

GC Journeys Report 2024 – 2025



**J. Whitney Bunting College of
Business & Technology**

May 2025

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I. Executive Summery

The J. Whitney Bunting College of Business & Technology (here after CoBT) is committed to providing students with diverse high-impact practices (HIPs) that help develop key students' skills and prepare students for their careers. To achieve these goals, we facilitate and encourage students to engage in programs that enhance their leadership abilities, research potential, and civic participation. Furthermore, we endeavor to prepare students for the job market through structured career planning, global involvement, and speakers' series.

Over the course of the academic year 2024-2025, the GC Journeys Fellow worked with the Interim Dean to develop a proposal for a badging system. This involved identifying and configuring an application/module to track students' progress toward earning their badges and then conducting necessary testing. The aim of the proposed badging system is to (1) encourage students to have wider engagement in HIPs, (2) change the culture from reactive to proactive by having students plan yearly HIPs that best fit their plans and academic schedule, (3) encourage self-reporting, and (4) facilitate capturing and tracking performance of all HIPs approved activities in one database. The proposal and the selected module (GivePulse badging) were presented to the CoBT faculty in their April meeting for discussion and feedback. The proposal will continue to be modified based on this feedback.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the CoBT provided a rich array of experiences for its students. Students benefited from two study abroad courses and 25 undergraduates conducted mentored research. The CoBT also hosted two accounting career fairs, an IT Career Fair, and a resume writing workshop.

Beyond the classroom, CoBT students were actively engaged in the community, volunteering 1,611 hours for various organizations and assisting 66 taxpayers with their tax preparation and filing. Furthermore, students have participated in numerous campus events: 171 students attended four Column Society talks, 48 students participated in events organized by the Entrepreneurs Club, 100 students participated in Marketing Club talks, and 560 students participated in the Elevator Pitch competition. Additionally, 79 students completed leadership programs offered through the Leadership Center.

This report features CoBT engagements in high-impact practices for Summer 2024, Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 and points out areas of opportunities.

II. College of Business & Technology HIP performance

The CoBT facilitates eight HIPs



1. Global engagements - Study Abroad & Study Away

In summer 2024, two GC faculty led programs in the field of MIS, sustainability, and leadership were offered. The total number of CoBT students enrolled in these study abroad programs was 60 compared to 24 in summer 2023, out of which 32 students were in the CoBT faculty-led programs compared to 8 in summer 2023.

Professor Jehan Eljourbagy offered a six credit course on International Corporate Sustainability & Leadership in New Zealand. The course was given over two weeks covering topics that enhance students' ability to lead high-performing global organizations and implement environmental compliance and sustainability in the workplace. Dr. Jeannie Pridmore and Dr. Joy Godin offered MIS related courses over three weeks in Germany, the Netherlands and France. The courses helped students gain international teamwork experience using SAP Design Thinking and acquire knowledge beyond what could be offered in a traditional classroom.

No Economics or Finance majors participated in study abroad programs. This might be due to a lack of related courses in their respective fields.

For summer 2025, three faculty-led programs are offered for students to explore new cultures and study at overseas universities. One course in AI Prompting, one in AI Prompting and SAP Design Thinking and the third course in Economics and Finance covering the following courses: “Capitalism and Communism” and “European Financial Systems”

2. Community-based engaged learning

2.1 Service-Learning Program

Business Ethics faculty rolled out the “Service-learning project” in Fall 2024 expanding the number of students with exposure to this HIP. The table below provides data for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 performance. This is compared to 2,880 hours volunteered to various organizations in the community in the past academic year. The number of volunteering hours decreased because a newly hired faculty member, teaching several Business Ethics sections, was unaware of the “Service-learning project”.

Term	No. of Business Ethics students	Volunteered hrs.	Organizations served	Economic Impact
Fall 2024	102	981	32	26,751
Spring 2025	63	630	31	17,180
Total	165	1,611	62	43,931[^]

*Some organizations are the same in both fall and spring semester.

2.2 VITA program

During Spring 2025, a group of 14 CoBT students, under the direction of Mr. Victor Scott Burns, participated in the VITA program and provided tax help to 66 individuals in 11 counties. This is compared to 6 students and 33 files in Spring 2024. The 14 students received 165 hours of training, and all got certified as tax preparers. Taxpayers saved \$8,400 in preparation fees and got a total tax refund of \$34,659.

VITA statistics Spring 2025	
Total Student Certified Tax Preparers	66
Total service hours by CoBT students	500
Total counties served	11
Taxpayers assisted	66
Taxpayers’ total refunds	\$34,659
Preparation fee savings	\$8,400*

*Based on an average filing fee of \$127 per taxpayer.

Taxpayers rated the service on a scale of 1 not satisfied, 2 satisfied, and 3 very satisfied. Sixty-three out of 66 rated the service as very satisfactory “3/3”, and the other three taxpayers did not complete the survey.

2.3 Knowledge Before College

In Fall 2024, the GC Journeys Fellow launched “Knowledge before College” to educate high school students on key business topics. This initiative aims to equip them with essential business knowledge for effective decision-making and a more secure economy. Recognizing that not all high school students will attend college or pursue business degrees, the program offers crucial topics like personal finance, taxation, contracts, and cybersecurity.



