

Georgia State University and Georgia Perimeter College Consolidation Frequently Asked Questions

January 6, 2015

Q&A:

Why consolidate the two institutions?

Consolidating the two institutions will help us improve student success by expanding access, applying best-practice programs and reinvesting savings into academics for the benefit of our students.

Who will be the president of the consolidated institution?

Georgia State President Mark Becker will lead the new consolidated institution.

Will any campuses be closed?

The consolidation implementation team will be assessing the needs and infrastructure of the new consolidated institution. The consolidation team's final report to the Board will include a recommendation about campus structure and locations.

Why these institutions now?

We have said all along we will be considering more consolidations. We must constantly assess ourselves to ensure we have a 21st century structure that provides the most effective system of institutions offering the proper range of degrees, services and opportunities for students and faculty.

The Georgia State and GPC consolidation presents an opportunity to create a modern, urban university that balances the needs for access as well as research and public service.

How much money will be saved?

Reducing administrative costs and functions is a goal of consolidating institutions, but it will not be a quick process. It is anticipated it will take at least 12 to 18 months to implement the consolidation of the individual institutions and to properly calculate savings attained by the action. Savings will occur from decreased administrative costs and increased service efficiencies. Savings will then be reinvested for academic and instructional needs for students.

What about GPC's financial health? Will consolidation help? Is this driving the consolidation?

Consolidation does present an opportunity to address financial challenges that GPC has been dealing with for several years now. However, the primary factor that led to recommending the consolidation of Georgia State and GPC is the substantial opportunity to expand access and improve retention and graduation rates.

Will there be layoffs?

A decrease in the number of jobs will likely occur, but until details are worked out it is not possible to know how many or which ones. Certain administrative functions will be combined, resulting in the need for fewer positions over time.

When will the consolidation go into effect?

We will immediately begin the consolidation review and implementation process. The target date for full integration is likely to be January 2016.

How will this be done?

The process will be transparent and will heavily involve each campus but with final approval of all decisions residing with the Board. An institutional implementation committee will be formed, which will include representatives of faculty, staff and administration. It is expected the majority of decisions will be made at the institutional level subject to final approval by the Board. University System office staff will provide overall leadership to the implementation effort, but the campus committee will be identifying and recommending the resolutions for key issues. The committee will be formed and begin work immediately.

How can I know what is going on? How do I get answers to my questions?

Both institutions' presidents will be involved in the consolidation. A website for the consolidation will be set up to keep campuses informed. The consolidation committee will have a chair, who will serve as the lead contact point for the committee. Shelley Nickel will serve as the point of contact in the USG office.

Students

How will students have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?

There will be student representation on the institutional consolidation committee.

When will this change go into effect?

The fall of 2016 is the targeted date for the consolidation to go into effect for students, but this could change depending on the needs of the institution.

How will this affect student activities?

The consolidation implementation committee will review the level and type of student activities now available to students at both institutions and develop an approach, which provides the best mix of student activities on all campuses.

What will my diploma say?

The consolidation implementation committee will address these and other issues in a way that meets the needs of students. In some cases, students already enrolled may have choices as to the institutional name on their diploma.

How will my tuition and fees change?

The Board sets tuition and fees and will continue to do so for the newly consolidated institution. The implementation team may recommend a change from the current structure to the Board once the consolidation has been implemented.

Will my degree requirements change?

Every effort will be made to honor the current degree requirements for existing students. Institutions will be given flexibility to matriculate students already enrolled in specific academic programs.

Will I get the courses I need to complete my degree?

Yes, this will be required by the Board and is a major responsibility for the consolidated institution.

Will my adviser change?

It is possible that one's academic adviser will change given the need to deploy faculty in the most effective and efficient manner required at each institution.

Will some academic programs be discontinued?

There will be a comprehensive review of all academic programs offered by both institutions in order to develop the optimum program array for the consolidated institution. As a result, the possibility exists that academic programs may be continued, modified or discontinued.

Faculty

How will faculty have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?

There will be faculty representation on the consolidation implementation committee, which will be established to guide the consolidation process. Existing faculty governance processes on both of the consolidated institutions may also be used to provide faculty voice in the consolidation process. Final decisions on policy matters still reside with the Board of Regents.

How will this affect individuals who are up for promotion and tenure during the consolidation timeline?

It won't. The Provost will work with Deans, Department Chairs and other campus leaders to create a comprehensive list of those eligible for promotion and tenure during the period of consolidation. Based upon the final list, faculty will be informed of timelines for these actions.

Will the expectations/guidelines for promotion and tenure change?

Because faculty promotion expectations are grounded in institutional mission, it is possible that tenure and promotion guidelines may change. The Provost (in conjunction with the Deans, Department Chairs, faculty leaders and other institutional staff) will work in conjunction with the Board of Regents to determine the new guidelines appropriate to the mission of the consolidated institutions and the appropriate procedures to implement the new performance expectations. Such changes will not go into effect right away.

How will this affect campus leadership and administration?

The President will build a new leadership team. The expectation is that there will be high-level involvement of faculty and staff in the building of new governance and communication structures.

Where and when will I be teaching?

This will be determined by the appropriate academic leadership at the institution.

What role will distance education play in the consolidated institutions?

In order for institutions to help increased numbers of Georgians complete their postsecondary education, new System initiatives are being developed to add and enhance distance education opportunities. Students and faculty in the consolidated institutions will be strongly encouraged to bridge geographic distances via improved distance education.

Staff

How will staff have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?

Staff will be represented on the consolidation implementation committee.

Will all administrative staff retain their positions?

Over time there will likely be a reduction in staff positions, but it is not possible to know which ones at this time. The implementation committee working with the President will determine the new administrative structure.

Will I have to relocate?

Decisions affecting individuals will take place as part of the implementation process. It is possible that relocations could occur.

Audit Issues

How will University System internal auditors be involved in consolidation?

University System internal auditors conduct both consulting engagements and internal audits. Internal audit teams will be made available by request to provide consulting services. Internal auditors may audit consolidated processes and systems. As appropriate, internal audit functions may be established at consolidated institutions.

Facilities

Will buildings or facilities be shut down as a result of the consolidation?

The system-wide space utilization study, not just consolidation, will inform and frame these types of questions. Ultimately, the President of the institution must make these decisions locally as we strive for efficiency and effectiveness at all USG institutions.

Will this affect the USG Capital Funding request?

The consolidation of campuses will not alter the USG's commitment to projects previously funded for design.

How will institution public-private venture projects be affected?

The USG will work with the consolidated institution and foundation to ensure a smooth transition of ventures projects through the consolidation.

How/when will all the signs be replaced (on-campus as well as directional from major roads)?

Consolidations will be implemented at the institution level. The implementation/transition team will coordinate these types of logistics and timelines within overarching target dates that will be established.