
GHC

GEORGIA HIGHLANDS COLLEGE

A Unit of the University System of Georgia

The College Statutes

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Article I: The College

Section 1 – Nature of the Institution

Georgia Highlands College (the College) is a state college within the University System of Georgia (USG). The College is subject to the general jurisdiction of the Board of Regents. The term Board of Regents as used in these statutes, is in reference to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and its executive officer, the Chancellor.

Section 2 – Purpose of the Statutes

The Statutes of Georgia Highlands College set forth the philosophy, purposes, and governance of the College and outline the broad administrative structures key to the operation of the college.

The Statutes are in accordance with policies adopted by the Board of Regents. In the case of any divergence from or conflict with the official policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia found in these Statutes, the official policies of the Board of Regents shall prevail.

Section 3 – Mission Statement

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.

Section 4 – Organization of the College

Academically, the College is organized into academic schools based on disciplines of study. The Faculty Senate or Staff Council may recommend structural changes to the College to the President. The President may designate who may implement changes to the organization of the College.

The President, or designee, shall at the first college-wide meeting of the academic year, report to all employees any organizational changes to the College. In addition, at that time each chief administrative officer shall report on the creation, modification, or dismissal of any councils or advisory groups under their area of responsibility.

Article II: Administrative Organization

Section 1 – The President

The President shall be elected by the Board of Regents upon the recommendation of the Chancellor ([Board of Regents Policy, 2.1](#)).

The President of Georgia Highlands College shall be the executive head of the College and all its departments and shall exercise supervision and direction to promote the efficient operation of the College. The President is responsible to the Chancellor for the operation and management of the College and for the execution of all directives from the Board of Regents. Additional guidelines and powers are delineated by the Board of Regents and can be viewed in [Board of Regents Policy 2.6](#).

Section 2 – The Provost

The Provost shall serve as the chief academic officer responsible for maintaining an appropriate educational environment by:

- advocating for shared governance;
- exercising general control of over the academic budgets and working with the President and other vice presidents and chief administrative officers to recommend college-wide budgets;
- adjusting the organizational and reporting structures of Office of the Provost and the college's academic schools, in consultation with the President;
- creating, modifying, or disbanding councils or advisory groups within Office of the Provost;
- making recommendations to the President concerning promotion, tenure, and salary increases for faculty;
- promoting the development of academic and non-academic activities that fulfill the responsibilities assigned to the College by the Board of Regents;
- exercising general supervision over the College's curricula; and
- performing such additional duties as the President may deem appropriate to the office.

The Provost reports to the President and holds office at the pleasure of the President.

Section 3 – Vice Presidents and Chief Administrative Officers

Vice Presidents and Chief Administrative Officers are responsible for the coordination and supervision of activities assigned to their respective office.

In carrying out the duties ordinarily implied by the office, Vice Presidents and Chief Administrative Officers shall have the following specific powers and responsibilities:

- providing leadership for the office along with development and implementation of appropriate goals;
- exercising general control of over the office's budgets and working with the President and other vice presidents and chief administrative officers to recommend college-wide budgets;
- promoting the development of activities that fulfill the responsibilities assigned to the College by the Board of Regents;
- creating, modifying, or disbanding councils or advisory groups within the office;
- reporting on and recommending changes to improve the quality and efficiency of services within the office; and
- performing such additional duties as the President may deem appropriate to the office.

Vice Presidents and Chief Administrative Officers report to the President, or the President's designee, and hold office at the pleasure of the President.

Section 4 – Academic Deans

Each academic school within the College is led by an academic dean. Each dean is appointed by the Provost after consultation with the President.

Under the direction of the Provost, the dean of each academic school shall have the following specific powers and responsibilities:

- facilitating the development of and coordinating programs designed to promote the goals of the school and the College;
- recommending to the Provost an annual budget for the school and its respective divisions;
- overseeing the efficient expenditure of funds allocated to the school;
- making recommendations to the Provost concerning promotion, tenure, and salary increases for the school's faculty;
- exercising general supervision over the school's curricula;
- presiding at or delegating all meetings of the faculty of the school; and
- performing additional duties or overseeing additional offices as designated by the Provost.

Academic deans report to the Provost, or their designee, and serve at the pleasure of the Provost.

Article III – Shared Governance

Section 1 – The President’s Cabinet

The leadership of Georgia Highlands College shall be represented by the President’s Cabinet. This body shall exercise legislative power on matters dealing with the general welfare of the entire College and consistent with the Policies of the Board of Regents ([Board of Regents Policy, 2.6](#)) and shall make such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary or proper for the promotion of the mission and general welfare of the College.

