



## DALTON STATE COLLEGE

### INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

The *mission* of Dalton State College (DSC) is to provide a diverse student population with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to attain affordable baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, and certificates and to reach their personal and professional goals. Through challenging academics and rich collegiate experiences, the college promotes lifelong learning, active leadership, and positive contributions to produce ethical and knowledgeable citizens who contribute back to society. The vision is to establish DSC as a first-choice destination college.

In pursuit of that goal, DSC offers targeted four-year and two-year degrees and career certificate programs, along with a wide variety of activities that engage students in local community businesses and industries. Each of the College's five Schools (Business, Education, Health Professions, Liberal Arts, and Science, Technology, and Mathematics) forges important partnerships to inspire students to be active members within their professions and communities.

Dalton State has expanded programs and maintained rigor in its academic offerings. During academic year 2018-2019, the college added three minors and four pathway programs. The Wright School of Business will offer minors in Business Analytics and in Financial Technology (FinTech) in collaboration with other colleges and universities within the system. The School of Science, Technology, and Mathematics added a minor in Sustainability, while the School of Education received approval to offer a post-baccalaureate pathway for certification in teaching History, English, Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry. Three other concentrations in Biology will allow majors to select pathways in General Biology, Environmental Biology, or Pre-Health Sciences.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, Dalton State became the first college in Georgia to attain the status of being a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), enrolling 27% Hispanic/Latino students in Fall 2017. To date, Dalton State remains the only college in Georgia with that designation, with the percentage of Hispanic/Latino students rising to 29.2%. The student population remains one with a preponderance of first-generation attendees (51%), with 63% of the students receiving Pell grants. The adult learner population remains relatively small at 7%. Enrollment remained flat for the 2018 AY, demonstrating a 0.9% decrease for a total student population of 5,118. However, between 2008 and 2018, the college reported a 3.2% overall increase in students, largely due to the growth of the dual enrollment program. During that same period, there was a 39% increase in degrees awarded, and the number of bachelor's degrees awarded rose by 222%. For AY 2018, there was a slight increase in the number of graduates (817), which represented an increase of 1% over the previous year.

The demographics of DSC are consistent with those of an access institution with a population of students who come to college as part of a new generation of learners in their families. They often work full- or part-time to contribute to their households and to cover tuition, fees, and textbooks. They often "stop out" due to the stresses of balancing academic and family life. Surveys conducted over the past several years by the Motivate Lab identify DSC students as ones who feel DSC is their "home," struggle with balancing their academic and work lives, and are proud to be the first in their families to attend college. A variety of systematic outreaches has been employed over the past year to address their needs as novice college students. Many of these are evolving as both students and faculty explore new methods of pedagogy and as support services are expanded. This report highlights those approaches and, when possible, measures progress.

### MOMENTUM YEAR UPDATE

Engagement in the Momentum Approach has expanded as more teams across campus are involved with its design and execution. The Dalton State teams represent faculty and staff from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The key elements of purposeful choice, productive academic mindset, clear pathways, heightened academic engagement, and completing critical milestones are incorporated into different aspects of DSC's development plan (Appendix A). Each of the elements listed above remains in the developmental stage as faculty and staff work through the special attention required. Although implementation of approaches to address these key indicators is underway, most are in the novice phase.

The outreach for purposeful choice has received the most attention through the new one-credit Perspective (PRSP) courses for first-year students, initiated during the last academic year (Appendix B). Space constraints on campus were especially challenging and limited the number of students who could enroll in these courses. Due to construction on campus, classroom space limited enrollment to 202 students. These courses utilized themes to engage students in exploring complex problems and were

designed to deepen student understanding of an array of issues relating to culture, society, creative expression, or the human experience and helped to create the academic expectation that inquiry and exploration are critical parts of college-level academics.

