

Georgia College Strategic Planning for 2020

Outreach and Community Engagement

Committee Members

- Artis Williamson, Chair
- Julie Cook
- Ruth Eilers
- Renee Fontenot
- Johnny Grant
- Julia Metzker
- Molly Randolph
- Liz Speelman
- Kendall Stiles
- Simone Bridgeforth

Introduction

As a public liberal arts institution, Georgia College has a strong commitment to community engagement and outreach. In 2014, the campus chose community-based engaged learning as the topic for a five-year quality enhancement plan. Shortly after the plan was completed, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected GC to receive the 2015 Community Engagement Classification. In a survey administered to undergraduates in 2015, 53% of the respondents indicated that they had participated in community service while at Georgia College.

The opportunity to educate extends well beyond the learning and knowledge shared in a typical university classroom. Outreach and community engagement are hallmarks of a great institution. Opening the resources of the university to the community, state, and nation are vital; building partnerships with the outside world is imperative to the success of students, faculty, staff, and the community; and integrating the university into the local and regional community is critical. Georgia College embraces these values and annually contributes to our community, state, nation, and world through:

- Serving roughly 14,000 non-students through more than 700 professional development and personal enrichment courses offered through Continuing Education and the Outdoor Center;
- Serving more than 15,800 K2-12 students and parents in school outreach programs, such as after-school and in-school tutoring, enrichment activities, homework help, science education, summer camps, and parent education through the efforts of Continuing Education, the YES Program, High Achievers, Communities in Schools, Academic Outreach, and the Science Education Center;
- Serving over 16,000 visitors who come to campus for visits to museums such as the Smithsonian-affiliated Old Governor's Mansion, the Sallie Ellis Davis House, the Planetarium, and the Natural History Museum;
- Volunteering over 50,000 hours of service to the region through more than 3,000 Georgia College students participating in the GIVE Center;

- Providing immeasurable hours of internships, apprenticeships, practicums, and GEM mentorships to businesses, industries, schools, and nonprofits around the community, state, and nation;
- Partnering with the local Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Central State Hospital Redevelopment Authority, Baldwin County School System, Communities in Schools, and other organizations to better our region;
- Opening campus resources, libraries, laboratories, and other facilities to local schools and serving more than 3,100 elementary, middle, and high school students in field trips, learning labs, science fairs, and history competitions;
- Hosting more than 2,000 people annually in seminars, conferences, symposiums, and guest lectures.

The above is just the tip of the iceberg in a community where the presence of the university provides an economic impact of over \$203,000,000 annually, while directly employing over 900 individuals and indirectly supporting an additional 1,500 jobs in the community, as per the last economic impact study conducted in FY12.

Although much of the university's outreach is captured and recorded, there are probably as many (or more!) activities that go unreported. Georgia College faculty and students lead volunteer programs in the community and make hundreds of speaking engagements with civic organizations, community groups, news outlets, and others; many students participate in internships, apprenticeships, cohorts, practicums, and volunteer activities that are not tracked and reported through a central campus system; faculty provide consultation services to businesses, industries, and non-profits; departments coordinate, host, and provide art exhibits, enrichment activities, athletic events, and cultural performances open to the community, attracting tens of thousands of people to the campus for gallery showings, plays, concerts, theatrical performances, sporting events, and other activities; thousands of visitors use or rent campus facilities for meetings, weddings, receptions, training, and other special events; and the list goes on.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Improve the number and quality of community-based experiences for GC students.

Measurable Objectives: *(NOTE: These objectives cross the other planning committees.)*

- All students will track hours of service in the community that provides a contribution to the public good, as deemed appropriate by the university unit or department.
- Institute an experiential learning requirement for all GC students. A student can meet the requirement by completing a structured internship, research, intercultural, community-based, leadership or other experience in which ...
 - Students apply academic knowledge.
 - Students critically reflect on their experience.
 - Students document the impact of their experience on others and themselves.
- Institute campus-wide student success milestones (modeled after the Career Planning Milestones) related to engagement for students in which:
 - All GC students will participate in an entrance evaluation related to engagement during their first year of college.
 - During their second year of college all GC students would participate in a formative evaluation related to engagement.

- All GC students will participate in a summative evaluation related to engagement prior to graduation.
- Create a campus wide system for recording and capturing outreach and community engagement activities for students.
 - Measure demonstrable learning outcomes for Georgia College students that result from community engagement activities.
 - Measure the number of unduplicated students participating in community engagement activities each semester
 - Track unduplicated hours of work or impact provided through internships, apprenticeships, practicums, cohorts, field-based experiences, etc.
 - Track unduplicated hours of service in the community provided by GC students.
- Improve the quality and number of formalized, reciprocal community-university partnerships.

Goal 2: Increase Georgia College faculty, staff, and student contributions to economic vitality, educational outcomes, and quality of life at the local, state, and national level.

Measurable Objectives:

- Annually, more than 100,000 participants will improve their personal and professional lives through documented non-credit outreach activities. (These activities would include programming offered through Continuing Education, Athletics, Outdoor Center, Academic Departments, Museums, Student Affairs, Alumni Services and others.)
- Annually, GC will contribute at least 10,000 documented hours of service to the local public education system.
- Annually, GC will contribute at least 50,000 documented hours of service to the community at large.

Goal 3: Establish a culture in which Georgia College faculty and staff contributions to community are valued and rewarded.

Measurable Objectives:

- Create a campus wide system for recording and capturing outreach and community engagement activities by faculty and staff.
- Develop faculty and staff evaluation/reward systems that value engagement and outreach work.