



GC JOURNEYS STUDENT HANDBOOK

GC JOURNEYS IS:

-  The First-Year Experience (FYE)
-  Career Planning Milestones
-  A Capstone Course in the major
-  Study Abroad/Study Away
-  Community-based Engaged Learning
-  Intensive Leadership Experiences
-  Mentored Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors
-  Internships, Field and Clinical-based Practica, and Apprenticeships

GC

JOURNEYS

INDEX

[*A Liberal Arts Education: The Story of GC Journeys*](#)

[*What is GC Journeys?*](#)

[*Why GC Journeys*](#)

[*Transformative Learning Experiences*](#)

Embedded Experiences:

- [First Year Experience](#)
- [Career Planning Milestones](#)
- [Senior Capstone](#)

Choose Two Experiences From:

- [Community-based Engaged Learning/Service Learning](#)
- [Mentored Undergraduate Research \(MURACE\)](#)
- [Internships](#)
- [Study Abroad](#)
- [Intensive Leadership Programs](#)

[*Live Text: How to Document Your Journey*](#)

[*Contact Us*](#)



A Liberal Arts Education: The Story of GC Journeys

What is a liberal arts education?

A liberal arts education seeks to educate the whole person, preparing that individual for life, not just for a job. It is an education that is about learning how to think and how to create a life worth living. It is an education that prepares people, not for a single job, but for wherever their professional lives take them. Shouldn't education prepare you for wherever you want to go, even the places you can't imagine yet?

GC Journeys: A Fairly Tale Comes to Life

Once upon a time, the educational experiences offered at high quality institutions such as Georgia College were all fairly similar. Every day professors around the world told students about chemical equations, supply and demand, and Shakespeare, believing that through learning about a variety of subjects, students would become consummate thinkers and engaged citizens. But sadly, decades of research suggested that this approach just didn't accomplish those outcomes. One day, one university decided to turn education on its head and do whatever was necessary to *actually* develop extraordinary thinkers and empowered citizens. Because of that, the students who graduated from this university were demonstrably different from those graduating from other institutions. And because of that, those graduates became

- powerful thinkers who blazed their own trails
- sought after thinkers who employers, graduate schools, and non-profits clamored to attract and
- agile thinkers who brought about positive change, undaunted by this rapidly shifting world

And in the end, that university transformed the lives of thousands of individuals *and* became a leader in transforming higher education as we know it.

Georgia College is on a mission to turn this fairy tale into reality through a program we call "GC Journeys."

GC Journeys is our vision for enacting our liberal arts mission, where every aspect of your time here – courses, athletics, clubs, residential life, and even the campus itself – contributes to helping you become a thinker and doer prepared to go beyond where you ever imagined you could go.

GC JOURNEYS

What is GC Journeys?

GC Journeys puts your Liberal Arts education into action by highlighting experiences that are proven to be transformative learning experiences for students and intentionally embedding essential skills into each degree program. Each GC Student is expected to complete 5 transformative experiences during their degree program.

Your journey starts with...



THE FIRST YEAR
EXPERIENCE (FYE)



CAREER PLANNING
MILESTONES



CAPSTONE COURSE
IN YOUR MAJOR

+ choose 2 from...



INTENSIVE
LEADERSHIP
EXPERIENCES



MENTORED
UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH



COMMUNITY-BASED
ENGAGED LEARNING



INTERNSHIPS



STUDY ABROAD/
STUDY AWAY

Where will your journey take you?

GC JOURNEYS

What does GC Journeys consist of?

- ▶ A thinking-focused curriculum: A curriculum and co-curriculum for first-year students that focuses on actively developing essential thinking skills that are designed to help you become a powerful, agile, and sought-after thinker who knows how to reason, analyze, innovate, and more. Your knowledge and skills are then captured in an ePortfolio that can be shared with graduate schools and future employers!
- ▶ Transformative Experiences (TEs): Five (or more) key experiences, specifically crafted to help you become someone beyond who you imagined you could be. These are opportunities proven to help students push beyond their usual boundaries. Three are built into the GC experience and the other two are your choice!

