



University System of Georgia  
**Strategic Plan 2024**



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***The University System of Georgia will excel in meeting the needs of our state and economy through universities and colleges that provide an affordable, accessible and high-quality education; promote lifelong success of students; and create, disseminate and apply knowledge for the advancement of our state, nation and world.***

Strategic Plan 2024 Vision Statement

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Georgia State University

# Message from the Chancellor

November 12, 2019

The University System of Georgia's Strategic Plan 2024 will shape the impact USG has on our state for the next four years and beyond. That makes it one of the most important things we do, not only for our success but our students'.

The challenges and opportunities we face in the coming years make the plan imperative. The following pages represent our strategy about how best to succeed for the benefit and advancement of Georgia.

It also affirms our commitment to our faculty, staff and students, as well as their families, taxpayers and policymakers, toward making smart choices about what we need and have to do to move forward. We as a system are most powerful when we work together and use our unique advantages as one of the largest university systems in the nation.

Governor Brian Kemp made one of his top priorities the improvement and investment in education in the most efficient and cost-effective way. We further that precedence with the work we have done in this plan. We also build on the vision established by our governing Board of Regents to not only be what's best for Georgia, but to compete among the best in the world.

Thank you for joining us on this journey, and for helping us make USG more affordable, more efficient and, most importantly, better at graduating more students.

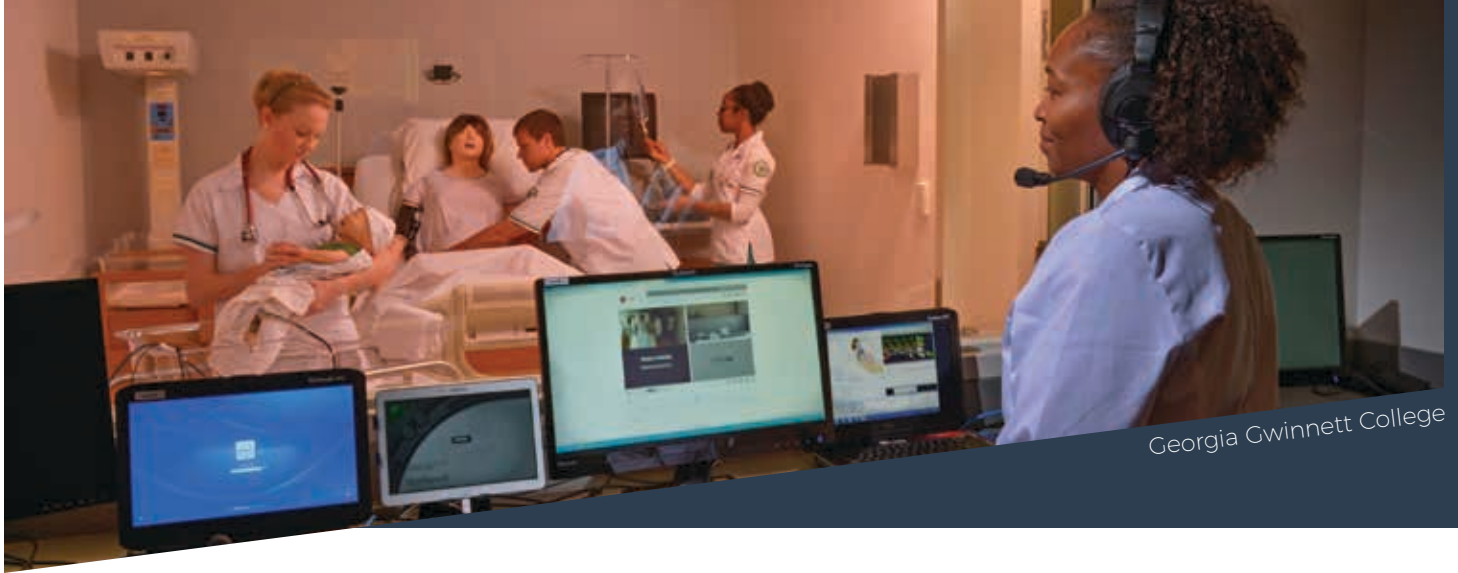
Sincerely,



Dr. Steve W. Wrigley  
Chancellor, University System of Georgia



# Executive Summary



Across the nation and world, there is no time in history when it has been so essential to acquire knowledge and possess flexible skills to participate successfully in the workforce. That in itself makes the University System of Georgia’s mission critical to our state’s economic future. Our mission is knowledge: To create it through research, transfer it through teaching and apply it through service.

Most importantly, our overall purpose is to raise attainment levels for communities across Georgia. Long gone are the days when public higher education can just focus on enrolling more students. USG must graduate more students while maintaining the system’s commitment to academic excellence. And we must do so knowing the environment in which we work is changing more rapidly than ever.

In the next 10 years, two-thirds of jobs will require some education beyond high school. Presently, only 47 percent of Georgia’s workforce meets that requirement. Research shows 99 percent of jobs post-Great Recession went to workers with a post-secondary education — 70 percent to workers with at least a bachelor’s degree. The economy relentlessly rewards education. As the growth of good, high-paying jobs outpaces the growth of middle- and low-paying jobs, it is imperative there are enough college graduates to fill these positions. Yet with the opportunities this provides, we will need also to navigate challenges that threaten to blunt our impact.

