



Gordon State College

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

Gordon State College’s mission is to ensure affordable, supportive access to high quality post-secondary education. As an access institution, we provide engaged faculty-student interaction through intimate classroom experiences, innovative and effective teaching strategies, excellent advising and mentorship programs, and effective student support services. GSC offers baccalaureate and associate degree programs. The institution has focused more in recent years on meeting the needs of underrepresented populations and dual-enrollment students.

After a peak enrollment of 5,009 in 2010, enrollment declined to 4,084 in fall 2015. Of entering freshmen in fall 2015,

- 55% had learning support requirements
 - 30% of entering freshmen had only a math requirement (N=321)
 - 19% had math and English and/or Reading requirements (N=204)
 - 6% had English, Reading, or both requirements (N=64)
- 65% were Pell-eligible
- 49% were black or African-American, 43% were white
- 24% were first-generation college students

To better serve our student population, Gordon State College was one of the first institutions in the USG to take remediation transformation to scale. To help more adult learners complete a college degree, GSC developed a Weekend College for a bachelor’s of science in Human Services, using hybrid course delivery. The course meetings are held at our teaching site in Henry County, a high-population county that contributes 23% of GSC’s entering freshmen, to provide adult learners with a convenient path for finishing a college degree in a high-demand field that offers many options. Overall, we have targeted traditionally underserved populations for increases in access and completion.

At the same time, our institution has increased its population of students taking courses on a dual-enrollment basis. In the semester of our peak enrollment, fall 2010, we enrolled 36 dual-credit students. In fall 2015, that population increased 408%, to 183 students.

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLETION GOALS, HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

High-impact strategy	1. Improve student engagement and advising through A. Intrusive advising B. Engagement and advising training for new faculty members C. Faculty development in teaching and learning
Related Goal	1: Increase in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by USG institutions.
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	Effectively engaging and advising students are critical factors in success for many students, and in an access institution these factors receive considerable attention.
Primary Point of Contact	For strategies 1.A and 1.B, Prof. Peter Higgins, Director of Student Success, Advising, and Testing, phiggins@gordonstate.edu . For strategy 1.C, Dr. Erica Johnson, Coordinator of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, ejohnson@gordonstate.edu .
Summary of Activities	A. Provide Always Alert intrusive advising for disengaged and poorly performing students. After piloting an Early Alert system in spring 2012, Gordon State College went to scale in fall 2013 with a system that focused on first-year, first-semester students, with the goal of increasing academic success rates and ultimately improving retention. In fall 2014, the College transitioned to an Always Alert system. GSC restructured its Always Alert program during the 2015-2016 academic year. Due to significant program growth, Always Alert decentralized the academic interventions in order to handle the increased demand. From Always Alert’s inception up through the 2014-2015 Academic

Year, Student Success Center staff were solely responsible for conducting all of the Always Alert academic interventions. As faculty began to buy in and the number of referrals and interventions increased, the Director of Student Success began recruiting academic coaches from 6 departments on campus who had interest in retaining students in their major.

During the 2015-2016 year, 13 faculty members from 6 departments volunteered to be academic coaches in addition to the Student Success Center Staff. These academic coaches included faculty from the following departments: Biology/Physical Science; Business/Public Service; Fine and Performing Arts; History/Political Science; Humanities; and Math/Computer Science. In total, academic coaches conducted 434 Always Alert interventions during the 2015-2016 academic year, 252 interventions in the fall 2015 semester, and 182 interventions in the Spring 2016 semester.

In addition to decentralizing academic interventions, Academic Coaches began conducting walk-in Always Alert advisement in 2015-2016. Walk-in advisement in a central location on campus increased accessibility for students to meet with an academic coach and complete their Always Alert intervention by removing the difficulties and vagaries of scheduling around both students' and faculty members' schedules.

B. Improve training of new faculty members in student engagement and advising.

In the years 2011-2015, Academic Affairs had provided structured training for new faculty members that included information and practices related to quality student advising. This training included workshops on Gordon's mission, student mentoring, academic policies, intrusive advising, and best practices in student engagement.