The Personalizable Transformative Experiences You Can Choose from:



MENTORED
UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH



INTERNSHIPS



STUDY ABROAD/
STUDY AWAY



INTENSIVE
LEADERSHIP
EXPERIENCES



COMMUNITY-BASED
ENGAGED LEARNING



@gcjourneys_



GC Journeys

GC JOURNEYS

The **Transformative Experiences** included in every GC undergraduate degree program are:

- The First-Year Experience (FYE)
- The Career Planning Milestones
- A Capstone Course in your major

The **Transformative Experiences** you can **choose from** to personalize your journey are:

- Study Abroad/Study Away
- Community-based Engaged Learning (CbEL)
- Intensive Leadership Experiences
- Mentored Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors (MURACE)
- Internships, Field and Clinical-based Practica, and Apprenticeships

The **Essential Skills** you'll seek to master through your courses here are:

1. Civic Engagement
2. Creative Thinking
3. Critical Thinking
4. Ethical Reasoning
5. Global Learning
6. Information Literacy
7. Inquiry and Analysis
8. Integrative Learning
9. Intercultural Knowledge
10. Oral Communication
11. Quantitative Literacy
12. Problem Solving
13. Teamwork
14. Written Communication



Our goal is to help you graduate as:

- curious, critical, and creative problem-solvers
- ethical, reflective, and engaged citizens
- skilled communicators
- service-oriented leaders and professionals who are dedicated to excellence

Discover more at: <http://www.gcsu.edu/gcjournays>

Where will *your* journey take you?



Why GC Journeys: *What Employers Want*

GC Journeys isn't only about bringing the liberal arts to life; it is also carefully aligned with what employers want. The American Association of College and Universities (AAC&U) surveys employers every few years to discover what knowledge and skills they most want to see from college graduates when they make decisions about who they will hire. Below are some of the findings from the 2018 survey of 1,000 executives and hiring managers from a wide variety of fields across the nation. You should be able to see substantial overlap between the information below and the Essential Skills and Transformative Experiences we emphasize here.

Employer Priorities on Select College Learning Outcomes

	<i>Very important for recent grads</i>	
	Executives	Hiring Managers
<i>Intellectual and Practical Skills</i>		
• Oral communication	80%	90%
• Teamwork skills with diverse groups	77%	87%
• Written communication	76%	78%
• Critical thinking and analytic reasoning	78%	84%
• Complex problem solving	67%	75%
• Information literacy	73%	79%
• Innovation and creativity	61%	66%
• Technological skills	60%	73%
• Quantitative reasoning	54%	55%
<i>Personal and Social Responsibility</i>		
• Ethical judgment and decision making	77%	87%
• Work independently—set priorities, manage time/deadlines	77%	85%
• Self-motivated—ability to take initiative and be proactive	76%	85%
<i>Integrative and Applied Learning</i>		
• Applied knowledge in real-world settings	76%	87%

GC

JOURNEYS

More likely to hire employees with these experiences:

Hiring Managers

<i>Internship/apprenticeship with a company/organization</i>	94%
<i>Field-based project in diverse community</i>	83%
<i>Research project done collaboratively with peers</i>	81%
<i>Service learning project with community organization</i>	78%
<i>Advanced, comprehensive senior project/thesis</i>	76%
<i>Multiple courses requiring significant writing assignments</i>	72%
<i>Study abroad program</i>	47%

More information on the AAC&U Employer Survey can be found [here](#).

GC

JOURNEYS

What are Transformative Experiences?

Transformative experiences are educational experiences that, when done well, have been shown to have significant impact on learning, grades, graduation, and more. In short, these are the types of educational experiences that transform you.

[Learn more about Transformative Experiences at GC!](#)

Transformative Experiences in GC Journeys

While each student will take 5 of these experiences during their time at GC, they are divided into two categories: embedded experiences and optional experiences. Embedded experiences are experiences that all Georgia College students, no matter their major, will complete just by finishing their degree. The optional experiences mean that students can choose 2 of the 5 experiences to complete their journey.

Embedded Experiences

- [First Year Experience](#)
- [Career Planning Milestones](#)
- [Senior Capstone](#)

Optional Experiences

- [Community-based Engaged Learning](#)
- [Intensive Leadership Programs](#)
- [Internships](#)
- [Undergraduate Research](#)
- [Study Abroad/Study Away](#)



GEORGIA COLLEGE
TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

GC

JOURNEYS



THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE (FYE)

First Year Seminars and Experiences

Part of what makes the curriculum at GC unique are the embedded courses such as the GCSU 0001 (FYAS) and GC1Y courses.