Georgia and the nation are experiencing declining birth rates that will impact us in upcoming years — as it has in some states already. Some of Georgia’s counties, particularly those in rural areas, are already experiencing population declines among young people who traditionally are thought of as college-aged. At the same time, we are experiencing a shift in demographics that have challenged our campuses to do better among those students we have traditionally served poorly, including those who are the first in their families to attend college.

USG faces these changes as the nation’s colleges and universities, including ours, have seen a shift in funding support that more directly relies on students and families. And this is happening as national polls show the public has doubts about whether a degree is worth it at the very time a degree is needed more than ever. We believe we are a good deal for Georgia. Yet we recognize it is up to us to prove our worth. Thus, we have Strategic Plan 2024.

Student success, responsible stewardship, economic competitiveness and community impact — these are the overarching four goals that will guide our strategy for the next four years and beyond. They represent not a catalog of everything we do, but most directly what we need and have to do to drive Georgia forward.



## Strategic Plan 2024 Goals

The plan goals are strategic emphases focused on meeting the most critical needs of Georgia. Accomplishing these goals will require the commitment and hard work of faculty, staff and administration at all USG institutions working together as one system to better serve our students and the state of Georgia.



### Goal 1

**Student Success:** We will increase degree completion through high-quality and lifelong academic options, focused learning and elimination of barriers to access and success for all Georgians.

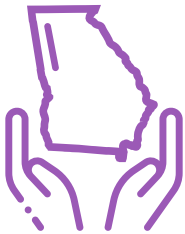


### Goal 2

**Responsible Stewardship:** We will ensure affordability for students by containing costs and optimizing efficiency across the system.

### Goal 3

**Economic Competitiveness:** We will advance Georgia through investing in world-class research and equipping students with marketable skills, knowledge and experience.



### Goal 4

**Community Impact:** We will work with our communities to improve quality of life.



## Strategic Plan 2024 Vision Statement

The University System of Georgia will excel in meeting the needs of our state and economy through universities and colleges that provide an affordable, accessible and high-quality education; promote lifelong success of students; and create, disseminate and apply knowledge for the advancement of our state, nation and world.

Georgia Southern University

# Introduction



Dalton State College

**T**he University System of Georgia's 26 institutions collectively serve more than 330,000 students, employ more than 48,000 people, generate more than 168,000 direct and indirect jobs and have an annual economic impact of \$17.7 billion. As such, the USG's mission of teaching, research and service is critical to the advancement of the state of Georgia. Given our scope and impact, we are well-equipped to help address the biggest challenges facing our state and nation. From meeting the demands of a rapidly changing labor market and ensuring vibrant and economically viable communities, to protecting our democratic institutions and processes, the USG is uniquely positioned to produce creative problem solvers, engaged citizens and a knowledgeable and skilled workforce.

The benefits of higher education to individuals and communities cannot be overstated. According to the College Board, those with postsecondary education experience higher earnings<sup>1</sup> and lower unemployment rates<sup>2</sup> compared to those without a college degree. They are also less reliant on public assistance programs<sup>3</sup> and have greater socioeconomic mobility.

## USG by the Numbers

- > 26 institutions
- > More than 330,000 students
- > More than 48,000 employees
- > 168,000+ direct and indirect jobs
- > Annual economic impact of \$17.7 billion



Moreover, college-educated individuals tend to have healthier lifestyles, evidenced by lower rates of obesity and smoking, increased exercise and greater likelihood of having employer-sponsored health insurance. All of these characteristics contribute to lower overall healthcare costs. Lastly, those with college degrees tend to exhibit greater civic engagement through voting<sup>4</sup> and participating in volunteer work.

Knowing the benefits of a college education, the USG remains committed to increasing the number of Georgians who earn degrees. Doing so improves the quality of life for individuals and families as well as communities across the state. Our work also plays a vital role in satisfying rapidly changing labor market demands across Georgia and the U.S. According to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, the U.S. labor market increasingly requires employees with some form of postsecondary education and many states, including Georgia, are projected to have a shortfall of educated workers over the next decade<sup>5</sup>. To fill this gap, and better prepare our

students for changes in high-demand skills, the USG must become more flexible in the courses and programs it offers as well as how it connects to the needs of industry and business.

***Strategic Plan 2024 provides the road map for raising educational attainment and moving Georgia forward. As we work to improve the lives, communities and economy of the state, we anticipate our local efforts will have far-reaching effects. Not only will we contribute to advancements for Georgia, but also for the nation and world.***

Strategic Plan 2024 provides the road map for raising educational attainment and moving Georgia forward. As we work to improve the lives, communities and economy of the state, we anticipate our local efforts will have far-reaching effects.

Not only will we contribute to advancements for Georgia, but also for the nation and world.

We embark on this work in the midst of challenges and opportunities. While USG enrollment continues to rise, it will likely peak in the near future. This is largely related to the nationwide decline in birth rates resulting from the recession, which will lead to a decline in high school graduates projected to enroll in college. In fact, the projected number of high school graduates in Georgia by 2030 is less than 100,000 — fewer than graduated this past year.



Atlanta Metropolitan State College





Middle Georgia State University

## *Ensuring an affordable education also remains a top priority for the Board of Regents.*

Also, Georgia's current high school graduates are going to college at a declining rate, likely as a result of a stronger economy and greater job availability. This trend is at odds with the rising demand for citizens with postsecondary education. Additionally, given expected demographic changes in Georgia, it will be important to enroll more students from groups that have historically attended college at lower rates. It will be especially important to enroll more adults, both those with some college and no degree and those who have never attended.