For 2015-2016, we kept this set of orientation workshops but added a subset of advising workshops provided by the Student Success Center professional advisors. The development of these new workshops was informed by the principles of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). The workshops focused in depth on the following topics:

- Learning Outcomes
- DegreeWorks, Banner, and Academic Summaries
- Core Curriculum and Academic Plans
- Learning Support
- Academic Standards and Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Always Alert Intrusive Advising
- Working with Student Success Center Advisors

At the conclusion of the workshops, new faculty members participated in an overview session and then engaged in independent reading of advising literature. Faculty began advising of students in the SSC, mentored by experienced advisors and referring to the advising handbook developed by the College.

C. Increase and improve learning opportunities for all faculty members in the knowledge and practice of excellence in teaching and learning.

While the GSC Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has existed for a number of years, Dr. Johnson, who was appointed coordinator in spring 2015, has taken an aggressive approach to adding and improving learning opportunities. The 2015-16 CETL Schedule of Events included:

- Multiple CETL Lunch conversations
- Multiple Open Classroom opportunities, where faculty members invite others in to observe and share ideas about pedagogy
- Affordable Learning sessions
- Teaching Symposia on the following topics:
 - Best Practices for Online & Hybrid
 - Using Media in Teaching
 - Reaching Challenging Students
 - Classroom Management and Dealing with Confrontation with Director of Public Safety
 - Faculty Well-Being and Excellence in Teaching
 - Getting Students to Come to Class Prepared
 - How (and Why) to Refresh Your Courses
 - Writing Across Disciplines: Teaching Structure and Self-Assessment

CETL continued the annual Teaching Matters Conference that draws participants from the eastern United States.

Measures of Progress and Success

Measure, metric, or data element	Combined number of degrees conferred and students who transfer to other USG institutions. As an access institution offering both associate and baccalaureate degrees, we measure “completion” by the number of degrees conferred and the number of students who transfer to a university or college. We have reliable transfer data only for USG institutions.																																				
Baseline measures	1375																																				
Interim Measures of Progress	<p>One-year changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate’s: +8.2% (403 to 436) • Bachelor’s: +22.3% (148 to 181) • Transfer Outs: -8.8% (509 to 464) <p>See table below, Degrees and Transfer Outs by Academic Year.*</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="378 562 1300 846"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="5">Degrees and Transfer Outs by Academic Year</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Metric</th> <th>2011/12</th> <th>2012/13</th> <th>2013/14</th> <th>2014/15</th> <th>2015/16</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Associate Degrees</td> <td>488</td> <td>500</td> <td>454</td> <td>403</td> <td>436</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bachelor's Degrees</td> <td>102</td> <td>124</td> <td>155</td> <td>148</td> <td>181</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer to other USG Institutions</td> <td>788</td> <td>692</td> <td>584</td> <td>509</td> <td>464</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>1375</td> <td>1315</td> <td>1180</td> <td>1057</td> <td>1081</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*See Appendix “Degrees and Transfers” for the five-year history and breakdown of transfers.</p>		Degrees and Transfer Outs by Academic Year					Metric	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Associate Degrees	488	500	454	403	436	Bachelor's Degrees	102	124	155	148	181	Transfer to other USG Institutions	788	692	584	509	464	Total	1375	1315	1180	1057	1081
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Measures of Success	Increase in combined number of degrees conferred and transfer outs.																																				
Lessons Learned	<p>Always Alert: The key challenge in 2015-2016 was providing service to more students at the same time that limited resources did not change. De-centralizing much of the advising has been a positive step in managing the work load while maintaining quality service.</p> <p>NFO Training: Because student engagement and effective advising are so important to retention and completion, developing effective resources to carry out those tasks is critical. Many new faculty come with insufficient training in engagement and advising, so it becomes an important responsibility on the College’s part to get them prepared, relying on existing resources. The orientation pieces developed prior to and for 2015-2016 are strong steps forward in achieving completion goals.</p> <p>CETL: These activities have a less direct but still important connection to completion goals. There have been no significant challenges to increasing and improving CETL learning opportunities.</p> <p>Completion Goals: Decreases in enrollment after 2010/11 eventually caused a corresponding decrease in degrees conferred and transfer outs. While enrollment stayed about level in the 2014/15 to 2015/16 academic years, we are very pleased that the College’s efforts at improving retention and completion have led to <u>increases in degrees conferred from 2014/15 to 2015/16.</u></p>																																				

