Societal Impact Plan

Advancing Equality and Improving Social Mobility

Focus Area: As a college of business and technology that seeks to differentiate itself as one that promotes the public good, we wish to focus our societal impact plan on reducing inequalities and providing opportunities for further social mobility. Core to our mission as the designated public liberal arts institution in the University System of Georgia, the J. Whitney College of Business & Technology at Georgia College & State University is committed to "cultivate a fair, just, and inclusive community that prepares our students, faculty, and staff to excel in a globally connected workforce," as stated in our University's Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan (https://www.gcsu.edu/imagine2030/strategic-vision). Our emphasis on reducing inequalities aligns with the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 10.2* in that we seek to "empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic, or other status" (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal10). This focus area was unanimously supported by the CoBT's Strategic Planning Task Force in 2022.

Desired Impact: Martha Nussbaum[1], a professor of philosophy and ethics at the University of Chicago, coined the capabilities approach to human welfare. This approach emphasizes capacity development to encourage a more productive and responsible citizenry. To aid in that effort, our college reaffirms our commitment to reducing inequalities, enhancing capabilities, and bettering quality of life for our students and community. We espouse a culture of inclusiveness in our teaching, learning, and decision-making, and an appreciation for diverse perspectives and backgrounds, along with equitable access to resources that support faculty/staff development, student learning, and broader intellectual understanding of how to reduce inequalities inside and outside of the workplace.

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[1] Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities: The human development approach*. Harvard University Press;
Nussbaum, M. C. (2016). *Not for profit: Why democracy needs the humanities*. Princeton university press.

To achieve our desired impact, we will further invest in existing programs that provide experiential learning opportunities to marginalized and underprivileged student populations. Additionally, we will encourage thought leadership in this area, support existing and new course development that addresses these matters, and work with external partners for community-based engaged learning projects. We will monitor our impact over time through stakeholder surveys, outcome measures related to student success, alumni outcomes (e.g., job placements, income, graduate school placements, etc.), and through various scholarship metrics to help us better understand the impact of faculty and student research.

Past and continuing efforts reflect our commitment to advancing equality and improving social mobility. These are foundational aspects of the college's guiding principles. The college has had a long-term involvement in providing opportunities for underserved minorities and women in technology. Those efforts led to the creation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group. Initially, the working group was tasked with creating goals for the college and finding ways to create inclusive educational experiences. One goal was to increase our emphasis on related courses and course content across the curriculum. Another goal was to sponsor faculty to attend and present at some of the first equity and inclusion-related conferences held in the U.S. by AACSB, the accrediting body for business schools. These were the first of many presentations by Georgia College faculty on such issues to national, international, regional, and state level audiences. Meanwhile, the college held diversity education sessions for faculty and students on issues such as trans and nonbinary inclusion, racial and gender equity, and microaggressions training. These sessions were the foundation for an ongoing speaker series.

Initiatives

Curriculum	Establish/support courses and embedded content into the business and liberal arts core curriculum; develop a VITA (Voluntary Income Tax Assistance) community-based engaged practicum course to support low-income, underprivileged members of the local community
Scholarship	Encourage faculty and student presentations, peer-reviewed journal articles, media exposure, and other related academic engagement activities in alignment with our SA/PA faculty qualifications policy.
Internal and External Engagement Activities	Continue to support and invest in programs such as GC Women in Technology, the Grace Hopper Conference, the Minority Youth in Business Program, and the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship all of which have the opportunity to empower and include diverse populations to achieve success.

Below are specific programming initiatives that have become a key part of our culture and continue to be supported and reinforced:

LGBTQ+: In keeping with the goal of creating a diversity-focused curriculum, faculty created three courses that center on LGBTQ+ topics. One course, LGBTQ+ Marketing (a course that the Women's and Gender Studies program co-lists as a senior-level elective), was the first of its kind in the Marketing field, and since it has become a consistent part of the Georgia College curriculum, it is now a regularly listed course in the university catalog. Additionally, we offer a three credit -hour, first-year management course experience in LGBTQ+ studies and a four-hour credit, second-year, International Pride course. We also have faculty who publish in this area and have emerged as thought leaders.

Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing (GHC): Women are an underrepresented group in the technology world. In many instances, especially in computer and data science, there may only be one or two women enrolled in a course. Many women do not persist in the major because of isolation or perceived lack of competence. The Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing Conference (GHC) is the largest gathering of women and non-binary technologists in the world. The Department of Information Systems and Computer Science sent one faculty member and one student to GHC in 2014. Now, funding from alumni, practitioners, and board members allows us to sponsor an average of four faculty and twenty students per year. The excitement about GHC, the transformational experience, and fellowship at the conference led our students and faculty to develop "GC Women in Technology" (GC WIT) as an academic student organization. Open to all students, GC WIT sponsors various speakers each semester and works to raise funds to defray costs for a student to attend GHC each year.

