

GEORGIA HIGHLANDS COLLEGE



STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2016



**A Letter from
Georgia Highlands College Interim President
Dr. Renva Watterson**



Institutional History

Founded in 1970 as Floyd Junior College, Georgia Highlands College (GHC) is a two-year unit of the University System of Georgia created to provide educational opportunities for the physical, intellectual, and cultural development of a diverse population in seven northwest Georgia counties. It now serves students who commute from throughout a large portion of Northwest Georgia and Northeast Alabama. In its 40-year history, GHC has served the Northwest Georgia community with a solid educational foundation for the first two years of college. On August 1, 2005, the institution officially became Georgia Highlands College (formerly Floyd College) to reflect the regional nature of the population it serves. Now enrolling about 5,200 students in transfer and career academic programs, GHC operates additional sites in Bartow, Cobb, Douglas and Paulding Counties.

In recent years, the college has become more innovative with its outreach and programming, offering more courses via nontraditional means to meet the needs of its diverse student population and initiating programs that serve as models for colleges across the country. As Fall semester 2005 was beginning, the college dedicated a new campus and building in Cartersville, on Route 20, just west of I-75. The 100,000-square-foot facility, which houses a soaring library, biology and physics labs and the latest technological advances, can accommodate about 2,500 students. Also in 2005, the Marietta site opened on the campus of Southern Polytechnic State University. The college's latest two sites – one in Dallas in Paulding County and one in Douglasville in Douglas County – opened for Fall semester 2009.

With the addition of new campuses, the college began the process of decentralizing student services to the campus level during 2010. That process has wrapped up, but assessment and continuous improvement of decentralization remains a focus of the college. Two other major milestones have been met since 2010: 1) the college has started an intercollegiate athletics program. Basketball began on the Floyd Campus during the 2012-2013 academic year; baseball and softball will begin on the Cartersville Campus during the 2013-2014 academic year. 2) the college has gotten approval from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and SACSCOC to begin a baccalaureate program in Nursing, which will begin Fall semester 2013. This achievement has moved the college to the state college sector of the University System.

GHC's enrollment has grown over the past five years, moving from an enrollment of 4346 in Fall 2007 to that of 5532 in Fall 2012. To face these increasing numbers, the college has expanded capacity by opening new instructional sites and hiring new faculty. As the college looks to a bright future, it continues to offer an advanced educational foundation to its expanding student body.

Institutional Information

Campuses/Sites

- Floyd Campus – Rome, GA
- Heritage Hall instructional site – Downtown Rome, GA
- Cartersville Campus – Cartersville, GA
- Douglasville Campus – Douglasville, GA
- Marietta Campus – Marietta, GA
- Paulding Campus – Dallas, GA
- WellStar Development Center instructional site – Marietta, GA

Academic Divisions

- Academic Success and eLearning
- Health Sciences
- Humanities
- Mathematics
- Natural Sciences and Physical Education
- Social Sciences, Business and Education

Accreditation

Georgia Highlands College is accredited to award the Associate Degree and the Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing by the following agency:

**Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033**

The Georgia Highlands College Nursing Program is accredited by the following agencies:

**National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission
61 Broadway,
New York, NY 10006**

**Georgia Board of Nursing
237 Coliseum Drive
Macon, GA 31217-3858**

The Georgia Highlands College Dental Hygiene Program is accredited by the following agency:

**Commission on Dental Accreditation
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611**

Vision, Mission, and Goals Statement of the University System of Georgia

Vision Statement

“The University System of Georgia will create a more educated Georgia, well prepared for a global, technological society, by providing first-rate undergraduate and graduate education, leading-edge research, and committed public service.”

Mission Statement

The mission of the University System of Georgia is to contribute to the educational, cultural, economic, and social advancement of Georgia by providing excellent undergraduate general education and first-rate programs leading to associate, baccalaureate, masters, professional, and doctorate degrees; by pursuing leading-edge basic and applied research, scholarly inquiry, and creative endeavors; and by bringing these intellectual resources, and those of the public libraries, to bear on the economic development of the State and the continuing education of its citizens.

Each institution in the University System of Georgia will be characterized by:

- A supportive campus climate, leadership and development opportunities, and necessary services and facilities to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff;
- Cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender diversity in the faculty, staff, and student body, supported by practices and programs that embody the ideals of an open, democratic, and global society;
- Technology to advance educational purposes, including instructional technology, student support services, and distance education; and
- A commitment to sharing physical, human, information, and other resources in collaboration with other System institutions, the public libraries, state agencies, local schools, and technical colleges to expand and enhance programs and services available to the citizens of Georgia.

Goals Statement

The University System of Georgia will ensure access to academic excellence and educational opportunities for all Georgians by:

1. Renew excellence in undergraduate education to meet students' 21st century educational needs.
2. Create enrollment capacity to meet the needs of 100,000 additional students by 2020.
3. Increase the System's participation in research and economic development to the benefit of a global Georgia. Enhance and encourage the creation of new knowledge and basic research across all disciplines.
4. Strengthen the USG's partnerships with the state's other education agencies.
5. Maintain affordability so that money is not a barrier to participation in the benefits of higher education.
6. Increase efficiency, working as a System.

In meeting these goals, the University System of Georgia will hold itself accountable to the citizens of Georgia for the effective and efficient use of every available material resource, new technology, and human insight and activity and will charge its collective intellectual power on behalf of the state.

Institutional Statements for Georgia Highlands College

Our Purpose

To provide access to a teaching and learning environment that prepares our students to thrive in a global society.