To satisfy the needs of an evolving labor market, we must offer degree programs that are more flexible, nimble and in tune with economic demands. And we must keep the findings from USG's College 2025 report in mind, becoming more adaptable in how we offer education and better at equipping students with essential skills connected to the larger world. We need to offer lifelong learning opportunities and partner more effec-

tively with those outside USG as well as within our system. To this end, the Momentum Approach, which itself is an effort to more effectively guide students toward timely completion and meeting their career goals, has focused our attention on key strategies shown to improve student success.

Ensuring an affordable education also remains a top priority for the Board of Regents. Our commitment to affordability is evidenced by the Board's decision to raise tuition by only 1.7 percent over the last five years, with no increase in two of the last four years. USG also appreciates the state of Georgia's continued support through appropriations. In FY 2020, USG received \$2.6 billion in state general funds, a 6.2 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. USG received full funding for enrollment growth and new funding increases for some special projects. This has maintained necessary support for institutions without sacrificing educational quality and allowed USG to keep tuition low.

Like many states, however, Georgia’s state funding for higher education has declined overall — a national trend exacerbated by the Great Recession. State funding used to support 75 percent of the cost to educate a student, with students and families being responsible for 25 percent. Today, the state meets 50 percent of the cost, with students and families responsible for the remaining half. Still, USG continues to offer some of the most affordable tuition and fees in the South. Yet we must do more to reduce the whole cost of education including room and board, textbooks and other course materials. Affordable Learning Georgia, an initiative which promotes the development and use of Open Educational Resources (free textbooks), is a notable way we are working to improve affordability.

We must also consider how we can help students make the best borrowing decisions related to their financial circumstances. It is imperative we improve the delivery of financial aid systemwide and better educate students about their financial aid options and how to pursue a college degree while accruing less debt. The “Know More, Borrow Less” initiative, already underway, seeks to accomplish these outcomes by providing every student clear information needed to make more informed decisions about their borrowing choices and future payments.

In response to funding and affordability challenges, USG and its institutions have sought greater efficiency in our work related to student success. From large-scale efforts like institutional consolidations and the systemwide Comprehensive Administrative Review, to organizational changes that take advantage of economies of scale such as Banner Managed Services, OneUSG and systemwide contracts, USG has achieved notable cost savings that allow us to redirect resources to improve student success. In fact, adjusted for inflation, USG since 2008 has both graduated more students and spent less per degree to do so. While we have made notable progress, continuing to identify and optimize efficiencies across USG is essential to improving affordability and, ultimately, degree completion.

Strategic Plan 2024 sets forth our plan to improve degree completion, affordability and efficiency, while enhancing economic competitiveness and community impact for the betterment of Georgia, the nation and the world.

*It is imperative we improve the delivery of financial aid systemwide and better educate students about their financial aid options and how to pursue a college degree while accruing less debt.*



Albany State University

# Strategic Plan 2024 Development

Strategic Plan 2024 was built on a foundation provided by the Board of Regents, who began this process in March 2019. Former Chancellor Dr. Stephen Portch led the board in discussions about the direction the system needs to go and how to focus its efforts. Furthermore, the College 2025 working group, led by Georgia College and State University president Steve Dorman, also laid the groundwork for this plan by envisioning the delivery of public higher education in a nimbler and more efficient fashion.

From this foundational work, Chancellor Steve Wrigley in June 2019 charged two working groups to carry out the plan's creation. A system office working group, made up of leadership across the agency, met regularly over the summer to assess USG's challenges and opportunities and to propose strategic goals about how to meet them. Similarly, a working group of campus presidents, representing each of the system's four academic sectors, proposed goal areas with the input of presidents throughout the system. Together, the working groups recommended four draft goals for the strategic plan. A list of working group participants is provided in the appendix.

To ensure transparency and the plan's vitality, the system office working group sought feedback on the draft goals from a range of stakeholders in September and October, discussed in more detail below. This helped revise the strategic plan's goals, establish their scope and develop an operational plan. System metrics and targets were also identified to help USG be accountable in meeting the strategic plan's goals. Strategic Plan 2024 was approved by the Board of Regents on Nov. 12, 2019, and will go into effect in January 2020.