Through faculty mentorship, groups of CoBT students will get the opportunity to develop and deliver an awareness workshop to high school students, fostering community engagement by sharing business knowledge, enhancing student teamwork and communication, promoting student-faculty collaboration, and raising GCSU's profile among high schoolers.

As part of this program, a cybersecurity awareness presentation was delivered on April 3 to students in the “High School Achievers Program”. Two dedicated Management Information Systems students, coached by Dr. Brad Fowler, presented material focused on social engineers and phishing. This session aimed to help students better understand how malicious actors use



email and text messages to trick people to divulge their usernames and passwords. The presentation was followed by an engaging conversation with the high school students and our students fielded some great questions. Given the increasing digital immersion of young people, understanding basic computer security is vital. The cybersecurity presentation demystified complex security concepts, making them relatable and

applicable to daily life by covering cyber hygiene, social media safety, malware awareness, and safe browsing. The interactive format included real-world examples, demonstrations, and a Q&A session.

3. Column Society

Column society is an organization that aims to connect students with industry professionals and alumni. The Column Society started in the spring of 2022, and since then talks are provided regularly during Fall and Spring semesters.

In Fall 2024, the GC Journeys Fellow of the CoBT discussed with Mr. Jonathan Pope, a member of the CoBT Leadership Advisory Board, the plan of the Column Society talks for the academic year 2024-2025. Mr. Pope offered full support and accepted the invitation to provide the first talk on October 1st.

In Fall 2024, two talks were organized focusing on the following topics:



- ✓ **October 1, 2024:** The History of Banking Sector in the US and its Future Challenges.
- ✓ **November 12, 2024:** Public accounting profession: Opportunities and required competences.

In spring 2025, two talks were organized focusing on the following topics:

- ✓ **March 12, 2025:** Technology changes and business environment.
- ✓ **April 9, 2025:** The talk (about money).

171 students participated in total compared to 157 students who participated in academic year 2023-2024.



4. Career Planning & Internships

Fall 2024 kicked off with three main activities for accounting students.

- On August 27, 2024, the accounting department hosted the third “Meet & Great” event sponsored by Nichols Cauley. Seventy-six students attended the event, and five faculty members participated.
- Mrs. Susan Manrodt from the Accounting & Business Law department arranged for a “Resume Workshop” on August 28, 2024, sponsored by the public accounting firm Fulton & Kozak. Fifty-three students met one-on-one with the three firm representatives; compared to 35 last year; and the students got the opportunity to have guidance on how to prepare a professional resume and improve their resumes.
- In November, Beta Alpha Psi hosted a panel discussion “Where Do I Fit”. The panel consisted of public accountants from four firms, Aprio, Bennett Thrasher, Nichols Cauley, and EisnerAmper. Forty-three students attended the panel.

Two accounting career fairs were held this academic year. On September 11, the first accounting fair was organized, and 31 public accounting firms attended. The fair was visited by 94 students, five faculty members, and two staff compared to 82 students, five faculty and one staff member last year. In addition to the career fair, two socials were organized by Grant Thornton and Aprio on Wednesday, September 11. Both socials were successful and attended by large groups of accounting students. The second fair focusing on public service entities was held on the 16th of September. The Public Service Focus Career Fair attracted six governmental organizations and 68 students, compared to 54 students last year.

In Spring 2025, the department of Accounting & Business Law held on January 29, 2025 a “Meet the Firm” Accounting Career Fair. Twenty-seven firms participated and 37 students attended.



Professionalism Classes

The Information Systems & Computer Science department offers professionalism classes that help students develop soft skills, explore professional pathways, and build early career readiness. In fall 2024, 81 CS/DS/MIS students were enrolled. In spring 2025, the CS/DS Professionalism class (CSCI 2810) enrolled 31 undergraduate students, primarily majoring in Computer Science and Data Science. The MIS Professionalism class (CBIS 2810) enrolled 49. Below is a summary of the activities conducted:

1. Career Exploration & Resume Building
 - Two resume workshops
 - Guest session on job search strategies and LinkedIn profile development led by Ms. Daniella Pittman from the Career Center
2. Professional Events
 - Participation in the Spring IT Career Fair (Feb 12, 2025)
 - ITAB-sponsored Student Networking Event (Apr 17, 2025)
 - Course Reflection assignment focused on career paths, professional certifications, and networking
3. Professional Etiquette Training
 - Business Etiquette workshop led by Dr. Meg Geddy
 - Formal Dining Etiquette Dinner (Mar 13, 2025), co-hosted by the Career Center and IT Advisory Board
4. Skill-Building Deliverables
 - Final resume and LinkedIn profile
 - Career Fair reflection
 - End-of-semester course reflection

Internships

Participating in an internship is highly recommended for the fulfilment of the Bachelor of Business Administration degree and the Bachelor of Science degree across all majors. The table below illustrates the number of internship placements for Summer 2024, Fall 2024, and Spring 2025:

	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Total
Accounting	27	1	20	48
Computer Science	7	2	0	9
Economics	1	1	0	2
Finance	18	4	2	24
Management	14	4	1	19
Marketing	32	0	7	39
MIS	5	0	0	5
Total	104	12	30	146

Elevator Pitch

The Elevator Pitch competition is a bi-annual activity that offers students a platform to develop communication skills, enhance public speaking, refine ideas, and expand networking opportunities. This year 560 students competed in the first round via Zoom, and the top 20 students each semester were invited to an in-person final competition where they presented a 60-second elevator pitch about their personal skills and experiences to a panel of judges. TTI, Pennington, and Central Garden & Pet sponsored the Elevator Pitch final competition.