Our Philosophy and Shared Values

The philosophy of Georgia Highlands College is expressed in the beliefs that education is essential to the intellectual, physical, economic, social, emotional, cultural, and environmental well-being of individuals and society and that education should be geographically and physically accessible and affordable.

In support of this philosophy, the College maintains a teaching/learning environment which promotes inclusiveness and provides educational opportunities, programs, and services of excellence in response to documented needs.

- Access - making programs and services available within our service area
- Student Success –placing students’ goals at the heart of what we do
- Integrity – demonstrating an ethical approach by our words and actions
- Excellence – providing the highest level of quality service and teaching
- Freedom of expression - allowing all campus constituents to share thoughts and feelings in an honorable and open way
- Inclusiveness –appreciating and incorporating the uniqueness of all individuals
- Cooperation – modeling and forming collegial and productive relationships
- Passion –inspiring others to create an environment of teaching, learning and work where all parties grow and are challenged
- Critical Thinking –making decisions informed by data and shaped by context
- Collaboration – building and fostering relationships that provide the highest mutual benefit to the college and the communities we serve

Our Mission Statement and Mission Goals

The mission of Georgia Highlands College, a state college of the University System of Georgia, is to provide access to excellent educational opportunities for the intellectual, cultural and physical development of a diverse population through pre-baccalaureate associate degree transfer programs, career associate degree programs, and targeted baccalaureate degree programs that meet the economic development needs of the region.

To achieve this mission of being a gateway to success for students, Georgia Highlands College has articulated the following goals:

- Effect quality teaching and learning focused on academic achievement and personal and professional growth.
- Provide comprehensive student services that encourage and enable all students to be successful learners.
- Engage students in a challenging atmosphere that prepares them for responsibility and leadership in an evolving global environment.
- Utilize appropriate technologies to advance programs, services and operations to support teaching and learning.
- Maintain efficient and effective administrative services and facilities to support all programs of the college.
- Foster community relationships that facilitate partnering for mutual success.

Our Vision Statement

The vision of Georgia Highlands College is to be the premier public, multi-campus institution of choice throughout our region, while serving as the state leader in transfer and retention within our sector.

Strategic Planning Goals for 2013-2016

GHC has identified three major planning goals that reflect the college's desire to thrive and grow in an environment that is focused on students and their achievement. Covering three academic years, the new Strategic Plan takes into account geographic growth of the college, continued focus on student success and ambitious goals for the future. The Strategic Plan is a living document, which will grow and adapt as the situation demands. A brief description and timeline of action items are included for each initiative.

Completion

The Complete College Georgia initiative involves all public colleges across the state; therefore, the goal of helping more students complete a degree or certificate potentially affects all Georgians. Georgia Highlands College is committed to increasing completion rates through multiple measures.

Strategies:

- Allow for the potential re-distribution of hours across curricular areas in appropriate majors to facilitate completion
- Develop new majors in innovative, interdisciplinary fields that would combine technical skills with the interpersonal and leadership skills necessary for success in the workplace
- Create supplemental instruction courses for the sciences to increase success rates
- Support traditionally underserved student populations through the financial and programmatic backing of groups such as Brother 2 Brother and Woman 2 Woman
- Expand GHC's evening pre-nursing cohort program
- Utilize data to determine academically underperforming groups and target these groups for intervention
- Develop career/advising interventions for pre-nursing students who are not succeeding in their gateway nursing courses
- Develop career/advising interventions for students who are not accepted into the nursing program
- Create a completion program for those students who have 90% or more appropriate credits towards graduation
- Routinize a reserve-transfer credit protocol
- Confer the associate's degree automatically upon a student's accumulation of appropriate credits

Infrastructure and Efficiencies

The physical integrity of our campus resources is directly related to the educational experience for students, as well as the work environment for employees. Georgia Highlands College is dedicated to finding ways to modernize and improve infrastructure while maximizing efficient use of resources.

Strategies:

- Reimagine the college's data collection process to facilitate better use of data in decision making
- Upgrade network infrastructure and increase bandwidth to improve existing services and expand distance learning opportunities
- Develop an infrastructure responsiveness plan and a comprehensive deferred maintenance plan
- Expand the college's base of personnel with grant writing experience, under the auspices of the Advancement Office and supported by professional development opportunities
- Construct and analyze database of potential external funding resources
- Create and implement a new branding and marketing plan
- Establish a college working group dedicated to infrastructure and accountability
- Analyze administrative structures and practices for potential efficiencies

Diversity and Globalization

Fostering an atmosphere of inclusion, understanding and tolerance is important to the intellectual growth of the college. Georgia Highlands College seeks to increase awareness and investigation of issues related to diversity and globalization across the spectrum of students, staff and faculty.

Strategies:

- Create more opportunities to internationalize the curriculum for students
- Name a faculty liaison for study abroad on each campus
- Explore long-term study abroad opportunities for GHC and begin to develop plans and policies to work towards this end
- Set enrollment targets for the student body that are thoughtfully developed with attention to creating a diverse student population
- Collaborate with campus/community partners and surrounding P-12 school systems to promote access to education for all students and their parents (traditional/non-traditional)
- Create a minority community advisory group for the President
- Promote the academic value of globalization/diversity among the student body
- Collaborate with the Advancement Office to raise funds to support globalization and diversity initiatives
- Increase number of enrollment management staff who speak Spanish, and target more recruitment towards Hispanic students
- Expand the college's hiring and promotion of diverse applicants through more targeted advertising in the community, more extensive and formalized development opportunities for existing employees, and more focused recruitment of a diverse part-time faculty.