High-impact strategy	2. Increase high school dual enrollment participation
Related Goal	6: Shorten time to degree completion through programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school and by awarding credit for prior learning that is verified by appropriate assessment
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	For some years, Gordon State College had built on its strong relationships with service area high schools to provide access to post-secondary education through dual-enrollment. In 2015, Georgia SB 132 and SB 2 provided a boost to dual enrollment opportunities for high school students, primarily through financial support.
Primary Point of Contact	Prof. Samantha Bishop, Move On When Ready Coordinator, sbishop@gordonstate.edu

<p>Summary of Activities</p>	<p>In 2015-2016, Gordon State added the position of Move On When Ready Coordinator. The Coordinator works closely with Admissions, Academic Affairs, and Financial Aid at the College to strengthen customer service. Most importantly, the Coordinator is a central point for communications with students, parents, and high school counselors, advising and registering all new MOWR students. The College added the Coordinator position to better meet the needs of a growing dual-enrollment population and of area high schools.</p> <p>GSC continues to work with public school systems in our service area to facilitate dual enrollment, through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vigorous recruiting at high schools, • evening information sessions for students and parents at the high schools and at Gordon State College campuses • partnering in three College and Career Academies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Henry County Academy for Advance Studies ○ Griffin Region CCA (Spalding, Butts, and Jackson counties) ○ Lamar County CCA 																		
<p>Measures of Progress and Success</p>																			
<p>Measure, metric, or data element</p>	<p>Increase in dual enrollment.</p>																		
<p>Baseline measures</p>	<p>At the peak of GSC’s overall enrollment, in fall 2010, dual enrollment was 41.</p>																		
<p>Interim Measures of Progress</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Dual-Enrollment Headcount by Academic Year</th> </tr> <tr> <th>2010/11</th> <th>2011/12</th> <th>2012/13</th> <th>2013/14</th> <th>2014/15</th> <th>2015/16*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>41</td> <td>57</td> <td>70</td> <td>155</td> <td>172</td> <td>194</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Dual-Enrollment Headcount by Academic Year						2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16*	41	57	70	155	172	194
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<p>Measures of Success</p>	<p>The maximum dual-enrollment headcount will be determined primarily by the maximum number of students in service area high schools who meet enrollment requirements.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction will be measured through a survey currently in the design phase.</p>																		
<p>Lessons Learned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service: With the increase in dual enrollment, GSC’s decentralized advising became less effective. The establishment of a MOWR Coordinator, a central point for related communications and MOWR academic advising, has made a significant, positive impact on customer service. High school counselors have communicated only positive feedback, and the creation of a customer service survey this year will help us track the quality of service. • Family preparation for college: In many families within the rural counties of our service area, planning for college is inadequate. Regarding MOWR, families do not often recognize the need for their students to prepare for and take in timely fashion the SAT/ACT exams. • GSC Admissions director and recruiters continue to collaborate with high school counselors in providing general college and specifically MOWR information sessions for students and parents. <p>The GSC Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs serves on the boards of our three partner college and career academies. In these partnerships, high schools, Gordon State, and other post-secondary partners collaborate in educating families in preparing students for college.</p>																		
<p>High-impact strategy</p>	<p>3. Enroll most students in need of remediation in gateway collegiate courses in English and mathematics, with corequisite Learning Support; combine English and reading remediation; and ensure that all remediation is targeted toward supporting students in the skills they need to pass the collegiate course.</p>																		
<p>Related Goal</p>	<p>7: Increase the likelihood of degree completion by transforming the way that remediation is accomplished</p>																		

Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	Gordon State College is an access institution in the USG, and 44% of our first-time, full-time freshmen in fall 2015 had one or more learning support requirements.															
Primary Point of Contact	Dr. Steve Raynie; Access Coordinator; sraynie@gordonstate.edu															
Summary of Activities	After piloting corequisite remediation in English and math, GSC went to scale with full transformation of remediation in spring 2015. We have all students with Learning Support requirements taking either a Foundations course or corequisite remediation. The majority of students needing remediation are now placed in corequisite remediation. Fall 2015 entering students with a math requirement were placed in a support lab for either Quantitative Skills and Reasoning or College Algebra, based on their COMPASS score, and took the appropriate gateway course as a corequisite. Reading and English were combined in English Learning Support.															
Measures of Progress and Success																
Measure, metric, or data element	Number of semesters to pass collegiate course for corequisite and stand-alone remediation															
Baseline measures	<p>Students admitted in fall 2012 with LS requirements could take only stand-alone LS courses, and passing a college course in the first term was not an option. Following are the percentages of students who passed in two, three, or four semesters:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2 Terms</th> <th>3 Terms</th> <th>4 Terms</th> <th>Not Passed Yet</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>English</td> <td>29%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>1%</td> <td>59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td>20%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>6%</td> <td>60%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2 Terms	3 Terms	4 Terms	Not Passed Yet	English	29%	10%	1%	59%	Math	20%	13%	6%	60%
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Interim Measures of Progress	<p>For students admitted in fall 2015 with an English and/or Reading Learning Support requirement,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% taking <u>corequisite</u> courses passed English 1101 in their <i>first</i> semester, and another 10% in their second semester. 37% taking a <u>stand-alone</u> remediation course passed ENGL 1101 in their <i>second</i> semester of college, and another 1% passed the course in their third semester. <p>For students admitted in fall 2015 with a Math Learning Support requirement,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% taking <u>corequisite</u> courses passed a college-level math course in their <i>first</i> semester, and another 3% in their second semester. 40% taking a <u>stand-alone</u> remediation course passed a college-level math course in their <i>second</i> semester of college, and 0% passed the course in their third semester. 															
Measures of Success	<p>Students in the corequisite courses will meet or exceed, within two semesters, the <u>overall</u> pass rate for the corresponding collegiate course in the fall term (ABC rate for English, ABCD rate for Math).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall ENGL 1101 ABC rate was 69%. The ABC rate for corequisite English students was 70% within two semesters. The overall MATH 1001 (Quantitative Skills and Reasoning) ABCD rate was 75% and the MATH 1111 (College Algebra) rate was 68%. The ABCD rate for all corequisite Math students was 81% within two semesters. 															
Lessons Learned	<p>This past year, the College has worked on two challenges in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesigning ENGL 0989 to strengthen reading across the disciplines, including types of texts encountered in other core courses, especially natural and social sciences. The redesign was completed and has been used since summer 2016. Scheduling courses at satellite campuses and in the evening, dealing with relatively low learning support student numbers at these locations or evening times to meet student needs. 															

High-impact strategy	4. Develop a Weekend College to offer adult learners the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in a flexible program designed to accommodate their needs.
Related Goal	9: Improve access for underserved and/or priority communities.

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Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	<p>About 12% of the GSC student population in any recent year has been adult learners. As the USG's primary access institution in this part of state, we believe that we can help a greater number of adult learners complete their college degrees.</p>									
Primary Point of Contact	<p>Dr. Barry Kicklighter, Department Head for Business and Public Service, bkicklighter@gordonstate.edu</p>									
Summary of Activities	<p>GSC established the first cohort for a Weekend College Human Services degree in spring 2015. Human Services is a multidisciplinary profession integrating the fields of psychology, sociology, government and administration. Gordon's program is unique among Human Services degrees in incorporating business, government, and economics courses in addition to the customary sociology and psychology curriculum. The primary emphasis of the curriculum is to provide practical, real-world training so that graduates can gain immediate employment.</p> <p>Weekend College students meet one weekend per month at Gordon State College-McDonough and complete the remainder of their coursework online. McDonough is located in Henry County, from which 23% of GSC's total enrollment comes and 30% of our adult learners.</p> <p>The Weekend College in Human Services established two more cohorts during the 2015-2016 academic year.</p>									
Measures of Progress and Success										
Measure, metric, or data element	Cohort enrollment									
Baseline measures	24 enrolled in spring 2015 (initial) cohort									
Interim Measures of Progress	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Weekend College Enrollment by Cohort</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Spring 2015</th> <th>Fall 2015</th> <th>Spring 2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>24</td> <td>24 (4 enrolled summer 2015)</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Weekend College Enrollment by Cohort			Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	24	24 (4 enrolled summer 2015)	15
Weekend College Enrollment by Cohort										
Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016								
24	24 (4 enrolled summer 2015)	15								
Measures of Success	The cohort enrollment goal is 25 students.									
Lessons Learned	<p>We have had two related challenges: reaching our enrollment goal for each cohort and allowing convenient program entry when applicants have already earned some of the program credits and are ready to enter. We have decided to go to one cohort per year, in the fall, and we have altered policy and process so that we can add students to an existing cohort without their having to wait until the next fall term, when that will work to the student's advantage.</p> <p>Prior Learning Assessment continues to be a challenge for fire fighters, police officers, and government managers, students who are interested in a Human Services degree. There does not appear to be a template for linking training competencies to our courses in business and management. A DANES-type assessment tool is needed.</p>									

