

STRATEGIC PLAN

FUTURE FORWARD

2024
2027



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Gordon State Community,

Thank you for being a part of Gordon State College! Four years ago, we launched our Strategic Plan, “Building the Power of WE.” This ambitious five-year plan focused on three strategic imperatives designed to move the institution forward: a collaborative campus culture, student excellence, and stronger community engagement. Many of the goals from the past few years focused on establishing baseline processes and approaches to collective work.

Our goal over the next three years is to ensure a focus on student success, enrollment growth, and fiscal strength by increasing recruitment and accelerating student success toward graduation. Through tactics like a strong graduation message, intrusive advising, accessible tutoring, student engagement, and immersive career development, we will retain students to graduation. Through new degree programs targeting the expanding economy, we will grow enrollment, serve our labor market, and spur regional development.

I am eager to work toward these goals of recruitment, retention, and graduation by uniting our talented faculty, staff, students, and the community at large. As a high-quality and affordable college option, Gordon State will continue to produce high-caliber students who are ready to own their future.

I want to thank each of you for the role you play in making sure our students are successful. Thank you for serving the next generation of Gordon State College graduates!

Highlanders Forward,

Dr. Don Green
President



GORDON STATE COLLEGE HISTORY

In the 1830s, a group of area farmers came together to solve a need—a need to educate their children. No doubt some may have thought their plan too ambitious, but in 1852 the school that would become Gordon State College was officially chartered. Twenty years later, the first president, Charles Lambdin, gave the school its name.

In the 1960s, when faculty member Faith Porch looked back at the school's history, she described its story as being about “ordinary men and women with a purpose.” Indeed, the desire to educate has been the driving purpose of the institution since its earliest days. The institution has never shut its doors, even when faced with the extraordinary situation of a civil war, two world wars, and a worldwide pandemic. In fact, Gordon is the third oldest institution in the University System of Georgia.

In 1890, President Jere Pound brought the Reserved Officers' Training Corps to Gordon that led to its designation as an honor school of the U.S. Army. Cadets came from across the United States and South and Central America, and for 82 years, Gordon students were a vital part of the country's military efforts. That military program, with its investment in housing, would later allow Gordon to build a residential life program, even as a two-year “junior” college.

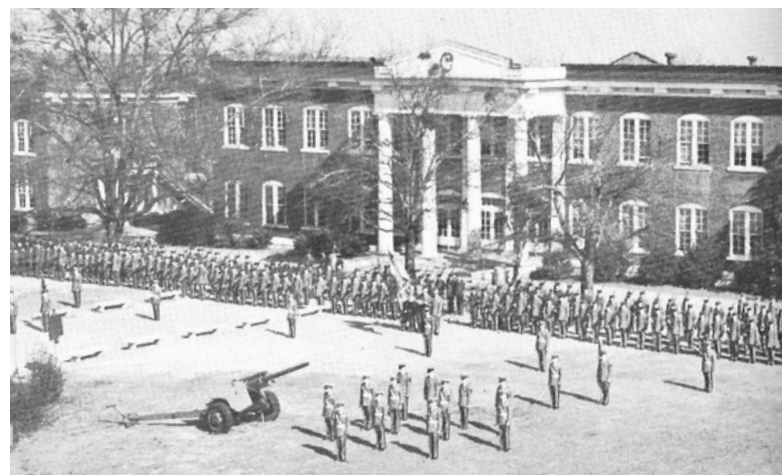
The school faced extraordinary financial and enrollment challenges in the late 1960s and early 1970s that threatened its continued existence, but again, Gordon kept its mission to educate at the forefront by joining the University System of Georgia as a two-year college in 1972. The military program ended, and the high school and lower school programs separated from the institution at that time. Gordon's quality nursing program soon became vital to the region's healthcare, and the college's affordability meant many students could reduce their overall cost of college by completing their core courses near their homes. When Georgia needed teachers

in 2006, Gordon widened its purpose to become a baccalaureate degree-granting institution awarding its first baccalaureate degrees in 2010. Multiple degree programs followed, each built to address a need in the workforce.

Alongside the college's faculty and staff, the men and women of the college's supporting Foundation have labored to increase its endowment, making college more affordable for students. Its resources have grown from less than \$5 million in the early 2000s to more than \$17 million in 2024.

Gordon has kept its purpose at its center, changing and adapting to meet the needs of the regional workforce with more than 20 degrees and a robust transfer program that allows men and women to achieve a quality education. Like the children of the rural farmers who long ago joined hands to give their children a better life, students of today are making better lives for themselves and Georgia because of Gordon.

Faith Porch's observation about the history of Gordon State College holds true after 172 years of educating students from all walks of life to live fulfilling and productive careers. It will continue to do so tomorrow and into the future for all who come seeking their own personal purpose.





MISSION

Gordon State College provides a supportive learning environment where students can grow academically and personally, preparing them for success in life and for making positive contributions to regional workforce needs.