How To Complete Your Journey: First Year Experience

The First Year Experience is one of three embedded experiences that is built into the GC curriculum. To “Complete your journey,” for First Year Experience, students need to complete their GCSU 0001 (FYAS) and GC1Y courses. Your instructors can help you determine what to include in your portfolio.

Questions about your First Year? Contact: Your FYAS and/or GC1Y instructors

GC

JOURNEYS



Career Milestones

At Georgia College, all undergraduate students are expected to complete a set of career planning benchmarks that follow a four-year career planning model. Known as the GC Career Planning Milestones, these benchmarks give students the opportunity to begin planning and preparing for their careers from their first day at GC.

How To Complete Your Journey: Career Planning Milestones

The Career Planning Milestones is the second embedded Transformative Learning Experience. To “Complete Your Journey:” Career Planning Milestones, students need to meet the Career Planning Milestones for each year (see info graphic below). The Career Center will track students’ completion of career planning activities. More information can be found here on how to complete the Career Planning Milestones: <http://www.gcsu.edu/career/milestones#>. Career advisors will help you determine which artifacts best represent your capstone experience and should be included in your portfolio.

Tips:

The advisors in the Career Center are experts at helping students land their dream jobs, so visit them early and often. By working with your Career Center advisor *every year*, over time you will build the skills you need to determine the right career path for you and to ace an interview.

Contact: GC Career Center, career.center@gcsu.edu

GC JOURNEYS



down

Career Center

CAREER PLANNING MILESTONES

A four-year career plan for all undergraduate majors



Schedule an appointment today via Unify.
110 Lanier Hall | 478-445-5384 | career.center@gcsu.edu
gcsu.edu/career



GC

JOURNEYS



**CAPSTONE COURSE
IN YOUR MAJOR**

Capstone

Whether they're called "senior capstones" or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork.

Complete Your Journey: Capstone

The Capstone is the final embedded experience built into GC Journeys. To "Complete Your Journey" for Capstone, you must successfully complete the capstone course for your program/major. Experiences will be determined by the requirements of your department/major. Faculty members mentoring such experiences will help you determine which artifacts best represent your capstone experience and should be included in portfolio.

Contact: Your academic advisor or your academic program head

GC

JOURNEYS



Internships

Internships: Internships are typically one-time work or service experiences related to the student’s major or career goal. The internship plan generally involves students working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals. Internships can be paid or unpaid and the student may or may not receive academic credit for performing the internship.

How to Complete Your Journey: Internship

Internships are one of the optional transformative learning experiences in GC Journeys. To “Complete Your Journey” for internships, you must sign up and complete an approved internship experience for academic credit at GC. These may be supported by the academic department or may be secured with assistance from GC’s Career Center. The Career Center advises students to begin their internship search at least 4 – 6 months before their desired start date. The Career Center uses Handshake to promote local, regional, and national internship opportunities to students. By completing the Career Planning Milestones, GC students will have the advantage when they apply for competitive internships. Artifacts may include reflections, work products from the internship, supervisor evaluations, internship experience surveys, final projects, etc. Your internship coordinator/mentor will help you determine which artifacts to include in your portfolio.

Tips:

94% of hiring managers surveyed said that they would be more likely to hire employees who had completed an internship. In fact, in some programs, such as education and health sciences, internships are a requirement for the degree. What students don’t always realize is that participating in an internship is a great option no matter what degree program they are in. Are there internships available for degrees such as English, history, or sociology? Absolutely! Just let the Career Center know you are interested.

Contact: [GC Career Center](#), (career.center@gcsu.edu), or your academic program head

GC JOURNEYS



MENTORED
UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH

Undergraduate Research/Mentored Undergraduate Research & Creative Endeavors

(MURACE)- Georgia College aspires to graduate students with creative and problem-solving dispositions that prepare them to be the next leaders of the free world. Georgia College connects teaching excellence with learning beyond the classroom to provide unique undergraduate research experiences for students.

How To Complete Your Journey: Undergraduate Research/MURACE

Undergraduate Research is one of the optional transformative learning experiences in GC Journeys. To “Complete Your Journey,” for mentored undergraduate research, please see your faculty member with whom you are conducting research. [Ask about getting course credit for research](#) (you should be able to even sign up for 0 credit hours if you are volunteering). You can seek out these experiences throughout your time at GC, and even join an undergraduate research circle. Visit [MURACE](#) for more details or talk to your academic department chair or Dean. Mentors should help you determine which artifacts to include in your portfolio.