High-impact strategy	5. Create an opportunity for applicants who fall just short of GSC's admission requirements to access a college education through a structured learning environment.
Related Goal	9: Improve access for underserved and/or priority communities.
Demonstration of Priority and/or Impact	As an access institution in the USG, Gordon State College has the responsibility of developing innovative methods for providing students the opportunity to earn a degree.
Primary Point of Contact	Dr. Steve Raynie; Access Coordinator; sraynie@gordonstate.edu
Summary of Activities	ACCESS stands for Admissions Course through Collegiate Excellence and Student Success. The ACCESS Institute provides an alternative admissions pathway to applicants identified as having the potential to succeed in college but who do not otherwise meet regular admissions criteria.

	<p>This program is available by invitation only through the Gordon State College Office of Admissions. Not all applicants will qualify, but those who are admitted participate in a designed curriculum with extra advising and tutoring support.</p> <p>Students enter in a cohort taking the same, carefully-planned set of classes and must meet the following contractual requirements to remain in the Institute:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All students must earn at least a C in all courses during the first term. 2. All students who remain in the program after the first term must take a set of prescribed classes together (i.e., remain in a cohort) for at least one additional semester. 3. All students agree to meet regularly with academic coaches, advisors, and tutors appointed by the college and to follow their guidelines and recommendations. <p>The first ACCESS Institute cohort was enrolled in the summer 2014 term, and our enrollment goal was 25 students for the first three cohorts. For the fourth cohort in fall 2015, we were prepared to push the enrollment goal to 50, which we almost met.</p>												
Measures of Progress and Success													
Measure, metric, or data element	Cohort enrollment												
Baseline measures	No students were admitted who did not meet admission standards in the prior year (other than Presidential Exceptions)												
Interim Measures of Progress	<table border="1" data-bbox="397 842 1084 999"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">Institute Enrollment by Cohort</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Su 2014</th> <th>Fall 2014</th> <th>Su 2015</th> <th>Fall 2015</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>18</td> <td>10</td> <td>49</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Institute Enrollment by Cohort				Su 2014	Fall 2014	Su 2015	Fall 2015	13	18	10	49
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Su 2014	Fall 2014	Su 2015	Fall 2015										
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Measures of Success	The enrollment goal is 75 students.												
Lessons Learned	The ACCESS Institute experience confirms that students' obstacles to success tend to have far less to do with comprehending the academics than they do with building successful habits in thought and action. For that reason, the College now includes STAR 0098 (Students Taking Academic Responsibility for College Success, a one-credit hour course focused on the individual learner's motivation and success skills) in the second-semester curriculum. This change was implemented in fall 2016 for the current Summer Institute cohort. (The first-semester curriculum already includes the one-credit-hour GFYE 0097/Gordon First Year Experience course that focuses on engaging the student in the college culture.)												

OBSERVATIONS

- Our most successful strategy and activities to this point have come under Goal 6, shortening time to degree completion by facilitating access to dual credit opportunities.
- In terms of overall GSC numbers, it appears that transforming remediation is going to be the strategy to have the greatest impact on retention, progression, and completion.
- Despite intensive efforts to improve branding and communicating, general efforts at attracting more students to a college education have been less effective than marketing to targeted populations: adults who wish to complete a degree, young people who fall just short of admission standards but are motivated, and dual credit students.
- GSC has developed more flexibility in course delivery and has enhanced student support, but funding personnel and other resources continues to be a key challenge.
- As an access institution, especially, GSC has the major challenge of trying to change long-term habits in a short timeframe for a significant portion of our student population. Such habits include time management, financial management, study skills and work ethic. We must assist students with developing good habits before they lose academic eligibility and/or lose financial support.
- Expectations: GSC expects to continue the high-impact strategies described above for at least the next two years, with at least annual evaluation of effectiveness. We will continue to explore methods for improving access and completion, such as

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- creating one or more new Weekend Colleges for other degree programs,
- expanding the ACCESS Institute,
- improving advising through timely, appropriate, and focused advising contact with students
- developing further our partnerships with USG institutions, Southern Crescent Technical College, area public schools systems and private schools, and area businesses and industries

Our efforts will be focused on meeting the needs of the students and communities in our service area by providing educational opportunities and quality support.