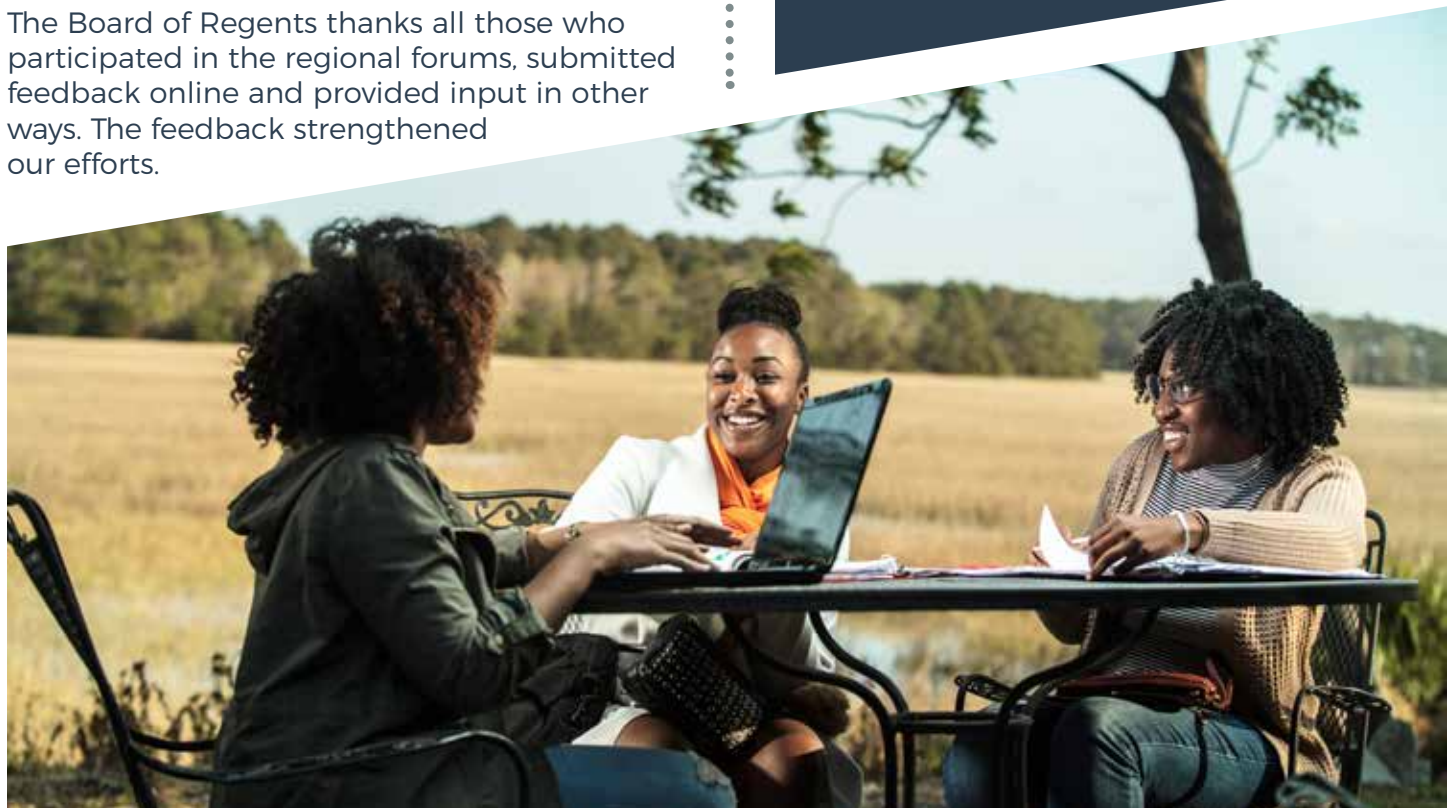


## Stakeholder Feedback

USG conducted five regional forums across the state for campus and local communities to learn about its strategic plan efforts and provide input. The regional forums were hosted by Georgia State University, Dalton State College, Fort Valley State University, Valdosta State University, and the USG-sponsored InteractUSG conference in Savannah. Approximately 500 people attended the forums and 150 comments were provided. The opportunity to provide feedback was also available through an online feedback form, where nearly 500 comments were submitted.

Insight from students, faculty, staff and representatives from various campus functions such as academic and student affairs, chief information officers, chief budget officers and career services was also obtained. Additional feedback came from external groups with whom we work closely: state legislators, the Department of Education, the Technical College System of Georgia, the Department of Economic Development and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. A complete list of meetings can be found in the appendix.

The Board of Regents thanks all those who participated in the regional forums, submitted feedback online and provided input in other ways. The feedback strengthened our efforts.



## Vision Statement

Strategic Plan 2024 was developed under the guide of the following vision statement:

*The University System of Georgia will excel in meeting the needs of our state and economy through universities and colleges that provide an affordable, accessible and high-quality education; promote lifelong success of students; and create, disseminate and apply knowledge for the advancement of our state, nation and world.*

This vision statement puts student success at the center of the plan and directs us to align our teaching, research and service mission toward improving our state and its economy. This is a lofty vision. As noted previously, we face challenges and opportunities in terms of demographic shifts, evolving business and industry needs and the imperative that we be good stewards with limited resources. These realities are why a cogent strategy, capitalizing on our strengths, is critical.



# Strategic Plan 2024 Goals



The goals that follow are strategic emphases focused on meeting the most critical needs of Georgia. Accomplishing these goals will require the commitment and hard work of faculty, staff and administration at all USG institutions working together as one system to better serve our students and the state of Georgia.

# GOAL 1: Student Success

We will increase degree completion through high quality and life-long academic options, focused learning and elimination of barriers to access and success for all Georgians.

Given how higher education benefits individuals and their communities, as well as the increasing demand for college-educated workers in a rapidly changing job market, it is critical to prioritize degree completion. The emphasis on lifelong academic options requires more flexible and adaptable degree programs, as well as teaching our students to be flexible and adaptable lifelong learners. We will accomplish this through new online learning opportunities and new programs like the Nexus Degree, which directly link to high-demand careers. We will focus instruction to ensure academic programs are connected to the world our students enter. Whether it is to master a specific skill set or deepen critical thinking, we know students learn more effectively when they understand the purpose of assignments, courses and degree programs. Moreover, we will instill a passion for learning and equip our students with essential skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration that are necessary for success in work and life. Finally, we must provide support for faculty in their critical role of improving student success.

Our definition of success cannot be limited to academic achievement. We need to prioritize students' overall well-being, from mental health to financial stability. We know that students' ability to pay for college, and their sense of financial security, are critical to student success. Fostering success in college also requires collaborating with the K-12 education system to ensure students are not only academically prepared for college, but also socially and emotionally equipped to navigate the expectations of higher education.