Girls Who Code: Women make up only twenty-two percent of the computing industry. Research shows the biggest drop-off in girls in computing occurs between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. Girls Who Code is an organization that values diversity, equity, and inclusion in the computing field. The Information Systems and Computer Science Department has partnered with Girls Who Code to host an after-school club for girls interested in computing. By working with and supporting the female youth in our community, we are helping to close the gender gap in the computing field.

Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing Conference (TAPIA): Diversity in the computing industry is drastically lacking. For example, African Americans make up approximately 8% and Hispanics approximately 7% of the computing workforce. TAPIA is a conference focused on improving diversity in the computing industry with its focus on African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic, and individuals with disabilities. Funding is provided yearly for four students to attend the TAPIA Conference with a faculty member from the Information Systems and Computer Science Department. At the conference, students learn about effective strategies for success in the computing industry from diverse perspectives, pursue career opportunities in tech, and network to build

a support system in the tech industry that is focused on improving the diversity in the field. Attending TAPIA is a transformative experience for the students and faculty who attend.

Minority Youth in Business Program (MYB): Started over thirty years ago, our Center for Economic Education hosts an immersive week-long residential learning experience on entrepreneurship for underserved, minority high school students from Georgia and surrounding states. An average of twenty students participates each summer with each receiving a full scholarship covering program, housing, and meal costs. Program topics include how to start a business, the marketplace and the free enterprise system, personal finance, business finance, operations and organization, management, marketing, public speaking, career development, and the college selection process, along with setting and defining life goals. In addition to these intensive workshops, students engage with local business leaders and Georgia College students who are a part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council and what is now the Leaders Igniting the Fundamentals of Excellence in the Cultural Center's (LIFE) mentorship program—a program designed to help underrepresented students navigate and adjust to their new college atmosphere.

AACSB Standard	Goal	Objective	Tactics	Measures of Success
4. Curriculum	Hold a SoTL session on how to incorporate issues of inequality and social mobility into business and technology courses	Empower faculty to develop additional courses or reimagine existing courses that emphasizes this content	Leverage existing faculty experts and those in our Center for Teaching and Learning to help facilitate	Feedback from faculty after the session; proposal development and plans
	Propose a VITA program practicum for community-based engaged learning	Engage students in empathy development and practical skills of tax preparation to support low-income, underprivileged members of the local community	Engage the IRS and other partners to identify needs and potential resources to sustain the program (e.g., grants, donor support)	# clients served; client survey and demographics; # of student participants; any donor or grant funding
8. Scholarship	Support student/faculty participation in related conferences and professional development	Funding 20 students to attend the annual Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computer conference	Develop an annual giving campaign to support student and faculty grants	A minimum of $5,000 raised to support conference attendance
	Encourage faculty scholarship in matters related to equality, equity, and social mobility	To help faculty in various business and technology disciplines better understand how to address these matters both in SoTL and in their discovery or practice fields	Identify funding (internal or external) to support faculty through travel grants or stipends	Funding sources identified and utilized
			Provide release time for faculty to develop research in the DEIB space	Number of presentations, proposals, or papers published

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[2] If this plan goes into effect AY23-24 upon approval of the faculty, we will conduct an analysis and document progress on activities and outcomes measures for AY 21-22 and AY 22-23.

	Facilitate the annual Minority Youth in Business Program	To promote and facilitate a successful week-long summer entrepreneurship workshop for underrepresented high school students	Secure funding from a variety of internal and external sources to sustain this annual workshop	Grants from companies; # of high schools and participants; student survey
9. Engagement Activities	Facilitate the second annual WIT conference for high school students	Recruit student participants; encourage faculty and supporters as facilitators	Collaborate with local high schools and corporate partners to help fund the event	Funding support; # of high schools and student participants; student and supporter survey
	Seek out minority-owned businesses in the middle GA area to involve in the Center for Innovation, HIPs, and possibly formalized large company partnerships	To support their needs and to learn from them about opportunities to engage the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, HIPs, and possibly formalized large company partnerships		# of minority owned companies engaged; feedback from participants

Student success measures such as # of students involved in HIPs with these organizations |

Framework for Table 9-1

Focus Area	Societal Impact Strategy (Standard 1)	Outcomes Related to Curriculum (Standard 4)	Outcomes Related to Scholarship (Standard 8)	Outcomes Related to Internal and External Initiatives and/or Activities (Standard 9)
SDG 10 Reduce Inequalities *10.2 Empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic, or other status*	Advancing equality and improving social mobility is a focused initiative in our strategic plan with numerous action steps pertaining to curriculum, scholarship, and engagement.	• *Bulleted outcomes for 2022-2027*	• *Bulleted outcomes for 2022-2027*	• *Bulleted outcomes for 2022-2027*
Assessment of Overall Impact and Discussion of Future Plans *This section will be where we provide some further context to the outcomes for Standards 4, 8, and 9 as will be bulleted above*				