Tips:

When you hear the word “research” you may picture a research paper you wrote for a class in high school or college where you found resources on a given topic and synthesized them into a paper. This is SO not that! Mentored undergraduate research is where you can pose a research question no one knows the answer to and then do original research with a mentor here. You might study historical documents to write a biography or conduct a study with rats or with elementary school students. The idea is you conduct actual research on a question you care about. And you don’t necessarily need to do mentored research in your major. If you have a side interest and you have the background knowledge needed for a mentor to take you on, go for it! You can also get assistance to publish your results or present them at a conference. Attend the GC Student Research Conference in your first year to get a feel for the work individuals are doing, and visit [MURACE](#) to learn more about how to find a professor to oversee your research.

Contact:

Dr. Doreen Sams (MURACE) doreen.sams@gcsu.edu

Dr. Jordan Cofer (Associate Provost of Transformative Learning Experiences)
jordan.cofer@gcsu.edu

GC

JOURNEYS



Study Abroad/Study Away

The International Center facilitates and coordinates international academic study, research, and internship opportunities for all Georgia College students, as well as partnerships and exchanges with institutions abroad. Students may study abroad on short-term programs - often with faculty in their majors - or through semester or even academic year-long programs at major universities throughout the world.

- Presently, nearly 300 Georgia College students - representing over thirty different majors - study abroad for academic credit each year in nearly two dozen separate nations worldwide.

Attend a Study Abroad Info Session, held Monday-Thursday in the International Education Center at 2 p.m. No appointment is needed!

How to Complete Your Journey: Study Abroad/Study Away

Study Abroad/Study Away programs are one of the optional transformative learning experiences available in GC Journeys. To “Complete Your Journey” with Study Abroad/Study Away, simply enroll in and complete a Study Abroad program. Artifacts may include itineraries, reflections, coursework completed for the study abroad course, journals, final papers and/or projects, digital stories, etc. Faculty members mentoring such experiences will help you determine which artifacts to include in your portfolio. For more information, visit the International Education Center in the Bone House, or at <https://www.gcsu.edu/international/study-abroad>

Tips:

One of the most common misconceptions about study abroad/study away is, “I won’t be able to afford it.” Seriously. Just GO THROUGH THE DOOR! Just walk into the Bone House and say, “I’m interested.” The great staff there will help you find the perfect program and show you just how affordable it really can be. Don’t forget to ask about the many scholarships available!

Contact: Liz Havey, Assistant Director of Education Abroad
liz.havey@gcsu.edu

GC

JOURNEYS



COMMUNITY-BASED
ENGAGED LEARNING

Community Based Engaged Learning/Service Learning

At Georgia College, Community-based Engaged Learning (CbEL) courses require student participation in service projects or community engagement (either on campus or through institutional partnerships with off-campus organizations) and integrate the service experience into course content.

How to Complete Your Journey: Community-based Engaged Learning (CbEL)

Community-based Engaged Learning is one of the optional transformative learning experiences available in GC Journeys. To “Complete Your Journey,” simply enroll and complete any faculty sponsored ENGAGE or CbEL course experience at Georgia College. You are encouraged to seek out these special courses if you are interested in community service, civic engagement, and collaborative partnerships within your local community. Faculty members mentoring CbEL experiences will help you determine which artifacts to include in your portfolio.

Tips:

We use several different terms here: “community-based engaged learning,” “ENGAGE,” and “service learning.” They all mean essentially the same thing, so don’t let that confuse you. Your advisor is a great resource for helping you find a CbEL course that is right for you. But also note that CbEL is not the same as volunteering. Volunteering is a wonderful thing that you should absolutely do, but volunteering is just something you do out of the goodness of your heart, whereas CbEL is about *combining* learning about a course topic *with* benefiting the community. CbEL usually allows you to apply what you are learning in a course to a real-world community issue. What could be better? You get credit for a course you need AND get the opportunity to work on a local project.