Reaching our student success goal also requires us to prioritize diversity and inclusion. We will remove barriers to access and success for student populations who historically have been underserved such as low-income students, racial and ethnic minority students, rural students and first-generation college students. To meet the state's attainment goal, we must do much more to ensure our delivery of programs and services also meets the needs of adult and working students. And while we focus on the state of Georgia, our institutions serve students from near and far. As we reach our student success goal, we will have impacts across the nation and globe.

## Metrics



Increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded from **67,854** in FY 2019 to **74,916** in FY 2024.



Increase the number of adult-aged undergraduate students from **42,967** in Fall 2018 to **45,160** in Fall 2023.



## Strategic Initiative: Momentum Approach

USG institutions have collaborated the past two years to implement Momentum Year, an evidence-based set of practices that support undergraduates in meeting their academic and personal goals and graduating on time. Beginning Fall 2019, all incoming freshmen must choose an academic focus area based on their selected major or broad area of interest. The focus area informs student advising, including an academic program map to guide students' course choices. This map supports the completion in the first year of at least 30 credit hours, enabling on-time degree completion. This plan includes core classes in English and mathematics (plus any required learning support), and nine credit hours in the student's selected major or academic focus area, giving the student a head start on learning about their interest. In addition, USG is working through the Chancellor's Learning Scholars program to assist faculty with implementing classroom strategies that better support students. Enhancing students' belief that they can increase their academic abilities has been shown to have as much effect on success as academic preparation.

While much work has been done to implement Momentum Year, campuses must also remove barriers to students completing their academic maps through enhanced advising, the use of predictive analytics to identify students in need of additional support and providing courses when and how students need them. Finally, USG will broaden the Momentum Year initiative into a systemwide Momentum Approach, applying the same principles of purposeful choice, productive academic mindset and full course loads to a student's entire postsecondary career.



## Strategic Initiative: Expand Distance Education Opportunities

Providing adequate access to higher education — wherever and whenever a student needs it — requires that USG expand distance education opportunities. The system has focused its efforts the last few years on eCampus, a consortium housed at the University of West Georgia that



University of West Georgia

enables systemwide affordable online education offerings. eCampus supports delivery of eCore, USG's digital version of its entire general education curriculum, and eMajor, which includes select online academic programs in high demand career areas. Still, USG must improve student access to all online academic opportunities and find additional ways for Georgians to take advantage of digital higher education from wherever they live in the state. USG is in the process of over-

hauling Georgia ONmyLINE, the systemwide web portal that allows users to research the full portfolio of online courses and programs offered by USG institutions. The new portal will be more user-friendly, contain updated and comprehensive consumer-focused information about courses and programs and improve enrollment options via direct links to applications and automated responses to inquiries by campus personnel.

Supporting geographic access to educational opportunities, however, requires more than online offerings. USG is also expanding virtual instruction across the state. Development of more classrooms configured to support virtual instruction provides a cost-effective means to deliver needed undergraduate and graduate programs throughout Georgia. This allows students to take advantage of academic programs on other USG campuses without having to leave their community. In addition, we are researching how the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS), a unit of USG, can help support citizens' access to lifelong educational opportunities. GPLS already supports access to information for all Georgians through libraries across the state as well as online resources. Better use of this resource allows USG to increase availability of academic programming to meet citizen and employer needs.

# GOAL 2: Responsible Stewardship

We will ensure affordability for students by containing costs and optimizing efficiency across the system.

## Metrics



Reduce average time to degree for bachelor's degrees from **5.1 years** in FY 2019 to **4.9 years** in FY 2024, and average time to degree for associate degrees from **4.4 years** in FY 2019 to **4.0 years** in FY 2024.



Increase annual savings to students through free textbooks from **\$16 million** in FY 2019 to at least **\$24 million** by FY 2024.



Decrease the percentage of students who maximize their total federal student loan borrowing from an average of **83 percent** over the last three years to **75 percent** by FY 2024.

We cannot ensure access and success without being affordable. While the Board of Regents has kept tuition and fee increases to a minimum, we need to do more to address the full cost of students' attendance such as room and board, books and other course materials. Additionally, we must continue to find ways to be more efficient while maintaining quality in our operations. The Comprehensive Administrative Review (CAR), for example, provided recommendations to improve efficiency and help avoid administrative duplication often found in services like student enrollment processing, residency verification, assessing fee waivers, etc. Savings obtained through optimizing efficiencies can be redirected to student success, by hiring faculty and expanding student services.

While being mindful about costs, USG institutions must also be good stewards of all of our resources. Investing in sustainable materials, technologies and operations are also necessary for achieving this goal. We can further identify savings and exercise good stewardship by creating a sustainable enterprise.

Our students, and their families, invest considerable time and money to earn a college degree. It is our responsibility to ensure they have information to make the best financial decisions about paying for their education. In addition, our goal is to help students achieve their academic goals at the lowest cost. Finding more efficient ways for course registration and financial aid, and reducing administrative red tape, will save them time and money. By advancing these strategies, we will assure our students, the taxpayers of Georgia and our funding partners, the Governor and General Assembly, that we are good stewards of the resources entrusted to us.



