

REPORT FROM PROVOST SPIROU 9 AUGUST 2021 GOVERNANCE RETREAT

PROVOST'S REPORT

1. **X THANK YOU** Thank you all for your extraordinary efforts during a very challenging last year. I know that our students appreciated your commitment and hard work so that they could continue to make progress in achieving their academic goals.
2. **COVID-19 UPDATES** Georgia College received Fall 2021 semester information (as of August 9, 2021) from the USG. Provost meetings with all 26 USG institutions were also held last week. This information was shared with the Deans and communicated in an August 4th meeting with Deans and Department Chairs:
 - a. As a public institution within the State of Georgia, we received guidance from the University System of Georgia that all 26 institutions will return to campus in the fall and deliver a face to face student experience without social distancing for the upcoming year.
 - b. COVID-19 vaccines offer safe, effective protection and we urge all students, faculty, staff and visitors to get vaccinated either on campus or with a local provider.
 - c. Everyone is encouraged to wear a mask or face covering while inside campus facilities. The system continues to work closely with the Georgia Department of Public Health to prioritize the health and safety of the campus community.
 - d. No student, faculty or staff member should be treated differently based on their COVID-19 vaccination status.
 - e. Students should not be asked about their vaccine status and be segregated in a classroom or from other instructor-student interactions (e.g., office hours, group work, field trips, labs, etc.) based on their vaccination status.
 - f. Vaccination status can be used to determine whether or not a person should quarantine after a close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19.
 - g. Students may be required by off-campus partnering organizations to wear masks and/or be vaccinated as a condition of participation in experiential learning opportunities such as study abroad programs, externships and delivery of medical services.
 - h. Any change in modality for a class due to isolation or quarantine requires the approval of the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Office of the Provost. A change in modality is subject to an end date and is correlated to isolation or quarantine timelines.
 - i. Department chairs will make arrangements for class coverage when faculty are unable to teach due to illness.
 - j. Faculty should be prepared to accommodate students who are required to go into quarantine or isolation.
 - k. The high-risk accommodation has expired (June 30, 2021).
 - l. If exposed, fully vaccinated individuals do not have to quarantine.
 - m. The decision tree has been updated based on the new guidance.
 - n. No institution may change the overall modality of their instruction.
3. **COLLEGE UPDATES** The work of the faculty and of our colleges continues to be remarkable. This past year we saw the approval of new graduate certificates in the College of Business and a first of its kind, a cross college collaboration between the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Business to develop a B.S degree in Data Science. The program is on the agenda for review at the August 10th BOR meeting.

4. **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION** The College of Education was once again rated in the highest category of “exemplary” on the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, Professional Program Effectiveness Measures.
5. **COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES** The College of Health Sciences continues its significant work through the Center for Health and Social Issues and the School of Nursing was recently recognized by the National League of Nursing as a Center of Excellence by enhancing student learning and professional development. The School of Nursing is also planning a third cohort that will graduate 40 additional nurses. This will greatly contribute to addressing the significant shortage of nurses in the state.
6. **HONORS COLLEGE** The Honors College is offering new courses in disciplines such as Statistics and World Languages and our University Library faculty will be contributing new courses to the GC Core.
7. **BORDER-FREE GC** We also launched the Border-Free GC initiative, offering six categories of accessible participation without travel. All of these accomplishments have been the outcome of the commitment and hard work of our faculty, as well as the support and leadership of our Department Chairs, Deans and all of our staff across Academic Affairs.
8. **UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL** Last year, at this time, we launched the *Undergraduate Research* journal. The first issue of *Undergraduate Research* was published in February and included 6 papers with a 13% acceptance rate. The second issue is scheduled to appear in September and will feature 8 papers with a 12% acceptance rate. These publications include student articles representing institutions such as UNC-Charlotte, Middlebury College, Swarthmore College, and Temple University, among others.
9. **FIRST YEAR SEMINAR** During the spring we revisited the First Year Seminar course and focused on ways to increase its effectiveness. Research clearly points to the importance of faculty interaction with students, as early as possible in their academic careers. The First Year Seminar is one of many ways to achieve that goal. With that in mind we introduced a pilot program for Fall 2021, titled TREK that will engage departments with first-year students. At the end of the semester, we will assess TREK and determine its impact and whether we should continue moving forward with it or identify other ways to engage with first year students.
10. **VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM** During the 2021-2022 academic year, the Provost Office will launch a new Visiting Scholars Program. The initiative will allow academic departments to invite scholars for a week-long period of time. This will be a competitive, application-based program and will provide faculty and students an opportunity to engage with colleagues within its residency format. The Office of the Provost is in the process of developing this program and will provide more details regarding the process soon.
11. **FACULTY SUCCESS COORDINATOR** Last year, we started a focused way of showcasing the numerous faculty successes and academic distinctions through the work of a Faculty Success Coordinator. The plan is to work closely with our colleagues to compete for state, regional, and national faculty awards. In addition to a newly developed awards database comprised of 900 awards (which is the only one of its kind), faculty in all disciplines can now find disciplinary awards. During the past year, Georgia College has had over 35 submissions for faculty or program awards, and we won 11 awards, with still many submissions in progress that haven’t announced a decision.
12. **POST-TENURE REVIEW** In September 2020, then Chancellor Wrigley appointed a Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Working Group to review the Board of Regents’ existing policy (1996) and how USG institutions use the post-tenure review process to evaluate tenured

