on our brand of high-touch, residential, undergraduate student experience.

With the arrival of President Cathy Cox (October 2021), the university has also been actively involved in a strategic planning process (Imagine 2030) to determine the direction of the institution for the future. Part of this involves studying what are our aspiring peers are doing, so we sent groups of interdisciplinary teams to four of our aspirational institutions (listed below): Elon University, College of Charleston, Miami University of Ohio, and the College of New Jersey. Additionally, through working closely with our Office of Institutional Research, our University Retention Committee, our Graduate Education Taskforce, our Academic Innovation Taskforce, as well as other datasets, we have attempted to benchmark GCSU against our peer institutions, as well as our aspirational peers, while planning for the future (demographic shifts, in demand programs, etc). The active benchmarks that we regularly monitor and publish in our factbook include: cost of attendance, four and six year graduation rates, and academic year salaries of faculty by rank. Additionally, our strategic planning committee has also been exploring other metrics, such as enrollment, retention, graduation, and progression rates, as well as state funding models (public) for aspirational institutions.

Below is a list of GCSU aspirational, comparator, and COPLAC Peers:

Aspirational Peers:

- Bradley University
- Christopher Newport University
- Elon University

- Emerson College
- James Madison University
- SUNY College at Geneseo
- The College of New Jersey
- Truman State University
- College of Charleston
- Miami University of Ohio

Comparator Peers:

- Ramapo College of New Jersey
- University of Mary Washington
- Winthrop University
- Eastern Connecticut State University
- Longwood University
- University of Montevallo
- SUNY College at Geneseo
- Radford University
- Murray State University
- Morehead State University
- Truman State University
- University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
- University of North Carolina at Asheville
- University Wisconsin- Stevens Point
- University of Wisconsin- La Crosse

COPLAC Peers (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges)

- Ramapo College of New Jersey
- St. Mary’s College of Maryland
- Keene State College
- University of Mary Washington
- Eastern Connecticut State University
- Georgia College and State University
- University of Montevallo
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Northern Vermont University
- SUNY College at Geneseo
- Sonoma State University
- Henderson State University
- The University of Virginia’s College at Wise
- Fort Lewis College
- University of Illinois Springfield
- Mansfield University of Pennsylvania
- The Evergreen State College
- University of Minnesota-Morris
- University of Maine at Farmington
- University of South Carolina Aiken
- Shepherd University
- Midwestern State University
- Truman State University
- New College of Florida
- University of North Carolina at Asheville
- University of Wisconsin-Superior

- University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma
- Kentucky State University

## SECTION 2: YOUR STUDENT SUCCESS INVENTORY

What are your priority programs/projects/activities/initiatives related to student success?

<b>Activity/Project Name</b> <b>Momentum Area</b> <b>(select all that apply)</b>	Purpose X Pathways Mindset Change Management X Data & Communications
<b>Activity/Project Overview or Description (what this is?)</b>	GC Journeys is Georgia College’s Momentum Year Plan. GC Journeys asks all students to complete five high-impact practices during their four years at GC. We work to make these experiences accessible to all students during their time.
<b>Activity/Project Activity Status (where is this in process? E.g., studying, initiating, piloting, scaling, maintaining, retiring, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are maintaining GC Journeys as our Momentum Year plan.</li> <li>• Additionally, we are scaling GC Journeys to be responsive to shifting student needs post-Pandemic.</li> <li>• We would like to better communicate our student success work.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation/Assessment plan (Key Performance Indicators, assessment plan, anticipated time period, reporting and review)</b>	Evaluation Plan and measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a GC Journeys Program evaluation to evaluate the entirety of the program, which is an indirect assessment.</li> <li>• Other units within GC Journeys (such as First Year Experience) carry their own individual assessments.</li> <li>• We have a University Momentum Year committee, which makes recommendations to the Provost.</li> <li>• We have a research team (in Institutional Research) which is researching the impacts of high-impact practices on students.</li> <li>• Our faculty worked with the Center for Teaching and Learning to create rubrics/success frameworks for each high-impact practice offered at GC.</li> </ul>
	Baseline measure: # of students participating in each HIP
	Goal or targets: each student completes five
	Time period/duration: 4 years
<b>Progress and Adjustments (what has been accomplished and what changes do you feel you need to make)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised first year experience (based on Noel Levitz consultant and student feedback) to help better connect students and faculty.</li> <li>• Created pathways to support internships (0 credit/ 0 cost internship).</li> <li>• Created a national undergraduate research journal, and won the top undergraduate research program through CUR.</li> <li>• Center for Teaching and Learning offering workshops for faculty on each high-impact practice offered at GC</li> <li>• Offer a Summer Institute for Faculty on how to lead high-impact practices (Momentum Year plan). Bring in national speakers.</li> <li>• Moved to appreciative advising model (students are asked to reflect on GC Journeys before they attend sessions).</li> <li>• Adding co-curricular workshops for residential students (held in residence halls): campus resources, financial management, etc.</li> <li>• Recipient of a Mellon Grant (with University of Michigan) to study student success with high-impact practices after graduation.</li> <li>• Added Mongoose/Cadence communication platform to continue to find new ways to reach students post-pandemic.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Plan for the year ahead (What steps will you be taking in 2022)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We plan to have a continued focus on engagement (on academics and co-curricular experiences).</li> <li>• We are implementing Civitas as a software solution to connect units across campus, and stay in communication with students.</li> <li>• We have a Momentum Committee, which has made the following recommendations for 2022: 1) a new focus on mental health for students; 2) create a cross-functional persistence support team of faculty and staff to connect with students; 3) Rethink Orientation as a way to enhance student engagement 4) Continue our efforts of engagement with students 5) hire an outside firm to conduct focus groups as another assessment method.</li> <li>• We want to add a data portal to make Momentum Year data available for everyone</li> <li>• We want to do a better job communicating our story with GC Journeys</li> </ul>
<p><b>What challenges will affect your ability to do this activity? What support do you need from outside your institution (e.g., the System Office or other institutions) to be successful?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee turnover (academic advising).</li> <li>• Need for new staff resources (Could we create an office for Community based Engaged Learning?).</li> <li>• Getting students to attend academic events (currently they want to do things that are fun, but not as much engagement with academic experiences).</li> <li>• Re-training students on the schedule and pace of college (when to register, how to engage, etc.).</li> <li>• It will take time to get Civitas (new CRM) functioning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Lead/point of contact</b></p>	<p>Jordan Cofer</p>