VISION

Gordon State College will create a vibrant community that nurtures academic and personal growth, inspiring students to serve as leaders in both the surrounding community and in the world beyond.

CORE VALUES



Commitment to Excellence

Prioritize high standards in all endeavors, striving for distinction in education, research, and community engagement.



Student Success

Focus on enhancing regional workforce by effectively preparing students for successful careers, thereby ensuring a substantial return on their educational investment.



Innovation and Creativity

Encourage creative thinking and innovative solutions, driving progress and adapting to the evolving needs of our society and the wider world.



Belonging

Embrace and celebrate multiple perspectives, fostering an environment that enriches learning and promotes respect and understanding.



STRATEGIC GOAL I

Strengthen efforts to attract, recruit, and enroll students with different interests, skills, talents, and needs.



OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Expand the current enrollment communications plan for new and returning students to ensure timely completion of college enrollment processes.
- 1.2 Develop strong partnerships with secondary schools and the technical college system.
- 1.3 Improve campus residence halls to attract students outside a 20-mile radius.
- 1.4 Develop programs focused on career preparation, while addressing the needs of traditional and nontraditional students.
- 1.5 Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to attract applicants in alignment with GSC recruitment objectives.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Enrollment Headcount
- Enrollment Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
- Nontraditional Enrollment
- Housing Occupancy Rates
- New Programs aligned with USG's Georgia Degrees Pay and US-DOL Workforce Demand Forecasts

SECONDARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- New Freshmen Enrollment
- Total Dual Enrollment (DE)
- Transition from Dual to Freshman Enrollment
- Transfer Student Enrollment
- Out-of-State Enrollment



STRATEGIC GOAL II

Promote retention and student success through targeted retention efforts, supplemental instruction, and engagement initiatives.



OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Invest in student population through retention efforts, supplemental instruction, and tutorial participation
- 2.2 Promote faculty and staff development opportunities to support continuous engagement to the institution and to their profession.
- 2.3 Provide a greater number of student engagement opportunities.
- 2.4 Engage commuter students with value-added experiences.
- 2.5 Enhance the student housing experience.
- 2.6 Establish affinity groups within the student population (examples: Greek life, Honors, ROTC, career-oriented clubs, student government, intramural sports).
- 2.7 Increase the number of students participating in Undergraduate Research.
- 2.8 Provide academic assistance to students placed on financial aid warning for not making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Fall-to-Fall retention (First-Time Full-Time Freshmen)
- Fall-to-Fall retention of total student population
- Percentage of freshmen enrolled in 15 credit hours in first term/30 credit hours in first year
- Percentage of students maintaining Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Percentage of students completing an identified High Impact Practice (HIP) course, which includes a workbased opportunity, a culminating project and/or research

SECONDARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Number of students participating in Undergraduate Research
- Number of faculty presenting at conferences or publishing articles
- Percentage of freshmen passing English and Math in the first year
- Number of faculty teaching HIP courses



STRATEGIC GOAL III

Drive students toward degree completion, closely aligning programs with workforce needs.



OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Expand career education and development.
- 3.2 Increase the number of degrees awarded each year
- 3.3 Increase the number of nontraditional students completing a degree.
- 3.4 Increase student engagement with the college and community.
- 3.5 Foster an environment to help Generation Z students appreciate the value of a college degree via workforce development.
- 3.6 Provide campus and community experiences to reduce early student departure.
- 3.7 Track student engagement in extra-curricular activities.
- 3.8 Boost students' annual savings by granting them access to cost-free textbooks.
- 3.9 Employ internal communication strategies to encourage persistence among enrolled Students, leading them to a clear path of graduation.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Three-year associate/six-year bachelor degree graduation rates
- Nontraditional student completion rate
- Number of students participating in internship opportunities and workforce preparation workshops
- Percentage of students eligible for Pell/Hope

SECONDARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Percentage of students taking classes with free textbooks
- Number of students participating in Federal Work Study Program
- Survey data detailing employment and/or military status, volunteer or service program contributions, and experiential learning participation
- GACE pass rate—Education
- NCLEX pass rate—ASN and BSN



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Planning Committee was formed by President Green in August 2023. During the fall 2023 semester, the committee received feedback from faculty, students, staff, retirees, alumni, trustees, and community partners. The Committee met monthly to develop a working three-year plan for the College. During spring 2024, the plan was presented to the President and Cabinet. The final plan was presented to the faculty and staff before its final approval in June 2024.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Teresa Betkowski (Facilitator)

Tonya Moore
Ryran Traylor
Sherlana Fryer
Kristi Hayes

Amanda Maynard
Mary Monroe Smith
Kathryn Green
Cecil McDaniel

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

Joanne Ardovini
Melissa Johnson
Jamie Petty
Britt Lifsey
Rhonda Toon
Peter Higgins
Don Green

Faculty, Students, Staff, Retirees, Alumni, Gordon State Trustees, and Community Partners



CHANGING LIVES TOGETHER



419 College Drive, Barnesville, GA
30204 gordonstate.edu
678-359-5555