The membership of the President’s Cabinet shall consist of the direct reports to the President. The President may assign any employee of the College to the President’s Cabinet for a term of the President’s choosing.

The President will chair the meetings of the President’s Cabinet. All meetings should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Georgia Open Records Act and Georgia Open Meetings Act.

Section 2 – The College Council

The College Council is advisory to the President on administrative matters pertaining to strategic planning and policy approval, and it exists to aid in college-wide information sharing.

The membership of the College Council shall consist of the members of the President’s Cabinet, deans, the chief of police, chief administrative officers, assistant vice presidents, executive directors, Faculty Senate President, Staff Council Chair, and the Student Government President. The President may assign any employee of the College to the College Council for a term of the President’s choosing.

The President, or their designee, will chair the meetings of the College Council. All meetings should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Georgia Open Records Act and Georgia Open Meetings Act.

Section 3 – Faculty Senate

The faculty shall be represented by a Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate shall be formed by the Faculty Senate Bylaws, which are approved by an affirmative vote of the Senate, affirmative vote of the Corps of Instruction, and the approval of the President ([Board of Regents Policy, 3.2.3](#)). The Faculty Senate shall have the power to adopt and amend bylaws governing its composition, organization, and procedures consistent with College Statutes and the approval process outlined above. The bylaws may provide for ad-hoc committees as needed. The Bylaws of the Faculty Senate contain a full description of its responsibilities and organization.

The Faculty Senate shall be led by a president who is tenured. The Faculty Senate shall meet and shall appoint a secretary who shall keep a record of the proceedings. All meetings should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Georgia Open Records Act and Georgia Open Meetings Act.

The Faculty Senate shall, subject to the approval of the President of the College, have the following specific powers and responsibilities:

- making statutes, rules, and regulations for its governance;
- providing committees as may be required;
- making statutes, rules, and regulations for students regarding admission, suspension, expulsion, classes, courses of study, the learning environment, and requirements for graduation; and,
- making regulations necessary or proper for the maintenance of high educational standards.

A copy of the College’s statutes, rules, and regulations made by the faculty shall be filed with the Chancellor and shall be published, implemented, and disseminated in accordance with SACSCOC regulations. The faculty shall have primary responsibility for those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process, subject to the approval of the President of the College ([Board of Regents Policy 3.2.3](#)). The Faculty Senate shall be empowered to recommend changes to standing committees.

The Faculty Senate shall function in a cooperative capacity to the President of the College, as the official representative of the Corps of Instruction regarding all matters of importance to the faculty or any other matters which the President brings before it.

Section 4 – Staff Council

The staff shall be represented by a Staff Council. The Staff Council shall be formed by the Staff Council Bylaws, which are approved by an affirmative vote of the Staff Council, an affirmative vote of the full staff, and the approval of the President. The bylaws may provide for ad-hoc committees as needed. The Staff Council shall be empowered to recommend changes to standing committees. The Bylaws of the Staff Council contain a full description of its responsibilities and organization.

The Staff Council shall be led by a chair who is a full-time staff member. The Staff Council shall meet and shall appoint a secretary who shall keep a record of the proceedings. All meetings should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Georgia Open Records Act and Georgia Open Meetings Act.

The Staff Council serves to foster a spirit of unity and loyalty among all GHC employees while advancing the mission of the College as a whole. The Council shall function in a cooperative capacity to the President of the College, as the official representative of the Staff regarding all matters of importance to the Staff or any other matters which the President brings before it.

Any motion, recommendation, or proposal having been favorably recommended by the Staff Council shall be forwarded to the appropriate administrator(s) for further discussion and approval.

Section 5 – Student Government Association

The students shall be represented by a Student Government Association. The Bylaws of the Student Government Association contain a full description of its responsibilities and organization.

The Student Government Association, based on the authority granted by the College, shall strive to ensure democratic representation and governance, act as the voice for student concerns through service on college committees, disseminate relevant information to Georgia Highlands College students, assist in the allocation and approval of student activity funds, and promote campus pride and spirit on campus and in local communities around the College.

Any motion, recommendation, or proposal having been favorably recommended by the Student Government Association shall be forwarded to the appropriate administrator(s) for further discussion and approval.

Section 6 – Committees

Since shared governance is at the heart of American public higher education and is a critical component of the accreditation process, the following committee structure is hereby established to promote involvement in the policy and decision-making process. While a policy may be initiated by the College's administration, faculty, or staff, this committee structure ensures that all voices of the faculty, staff, and students contribute to the discussion.