## Strategic Initiative: Know More Borrow Less

Long-term affordability for students is enhanced when they borrow less money and therefore experience a total lower cost of attendance. USG is implementing a systemwide effort to reduce student borrowing through financial literacy training, enhanced electronic communications, automated tools and business process changes designed to better help students and their families make decisions. Activities within this initiative include:

- Deploying automated tools designed to remove barriers in the student aid process.
- Proactively distributing a standardized annual electronic “debt notice” to students explaining their current student loan obligations, projected cost to repay, career and repayment information and more.
- Implementing standardized electronic college financing plan notices that clearly shows individualized cost of attendance, student aid offered and the projected amount a student/family would be required to pay for that period of enrollment.
- Installing artificial intelligence services at all campuses that consistently provide relevant, high quality information to students and families at any time.
- Re-designing our business processes so students and families can more easily determine and select an amount to borrow that meets their needs rather than simply accepting the maximum available under federal rules.



Georgia Institute of Technology

## Strategic Initiative: Affordable Learning Georgia

Reducing textbook costs represents a significant opportunity to ensure affordability for students. Our Affordable Learning Georgia initiative will continue with the following objectives:

- Awarding USG grants to provide free and open textbooks, commonly called Open Education Resources (OER), and often referred to as “eTextbooks.”
- Working with faculty to redesign courses to take advantage of free and low-cost materials in place of costly textbooks.
- Use OER in all USG eCore online courses and continue to expand the use of free eTextbooks in the classroom.

# GOAL 3: Economic Competitiveness

We will advance Georgia through investing in world-class research and equipping students with marketable skills, knowledge and experience.

Public higher education fosters economic competitiveness through development of a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce and through research and innovation. To achieve this goal, we need to improve the alignment of our degree programs with industry demands and focus on our communities' need for talent. Institutions must build more partnerships with both local officials as well as Georgia business and economic development leaders and seek their input about educational programs and what knowledge and skills students need to be successful. However, it is likely that many of the jobs our students will compete for in the future are still unknown. As such, we also have to prioritize holistic education that equips our students with essential skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving. We need to train our students to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of a rapidly changing economy. We also need to provide students with a variety of hands-on learning opportunities through internships, apprenticeships and experiential learning that are strategically aligned with community and industry needs. Students also need to learn how to communicate their learned skills to employers. Lastly, by educating a diverse student body and equipping all students with essential skills, we can ensure they are prepared, regardless of race, gender, age or socioeconomic status, to enter and succeed in high-demand industries.

We also need to advance and harness the work of our world-class research faculty that contributes to critical advancements for Georgia in areas such as medicine, technology, agriculture and the arts. Research investments lead to innovations that directly advance the economy and also develop infrastructure and communities to attract and retain high-skilled talent.

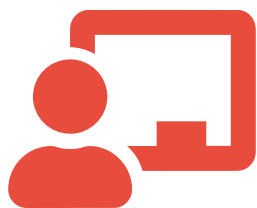
## Metrics



By Fall 2023, all institutions will have created and implemented a process to measure student achievement of marketable skills in the new general education curriculum.



Increase research expenditures from **\$1.54 billion** in FY 2019 to **\$1.87 billion** in FY 2024.



USG will collaborate with institutions to create a metric on faculty scholarly productivity.

## Strategic Initiative: Redesign General Education Curriculum

Both USG's College 2025 initiative and the Momentum Approach have demonstrated the need to update the structure and content of USG's



Kennesaw State University

general education curriculum to better prepare students with the skills, knowledge and experience to be successful. Consequently, USG initiated a review in Spring 2019 by a group of faculty, academic administrators and industry leaders and sought public feedback utilizing more than 500 submitted comments to create a draft set of design principles to shape the structure and scope of a new curriculum.

These design principles envision the ideal general education curriculum as:

- Well-rounded.
- Translatable to all settings.
- Fostering connections between a coherent body of knowledge and students' chosen professions.
- Developing 21st-century skills such as data, technology literacy and being able to work in diverse multi-disciplinary teams.
- Preparing students to thrive in the workplace, society and the world.
- Providing a flexible platform for success through high-quality courses that maintain consistent rigor and foster seamless transfer.

A new implementation commission is now in the process of taking the design principles from idea to execution. This work involves far more than simply designating a more modern set of knowledge and skill areas and identifying courses that deliver them. It will require a redesign of the courses themselves, embedding the design principles across the curriculum and developing a new way of ensuring students achieve mastery of the required knowledge and competency. It is a fundamental shift not only in what we emphasize, but in how we conceptualize, deliver, assess and document completion of general education for all students.



## *Strategic Initiative: Expand Nexus Degrees*

USG has created an innovative new degree type called the nexus degree to provide students more flexible, high-demand and career-oriented academic options. Nexus degrees are planned in collaboration with a major industry sector and consist of 42 credit hours of general education and 18 credit hours focusing on the skills and knowledge requirements of that industry. The degree includes at least six credit hours of experiential learning/internship activities and at least 12 credit hours of upper division coursework. The nexus degree may be offered in a condensed boot-camp format as well as in more traditional formats. It is a flexible credential that can support quick completion of a high-demand career credential for those with some college credit, serve as an alternative to a traditional associate degree or function as a minor in a technical area to those already pursuing bachelor's degrees.

USG will work over the next four years to assist institutions in collaborating with industry to create these innovative degrees, ensure their quality and rigor through the academic program approval process and promote their existence and benefits to current and potential students. We will also help share ideas about new nexus degree program creation through development and sharing of academic program “playbooks” in high-demand career areas. Finally, USG will track nexus graduate outcomes in the workforce to inform program improvements and assure potential enrollees of the credential's value.



Columbus State University/Georgia Film Academy

# GOAL 4: Community Impact

We will work with our communities to improve quality of life.