GC Entrepreneurs Club hosted in Spring 2025 two speakers.

February 20, 2025: How to use your passion to create a profitable business and career.

Speaker: Dr. Mike Martino, co-owner of several health and fitness related facilities, including Bodyplex in Milledgeville. Mike began his fitness career as a collegiate swimmer, coached other swimmers who competed in the Olympics, and eventually got his PhD in exercise science and came to Georgia College to teach.

28 students were in attendance

April 17, 2025: 2024 alumni speaker event.

Speaker: Josh McLaughlin, founder of Tomorrow Digital Marketing (TDM). TDM uses a full-stack approach where they handle everything from content creation to social media, paid ads, email marketing, and more. Josh is a '24 GC graduate of the College of Business & Technology.

20 students were in attendance

The Marketing Club led by Dr. Whitney Ginder hosted three guest speakers in Fall 2024.

The total number of students who participated in these events is 100 students.

September 11: Professional Development Workshop: Resume Writing/Reviews, Networking, and LinkedIn, by Nathaniel Gartner and Brody Crocker, Territory Mangers at TTI.

October 30: Social Media Marketing Strategy, by Lauren Janis, Social Media Manager for McAlister's Deli/Focus Brands.

November 20: Brand Activations and Talent Partnerships, by Meredith Almond, Senior Manager, Brand Activations for Jimmy John's/Inspire Brands.

Other student clubs hosted speakers, but the information was not reported.

5. Mentoring Undergraduate research

Economics students are engaged in undergraduate research through a mandatory course requiring a research project. In the academic year 2024-2025, 25 undergraduate students were mentored for research in economics and finance, AI, and business law & ethics. Seventeen students presented their work at national/regional conferences and/or GCSU Research Day. Two research projects were submitted to academic peer-reviewed journals, and one was accepted for publication.

The following table provides some details on the mentored undergraduate students.

Academic year	Field of study	Mentored Undergrad. students	Conf. presentations or research day	Submissions to PRJs	Published in PRJs	In-progress
2023-2024	Economics/Finance	39	14	1	1	2
2024-2025	Economics/Finance	19	17	2	1	1
	AI	4	1	0	0	3
	Business Law/Ethics	2	0	0	0	0
Total		25	18	2	1	4

6. First Year Experience & Capstone

Twenty CoBT faculty members facilitated a GC Read seminar during the Week of Welcome, 25 % of which are faculty from the College of Business & Technology. Nine faculty members from the four CoBT departments provided first year experience courses. Every major, other than accounting, has a capstone course.

7. Leadership

CoBT students participated in a variety of leadership programs during the 2024-2025 academic year.

- Twenty-eight students completed the “**Leadership academy program**” in May 2024. and 48 students completed the program in May 2025.
- One student completed the “**Leadership Program**” in December 2024, and 17 students are currently enrolled with anticipated completion upon awarding their bachelor’s degree.

- c. One student completed the “**Leadership Certificate Program**” in May 2023, and 39 students are currently enrolled with anticipated completion upon awarding their bachelor’s degree.
- d. Eleven students completed the “**Georgia Education Mentorship Program**” (GEMP) in May 2024, and 9 students in May 2025. Fourteen students are currently enrolled with an anticipated date of completion May 2026. This program is highly selective, and only 25 students are picked to participate each year.
- e. Four students are admitted for the “**Intercultural Leadership Program**” at the European Parliament, compared to 2 students last year.

In addition to the above students’ engagements in leadership programs, the CoBT arranged for a leadership tour for ten students from May 12 to May 16, 2025. The tour visited 15 businesses in Georgia and met with a CoBT Leadership Advisory Board member over lunch.

II. Areas of opportunity

This section highlights the areas of opportunities that facilitate further advancement of CoBT GC Journeys HIP activities.

1. Defining the main HIP areas and developing a systematic tracking process to collect data on students’ engagements in all the different areas. This systematic data collection is likely to lead to more reliable and complete information.
2. Introducing new faculty to the College of Business & Technology GC Journeys activities and encouraging them to encourage their students to participate.
3. Introducing a badge system (or equivalent) and setting a minimum target for students to achieve.
4. Creating more opportunities for study-away/study-abroad programs with wider diversity of topics, particularly in areas that lack offerings such as accounting and logistics.
5. Incentivizing students to report their internships when the major does not require a for-credit internship.
6. Hosting representatives of GCSU Leadership programs in classrooms to inform students of the available programs and their intended outcomes to facilitate higher students’ participation.