GC

JOURNEYS



INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES

[Intensive Leadership Experience](#)

The Office of Leadership Programs maintains institution-wide responsibility for management, coordination, and development of all Georgia College leadership programs and initiatives. Beyond Georgia College's core leadership programs, which are directed and administered by the Office of Leadership Programs, the staff works collaboratively with members of GC's faculty and staff to develop affiliate programs. Affiliate Programs are courses and student programs that engage with leadership-related topics, including mentorship, civic engagement, social justice and inclusion, strategic thought, and global citizenship, and have as their goal developing students as citizens and leaders for the public good.

How to Complete Your Journey: Intensive Leadership Experiences

Intensive Leadership Experiences are one of the optional Transformative Leadership Experiences available in GC Journeys. To "Complete Your Journey," participate in a core or affiliate leadership program. Students may review their options and choose from a range of Georgia College's leadership programs by visiting gcsu.edu/leadership. For questions about curricular and co-curricular leadership experiences, contact the Leadership Office.

Tips:

A common misconception about leadership experiences is that they are for outgoing, extraverted people, or that leadership is not for you. In fact, there are all kinds of leaders and leadership styles. Make an appointment with the leadership program team and they will help you find an experience that is right for you.

Contact: Dr. Harold Mock, [Director of Leadership Programs](mailto:harold.mock@gcsu.edu) (harold.mock@gcsu.edu)



Livertext ePortfolio: How to Document Your Journey

ABOUT LIVETEXT

You may have heard of a portfolio before – a collection of select examples of work that an architect or artist might bring to an interview or use to help land a contract. An ePortfolio is similar, but it is a virtual repository for multi-media projects you produce.

Account Creation: To create your account, please follow the instructions in the email you received from LiveText. If you do not have the email, first check your spam folder. If you still cannot find it, contact Andrea Barra (andrea.barra@gcsu.edu) to have it resent.

General Navigation: Please click [this link](#) to review the instructions for navigating LiveText.

Try This Video: Here is a [helpful video](#) from LiveText to get you comfortable!

For Additional Issues: Try the LiveText [Help page](#).

Still Having Problems?: Contact LiveText Support at 1-800-311-5656 or support@watermarkinsights.com.

WHY LIVETEXT?

81% of hiring managers state that they find ePortfolios useful when evaluate recent graduates, and yet few universities utilize them at all and certainly not as extensively as we do at Georgia College.

An ePortfolio serves two primary purposes:

1) To assist you as you seek employment. Hiring managers commonly ask questions such as, “What can you tell me about your critical thinking/teamwork/analysis skills?” Every applicant is going to *claim* to have those skills, but what will make you stand out is that you can *prove* you have those skills. Imagine if instead of simply claiming you have exemplary creative thinking skills you could instead say, “I took 7 courses with a creative thinking focus, and in my ePortfolio I have numerous examples of projects I can show you where I demonstrate high levels of achievement in creative thinking.” Or what if you could say something in an interview like, “I completed an internship focused on developing my problem-solving skills, and I took 4 courses focused on problem solving. Furthermore, on several of my later projects demonstrating my problem-solving abilities, I was assessed at a mastery level. Examples of my work in this area are available in my ePortfolio if you would like to see them.”

2) Your Livertext ePortfolio will be the place where you store all your major projects over the course of your time at Georgia College. For example, if you take four courses that have a problem-solving focus, you will have at least four projects demonstrating your ability to problem solve under the tab for problem-solving. You will be able to track how your ability to solve

GC

JOURNEYS

problems matures over time. Your portfolio will allow you and your advisors, mentors, and professors see which skills you've mastered and also where you may want to work more in order to develop your brain to the greatest extent you can while you are here.

You will create many marvelous multi-media "artifacts" such as videos, podcasts, articles, presentations, and more, and because they will be stored in your online portfolio, they will never be lost or misplaced, and they will all be in one well-organized spot when you need them.



**Are you ready to build your
GC Journeys portfolio?**

Have you registered your account?

LIVETEXT by Watermark™

Check your email! Register your account today!

Email if you have any questions at all:

journeys@gcsu.edu

GC

JOURNEYS

Contact Us:



[Dr. Jordan Cofer](#),
Associate Provost for Transformative
Learning Experiences
(478) 445-8753
Carl Vinson House

Email: journeys@gcsu.edu



[Dr. Cynthia Alby](#),
Director of GC Journeys
(478) 445-8746
Carl Vinson House