A. Standing Committees:

The Standing Committees of the College address concerns pertinent to the efficient and appropriate operation of the College. The Standing Committees shall review and recommend policies and/or procedures under its purview. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives shall solicit nominees from the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government Association annually. A detailed description of purpose, membership, and responsibilities of each Standing Committee is housed and managed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives in collaboration with the Office of the President.

B. Ad-hoc Committees:

Ad-hoc committees are working groups that are established temporarily to accomplish a specific task or goal of college-wide importance. The President, Provost, Vice Presidents and Chief Administrative Officers, the Faculty Senate, or the Staff Council may create ad-hoc committees. Any faculty, staff, or student, as appropriate, may serve on an ad-hoc committee. Alumni and/or community members may also serve under special circumstances. At the time of creation, any ad-hoc committee membership and charge shall be shared widely with the college community through approved GHC communication channels. Oversight of any ad-hoc committee is the responsibility of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives in collaboration with the appropriate office of the college.

Article IV: The Faculty

The faculty will consist of the Corps of Instruction and administrative officers. (*Board of Regents Policies [3.2.1](#) and [8.1.1](#)*)

Section 1 – Corps of Instruction

Full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, and teaching personnel with such other titles as may be approved by the Board shall be the Corps of Instruction. Full-time research and extension personnel and duly certified librarians will be included in the Corps of Instruction on the basis of comparable training. Persons holding part-time and adjunct appointments or other honorary titles shall not be considered to be members of the faculty. (*Board of Regents Policy [3.2.1.1](#)*)

Full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, principal lecturers, and teaching personnel with such other titles as may be approved by the Board of Regents shall be hereafter referred to at Georgia Highlands College as teaching faculty. Duly certified librarians shall hereafter be referred to at Georgia Highlands College as library faculty.

Section 2 – Administrators with Faculty Status

Administrative officers shall be appointed by the President of the College and shall hold office at the pleasure of the President.

A faculty member who has academic rank and rights of tenure in the Corps of Instruction and who accepts an appointment to an administrative office, other than President, shall retain the responsibilities and privileges of faculty membership, his or her academic rank, and rights of tenure as an ex officio member of the Corps of Instruction, but shall have no rights of tenure in the administrative office to which he or she has been appointed.

The additional salary, if any, for the administrative position shall be stated in the employment contract and shall not be paid to the faculty member when he or she ceases to hold the administrative position. (*Board of Regents Policy [3.2.1.2](#)*)

Section 3 – Other Faculty Members

In addition to the Corps of Instruction, the Faculty will consist of the President of the College and other full-time administrative officers as the College may designate as having ex officio faculty status. (*Board of Regents Policy [3.2.1.3](#)*)

Section 4 – Faculty Meetings

There will be at least two required general faculty meetings per academic year that will be scheduled by the President or the Provost. Other meetings may be called as needed by the President, the Provost, or the Faculty Senate. Notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting shall be given to each member of the Faculty at least seventy-two hours in advance of the proposed meeting.

A quorum of the Faculty shall consist of a majority of the Corps of Instruction. The Provost, or his or her designee, acts as a presiding officer. The presiding officer shall determine if a quorum is present. The presence of a quorum shall be necessary for the conduct of any business of the Faculty.

Meetings shall comply with the Georgia Open Records Act and the Georgia Open Meetings Act. (*Board of Regents Policy [3.2.3](#)*)

The presiding officer will provide a secretary who will take and archive the meeting minutes in accordance with USG Records Retention Schedule.

Section 5 – Academic Freedom

The College endorses the principles of academic freedom expressed in the Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities issued by the American Council on Education in 2005 and endorsed by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

Section 6 – Promotion and Tenure

Members of the Corps of Instruction shall engage in the promotion process at the College as defined by [Board of Regents Policy 8.3.6](#). A full description of the promotion process shall be included in the GHC Policy and Procedure Manual.

Members of the Corps of Instruction at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher shall engage in the tenure process at the College as defined by [Board of Regents Policy 8.3.7](#). A full description of the tenure process shall be included in the GHC Policy and Procedure Manual.

Article V: Staff

For Georgia Highlands College to be successful in its instructional and service mission, it is essential to have quality and competent staff supporting faculty. Staff employees shall consist of two major employee groups A) staff professional and administrative employees and B) staff non-exempt and defined as follows:

- A. Staff Professional and Administrative Employees are exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities. (This group does not include faculty or graduate assistants); and
- B. Staff Non-Exempt Employees are not exempt from the federal wage-hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). (NOTE: The University System of Georgia position classification system includes the appropriate FLSA status in the “Master List with Definitions and Guidelines.”)
- C. Classified Employees shall consist of the Staff Professional and Administrative, and Staff Non-exempt employees as defined above.
- D. Student Employees are considered temporary. (Board of Regents, [HR Policy on Position Classification.](#))

Article VI: Policies and Procedures

Section 1 – GHC Policy and Procedures Manual

The Georgia Highlands College Policies and Procedures Manual contains all policies and procedures under which the College operates. These are approved by affirmative vote of the President's Cabinet and acceptance by the President. All policies and procedures, or their amendments, must be sponsored by the President, Provost, a Vice President or a Chief Administrative Officer, Faculty Senate President, or Staff Council Chair.