In Fall 2018, the college piloted ten PRSP courses with at least one section in each school. Through a focus on college-level writing and critical thinking, the objective was to acclimate students to college-level coursework using the Perry Model of Intellectual Development, which highlights four stages of development in critical thinking. The PRSP courses guide students through the first three stages of intellectual development. While these courses cannot address all aspects of critical thinking, the pilot served as an academic foundation for 202 first-year students, with plans to assist all freshmen when classroom space becomes available. A secondary goal of the PRSP courses was to implement instructional strategies designed to effectively promote student learning outcomes. Instructional strategies in PRSP included dynamic lecturing, granting students time to think and reflect, encouraging and actively managing participation, building a classroom community, and providing opportunities to work collaboratively on group projects.

Analysis of data indicated that of the 202 students enrolled, 157 students successfully completed the course with a C or better, 7 students received a grade of D, 23 students received an F, and 16 withdrew. The overall GPAs of students who were enrolled in the PRSP courses did not differ substantially from those that did not enroll. However, students in the PRSP courses attempted more course hours (14) as opposed to those who did not (10). Course surveys revealed that students found the course material interesting and engaging. Students appreciated learning about other students' opinions and points of view. Interaction with their classmates was one of the most positive aspects of the course. Almost all the student comments centered on the characteristics of the instructors. Students noted faculty who taught the courses were enthusiastic and excited about the material and cared about them as people, not just as students. Students described the classroom environment as one where they were encouraged to participate and where they were treated as valued members of a community. PRSP courses will be offered again in Fall 2019, and a small cohort of the students in the 2018 courses will be followed to determine retention and progression.

## **OTHER INSTITUTIONAL HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES**

The effects of High-Impact Practices (HIPs) on persistence and graduation in the general literature support the notion of engagement on a variety of levels such that students feel a sense of purpose and retain knowledge at higher rates (Kuh, 2008). To that end, DSC's HIPs committee has actively engaged faculty through workshops and activities that support integration of HIPs into coursework. Over the past academic year, the committee has accomplished a great deal in both educating faculty on the use of HIPs as well as providing support for their inclusion in courses. The summary of activities is as follows:

- Ninety-five faculty/staff members attended the fall faculty HIPs workshop, and 61 attendees indicated that they believed they understood more about high-impact practices, the philosophy behind them, and how they fit into Dalton State College's future. Four faculty members from across the campus presented on how they have implemented high-impact practices in their own courses.
- Twenty-nine faculty/staff members attended one or more of the three HIPs workshops during the fall semester. These workshops were designed to introduce attendees to what HIPs are, the research behind them, and the eight quality criteria for HIPs and invite them to select a course they wanted to make a HIP and one HIP they would like to implement. These workshops were led by faculty/staff members who had completed HIPs training and had successfully implemented high-impact practices into their courses.
- Six faculty/staff members who attended the HIPs workshops in 2017-2018 attended a workshop in the fall semester on how to assess the impact of HIPs and introduce them to the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL).
- Fifteen faculty/staff members attended one or more of the three HIPs workshops during the spring semester.

Within each school, the percentage of faculty who have infused at least one HIP into their courses has been impressive. In some cases, these percentages reach 100% especially in those schools whose curriculum lends itself to these types of pedagogy. The School of Education and the School of Health Professions utilize experiential learning, fieldwork experiences, and capstone projects throughout most of their curricula. However, the other schools have also incorporated these high impact activities along with study abroad and undergraduate research opportunities.

In the School of Science, Technology, and Mathematics, faculty-student research projects accounted involved 16 faculty and more than 32 students. A complete listing of those projects can be found in Appendix C. In addition to the research projects, student exposure to experiential learning opportunities, internships at partnering local industries along with capstone projects were also part of

the HIPs in which students were engaged. Although this represented only 34% of the faculty, the impact on student engagement was remarkable.

In the Wright School of Business, 100% of the faculty utilized at least one HIP in their classes. These included team projects, faculty-student research, case presentations, flipped classrooms, plant tours, and competitions. A similar percentage was reached in the School of Education. Seventy-one percent of the faculty in the School of Health Professions and 70% in the School of Liberal Arts incorporated at least one HIP in their classes. At least 14 Liberal Arts faculty specifically noted in their annual reports their use of high-impact practices in multiple courses, with 29 students participating in internships and all graduates participating in capstone projects.