The public service and outreach programs of our institutions have helped communities all across Georgia tap into resources to create businesses and jobs, develop leaders and address a range of critical challenges including public health, infrastructure, education and housing.

This goal, therefore, is intentionally broad, and defines community and quality of life in a variety of ways. USG and our people live in all regions, and our mission of teaching, research and service can and does impact the entire state. By partnering and collaborating with local residents, business groups, religious and secular groups, nonprofit organizations, as well as communities beyond Georgia's borders, we can help to identify and impact Georgia's opportunities and challenges. This includes our efforts to redesign how we prepare the state's future teachers, broaden Georgia's cybersecurity workforce and create a systemwide support network for our institutions' economic development efforts. From expanding healthcare in rural areas to improving sustainability and environmental stewardship, the expertise of USG faculty and staff is a great resource to Georgia's diverse communities.

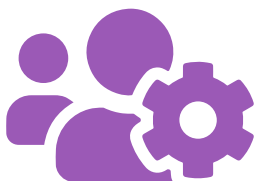
This critical work means we must listen to community stakeholders and the individuals already engaged in the work of revitalization. Understanding diverse perspectives will attune USG to the challenges communities face and the solutions most appropriate for addressing them. This kind of community partnership and outreach will also provide a great learning opportunity for our students. Students who engage in service learning gain valuable skills while simultaneously providing needed support for important community initiatives.

Furthermore, each of our campuses is its own community unto itself, one that can be enhanced by engaging with faculty and staff and ensuring students feel they belong. We need to prioritize diversity and inclusion so all viewpoints and people feel welcome. Additionally, the growing number of students enrolling online, and the faculty who teach them, represent yet another opportunity to foster community. Lastly, USG is a community of 26 institutions. We can most effectively reach this goal by working together to collaborate and coordinate our efforts for maximum impact.

## Metrics



Increase the number of graduates in health professions from **7,388** in FY 2019 to **7,996** in FY 2024.



Increase the number of student enrollments in experiential learning courses from **42,129** in FY 2019 to **150,000** in FY2024.

## Strategic Initiative: Increase the number of graduates in health professions

One of the biggest challenges to quality of life across Georgia is a shortage of high-quality health care professionals, particularly in rural communities. A lack of medical professionals directly affects the health of community members and also negatively impacts economic development. USG is engaging in several initiatives to address this challenge. The Medical College of Georgia (MCG) is redesigning its curriculum to shorten time to a medical degree and reduce student costs; this will make medical education more affordable and attractive. MCG is also working to increase the number of physicians committed to primary care, a particular shortage, and those committed to practicing in rural Georgia.



Georgia Highlands College

USG is also striving to increase the number of nursing graduates and enhance their preparation. One effort is expanding opportunity for registered nurses to earn their Bachelor of Science in nursing (RN to BSN) through a collaboration between Columbus State University and our eCampus initiative. The online program can be completed in as little as 12 months, with no required campus visits, allowing registered nurses to earn their BSN while continuing their career. The RN to BSN fosters career success and leadership opportunities and improves quality of care and patient outcomes. USG will also enhance the state's nursing pipeline through the Nursing and Health Science Simulation Lab Facility being planned at Albany State University. This facility will be a comprehensive, advanced shared simulation center for Nursing and Allied Health instruction serving Southwest Georgia. The facility will support nursing program expansion at Albany State and provide opportunities for collaboration with other USG schools, the Technical College System of Georgia and private Nursing and Allied Health programs to address the challenge of clinical student placements in acute care settings.



## Strategic Initiative: Expand Experiential Learning Opportunities

USG is participating in a National Association of System Heads (NASH) initiative, Taking Success to Scale, that aims to expand students' access to experiential

learning opportunities including service learning, work-based learning, undergraduate research and study abroad programs. USG is working with six institutions to pilot the increased availability of these experiences for students, better define what the experiences should include and analyze data on how well they worked and how they can be improved.

Experiential learning blends academic coursework with hands-on experience in a more applied setting such as a laboratory, an apprenticeship, a community improvement project or even in another country. These experiences prepare students for a lifetime of engagement by exposing them to a range of communities, making them aware of local needs, building skills to meet those needs and illustrating the impact their engagement can



University of Georgia

make. Future work includes utilizing successes at the pilot schools to assist all USG institutions in broadening the availability and consistency of experiential learning courses and ensuring data is submitted to USG to track progress and evaluate outcomes.

# Conclusion

**U**SG's Strategic Plan 2024 comes down to the idea that we have to change the way we do business to best meet Georgia's needs. Doing so supports the success of our faculty, staff and students. It also improves Georgians' quality of life.

Being flexible in how we engage students, innovative in the breadth and depth of our courses and aggressive in how we apply research to cure diseases, advance science and develop technology should be a call to arms.

All of us must be better — better at collaborating, better at listening, better at building relationships — not just across campus but throughout communities here and afar. Every one of our 26 institutions benefits from the collective knowledge of one of the largest public university systems in the nation. We must bring this strength to bear on our actions.

Accountability and transparency at such a critical moment is necessary and welcomed. We will report our progress both on a system level and sector level to members of our governing Board of Regents. Metrics and our progress toward them will be readily available to the public and all stakeholders.

We are grateful to the hundreds of citizens, policymakers, industry leaders, faculty, staff and students who provided input on this journey. You gave invaluable feedback and, in no small fashion, helped shape our future.

Together, our efforts translate into a powerful union of academic innovation, diverse institutional missions and community foresight. Together, we drive Georgia forward toward achieving our goals.