The [Board of Regents Policy Manual](#) of the University System of Georgia should be consulted for human resources information concerning employment and resignation, tenure, removal of tenured faculty members, removal of non-tenured faculty, leaves of absence, outside employment, and all other personnel-related matters. Copies of the *Board of Regents Policy Manual* are maintained in administrative offices and are available on the University System of Georgia website.

GHC Policy and Procedure Manual offers detailed descriptions of the operations and procedures at the College and is maintained on the College's website. These handbooks are maintained on the College's intranet and in administrative offices. In the case of conflicting policy, the Board of Regents Policy Manual will prevail.

Section 2 – Employee Handbook

The purposes of the Employee Handbook are to orient new faculty, staff, and administrators, i.e. all employees, to the policies and procedures of the College and to serve as a ready reference for all employees. The Employee Handbook shall contain specific details concerning matters related to employment and administrative processes. It shall be amended by an affirmative vote of the President's Cabinet and acceptance by the President. The Employee Handbook will be shared widely with all employees through the College's website.

Section 3 – Student Handbook

The purposes of the [Student Handbook](#) are to orient new students to the policies and procedures of the College and to serve as a ready reference for all students. The Student Handbook shall contain specific details concerning matters related to student life and governance. It shall be amended by an affirmative vote of the President's Cabinet and acceptance by the President. The Student Handbook will be shared widely with all students through the College's website.

Article VII: General Provisions

Section 1 – Adoption

Statutes and any subsequent amendments or modifications shall be adopted by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds vote of the Corps of Instruction and shall be in effect upon approval by the President.

Section 2 – Amendments to Statutes

Amendments of these Statutes may be proposed by the President, the President’s Cabinet, the College Council, any member of the faculty, Faculty Senate, Staff Council, standing committees, or ad-hoc committees. Proposed amendments shall be submitted, in writing, to the Faculty Senate and shall be reviewed by the College Council, the Staff Council, and any other appropriate committees. All feedback shall be submitted to the Faculty Senate for consideration.

Upon approval of the Faculty Senate, the proposed amendment, in its final form, shall be posted and distributed to the Corps of Instruction no later than five working days prior to a vote. Voting shall occur either:

1. at the next meeting of the Corps of Instruction following latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order
or
2. by means of electronic balloting independent of a meeting, with no fewer than five working days to cast an electronic vote.

Approval requires a two-thirds vote of the Corps of Instruction. Approved amendments shall become effective after their approval by the President.

Section 3 – University System of Georgia Notification

After amendments to the statutes are approved by the two-thirds of the Corps of Instruction and the President, the statutes shall be submitted by the President to the Chancellor ([Board of Regents Policy, 3.2.3](#)).

Section 4 - Posting of Statutes

Statutes are publicly posted on the College website and accessible in hard copy through the Office of the President. Amended versions must be retained as a matter of public record. The Statutes and approved amendments are posted on the Georgia Highlands College website for faculty and administrative staff awareness.

Section 5 – Interpretation of Statutes

The President determines the interpretation and resolves conflicts of jurisdiction. Appeals may be made to the Board of Regents in accordance with their Policy Manual. If such an appeal is not provided by policies of the Board of Regents, the decision of the President shall be final.

Section 6 – Board of Regents' Powers

The Board of Regents retains the power to modify, amend, or repeal Statutes. These statutes are subject to the by-laws and policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and any provision, rules, or regulations in conflict therewith shall be null and void.

Subsequent changes are automatically incorporated, with corrections distributed by the Office of the President.

Revision and Ratification Dates

November 9, 2006	Revised and approved by the Board of Regents
August 7, 2014	Amendments approved by the Faculty and the Board of Regents
February 2, 2015	Amendments approved by the Faculty and the Board of Regents
August 24, 2018	Amendments approved by the Faculty
October 1, 2019	Revised and approved by the Faculty and the Board of Regents
April 12, 2024	Revised and approved by the Faculty Senate
April 26, 2024	Amendments approved by the Faculty
April 29, 2024	Amendments approved by the President
June 6, 2024	Revised per Board of Regents suggestions
October 24, 2024	Revised per Board of Regents request for notification only