faculty members. All institutions submitted data in the fall 2020. Based on the Working Group recommendations, the Post-Tenure Review process will be modified to provide a better framework for faculty performance development and evaluation across all stages of their career. Additionally, the BOR will enact system level guidelines and standards for all faculty reviews and will ensure that campus policies and standards conform with system requirements. This item is on the August 10th BOR meeting agenda.

13. **SACSCOC AND QEP** Earlier this summer we received word from SACSCOC that we had successfully completed the 5-year reaffirmation process. We are launching the process for the 10-year reaffirmation. A key aspect of that will be the development of the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP). In the fall we will hold QEP Informational Sessions to identify possible QEP topics. In the Spring of 2022 a presentation to the University Senate and the Executive Cabinet will move us forward in narrowing the possible topics. It is important that the university community participates and contributes to this effort, so please look for related announcements.
14. **FACULTY CLUSTER HIRE** It is important that we continue our efforts and commitment to diversity and inclusion through the pursuit of a multidisciplinary faculty cluster hire in disparities. A group of new faculty, focusing on health, education, economic, social, and/or cultural issues would strengthen our work with students, support the Honors College with additional course offerings, engage with our newly created Institute of Rural Studies, and expand our programming while pursuing new grant funding opportunities. We continue to explore the possibilities as we move into the upcoming academic year.” The Provost Office would oversee the search process for the new initiative.
15. **PATHWAYS TO GEORGIA COLLEGE** In the Fall of 2019, we launched the Pathways to Georgia College initiative which led to signing two agreements, one with Georgia Highlands College and the other with Gordon State College. These agreements will provide students who were not accepted to start their studies at Georgia College, the opportunity to still become a GC student via pathways at those institutions. We recently completed a similar agreement with the College of Coastal Georgia that will be signed on August 23, 2021.
16. **ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP** We also welcome this year a number of colleagues in leadership positions: These include Dr. Shaundra Walker, Director of the University Library, Dr. Daniel Czech, Associate Dean in the College of Health Sciences, and Joel L. Robinson, Senior Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management. New department chairs starting this fall include Dr. Herb Snyder as Chair of Accounting, Dr. Michael Dreher as Chair of the Department of Communication, and Dr. Bill Donaher, Chair of the Department of Management, Marketing, and Logistics. We also have a few colleagues that stepped up into leadership positions: Dr. Tanya Goette as Interim Associate Dean in the College of Business, Dr. Donovan Domingue as Interim Chair of the Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Astronomy, Eric Griffis as Interim Chair of the Departments of Art and Theater & Dance, and Angela Criscoe, Interim Executive Director of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies.
17. **ASSOCIATE PROVOST AND DIRECTOR OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL SEARCH** We have launched the search for the Associate Provost and Director of The Graduate School position. Dr. Mark Pelton will lead the search with committee representation across the colleges and from the University Senate.
18. **WHITE HOUSE COVID-19 COLLEGE VACCINE CHALLENGE** Georgia College will join The White House and the U.S. Department of Education COVID-19 College Vaccine Challenge to end the pandemic. Participating colleges commit to taking three key

actions to help get their campus communities vaccinated: (1) engaging every student, faculty, and staff member; (2) organizing their college communities; and (3) delivering vaccine access for all.

19. **FACULTY ACTIVITIES** (August 9-13)

- a. *Making Excellence Inclusive Faculty and Staff Day*
Tuesday, August 10th from 9am – 4:30pm
Arts and Sciences Auditorium
- b. *Welcome Back Faculty Event*
Thursday, August 12th from 9am – 11am
Russell Auditorium
- c. *First Year Convocation (Regalia Event)*
Friday, August 13th from 9am – 10am
Centennial Center Lower Level (line up at 8:45am)