Clayton State University

# Appendix

## Board of Regents

Chris Cummiskey  
W. Allen Gudenrath  
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Ben J. Tarbutton III  
Thomas Rogers Wade  
Don L. Waters  
Philip A. Wilheit, Sr.

## Presidents' Working Group

Mark Becker, Georgia State University  
Richard Carvajal, Valdosta State University  
Paul Jones, Fort Valley State University  
Margaret Venable, Dalton State College

## System Office Working Group

Angela Bell, Vice Chancellor for Research and Policy Analysis  
Matthew Colvin, Executive Director of Economic Development  
Tracey Cook, Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategy and Fiscal Affairs  
Tristan Denley, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer  
John Fuchko, Vice Chancellor for Organizational Effectiveness  
Juanita Hicks, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources  
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Teresa MacCartney, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration

Jason Matt, Executive Budget Director  
Sandra Neuse, Associate Vice Chancellor for Real Estate and Facilities  
Shelley Nickel, Consultant  
Stuart Rayfield, Vice Chancellor for Leadership and Institutional Development  
Kristina Torres, Leadership Communications Manager  
Martha Venn, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

## Staff Support

Lori Hagood, Research Associate  
Tracie Arnold-Dixon, Senior Project Manager

## Regional Forums

Georgia State University, Sept. 3, 2019  
Dalton State College, Sept. 11, 2019  
InteractUSG Conference, Savannah, GA, Sept. 19, 2019  
Fort Valley State University, Sept. 23, 2019  
Valdosta State University, Sept. 25, 2019

## Stakeholder Meetings

Georgia Department of Economic Development, Aug. 14, 2019  
Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Aug. 15, 2019  
Communications Leads, Sept. 24, 2019  
Chief Business Officers, Sept. 24, 2019  
Student Government Association, Sept. 24, 2019  
Chief Information Officers Advisory Council, Sept. 26, 2019  
Regents Advisory Committee for Career Services & Cooperative Education, Sept. 27, 2019  
Presidents' Council, Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 2019  
Staff Council, Oct. 1, 2019  
Regents Advisory Committee for Academic Affairs (RACAA), Oct. 3, 2019  
Georgia Department of Education, Oct. 14, 2019  
Faculty Advisory Council, Oct. 17, 2019  
Regents Advisory Committee for Student Affairs (RACSA), Oct. 17, 2019  
Regents Advisory Committee for Institutional Research and Planning (RACIRP), Oct. 22, 2019  
Regents Advisory Committee for Effectiveness and Accreditation (RACEA), Oct. 23, 2019  
Technical College System of Georgia, Nov. 1, 2019

1 Ma, Pender, and Welch (2016). Education Pays: The benefits of higher education for individuals and society. College Board: Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://research.collegeboard.org/trends/education-pays> Bachelor's degree recipients earned \$24,600 more and paid \$6,900 more in taxes than high school graduates in 2015. Figures are based on the median earnings and tax payments for full-time, year-round workers aged 25 and older for bachelor's degree recipients (with no advanced degrees) compared to individuals whose highest education level is a high school diploma.

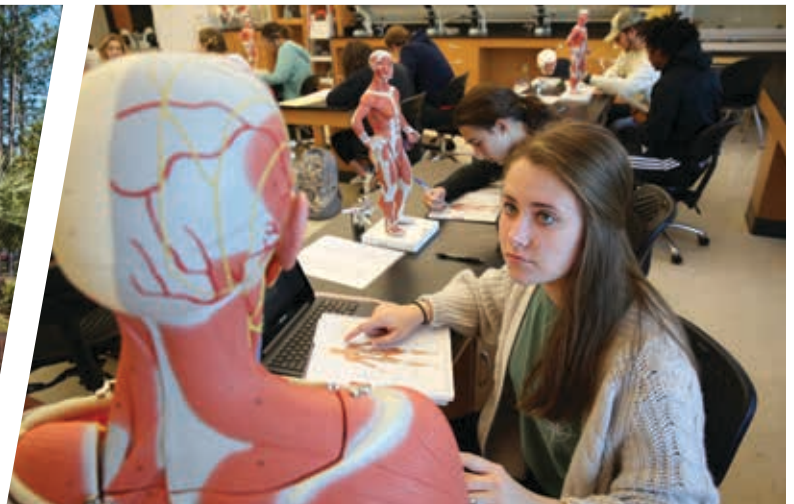
2 Ma, Pender, and Welch (2016). In 2015, of individuals aged 25 years and older, 5.4 percent of individuals with a high school diploma were unemployed and 2.6 percent of bachelor's degree recipients were unemployed. Likewise, 3.8 percent of associate degree recipients and 5 percent of those with some college credit, but no degree, were unemployed.

3 Ma, Pender, and Welch (2016). In 2015, among individuals aged 25 years and older, 3 percent of bachelor's recipients, 8 percent of associate degree recipients, 11 percent of individuals with some college, but no degree, and 13 percent of individuals with a high school diploma relied upon the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

4 Ma, Pender, and Welch (2016). 45 percent of bachelor's recipients and 20 percent of high school graduates voted in the 2014 midterm election.

5 Carnevale, A. P., Ridley, N., Cheah, B., Strohl, J., and Campbell, K. P. (2019). Upskilling and downsizing in American manufacturing. Washington DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.





Clockwise from top left, Fort Valley State University; Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College; University of North Georgia; Gordon State College; College of Coastal Georgia; Augusta University; and South Georgia State College.



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