Although there is a great deal of engagement in this area, there are several issues that will be addressed in the coming academic year. These include efforts to

- Continue to inform the DSC campus about high-impact practices and the importance of HIPs for DSC students. More specifically, the HIPs Committee plans to expand its efforts to educate DSC faculty/staff about the specific criteria that make a high-impact practice truly HIP.
- Continue the “Train the Trainer Model” and expand efforts to invite other faculty/staff to become more involved in the HIPs initiative across campus.
- Review, revise, and complete the current draft of the HIPs guidebook.
- Work with Dr. Theresa Butori, the new director for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, to create online modules for DSC faculty/staff that are unable to attend the fall/spring HIPs workshops.
- Create and implement a credentialing system for DSC faculty/staff implementing HIPs in their courses. These courses would receive a special designation in Banner, allowing students to more conscientiously choose which course experiences they wished to have. This would also allow the committee to collect important data on the impact of HIPs across campus.
- Develop a system in which data can be collected to assess whether the outcomes of HIP classes are truly having an impact on student performance.

#### *Additional Activities*

Other activities to support the goals of Complete College Georgia include the use and expansion of Open Educational Resources (OER) texts, course redesign for both Math and English core curricula, intrusive advising, development of partnerships with local industry, increased study abroad opportunities, focus on new faculty skill building through the New Faculty Academy (NFA), the Chancellor’s Learning Scholars program, the honors program, and civic engagement through the newly established Office of Governmental Affairs.

The USG system continues to support initiatives that address college cost and affordability through **Open Education Resource (OER)** texts. Over the past several years, DSC has applied for and received multiple grants and mini-grants. Appendix D provides a table of those Affordable Learning Grants (ALG) awards in conjunction with number of students affected by OERs funded by ALG grants. The grants were awarded in past years but, as column 5 indicates, the already created or adopted OERs are still being used and will continue to be used. At least 5,338 total students were involved in the use of ALG-funded OERs. This does not include use of OERs that are non-funded by ALG. Over \$500,000 in textbooks savings accrued in the case of ALG-funded OERs. In official data provided by the Affordable Learning Georgia in late spring 2019, Dalton State has been awarded \$191,640 in grants, has saved students \$3,212,000 in textbook costs, and has affected 18,823 (duplicated) students. The ratio of investment to ROI in these projects is \$1/\$16.76. Dalton State was ranked #6 in the USG in ALG grant outcomes—not just in the college sector, but in all sectors. See <https://www.affordablelearninggeorgia.org/about/powerbi>.

To raise awareness of OERs, a webinar was held in January 2019 by Dr. Barbara Tucker, who has taken on the role of OER facilitator. An archived version was made available for those that could not attend. Six faculty using OERs served on a panel to discuss their experiences. Additionally, articles and many announcements about ALG grants, OpenStax, and OER research were disseminated through email and DSC’s peer-reviewed *Journal of Academic Excellence*.

- An IRB-approved survey on OER use and understanding by DSC faculty was conducted in 2018. The results of that survey are indicated below:
- 60 respondents; 85% full-time tenured/tenure track/lecturer status.
- 76.6% indicated familiarity with OERs (higher than national averages).
- 41.7% (26/60) indicated that they used OERs in their classes. Disciplines in STM, Education, and Liberal Arts top the list.

- 41.7% (26/60) stated they saw OERs as equal or better in educational value than traditional textbooks. Accessibility and reduced costs were viewed as the best qualities of OERs; 80% said they were aware of ALG grants.
- Professors in Chemistry, Literature, and American history use OERs without grant-funding.
- A spreadsheet that includes the responses of the survey can be found at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FOEkpQOZ3hY9gd1IoVguQIvtq3zoLgp8qxOMIJIJSIE/edit?usp=sharing>
- A copy of the survey itself can be found at <https://forms.gle/ac5NhmG3SZkZ3A9u9>

With regard to ALG grant activity during the 2018-2019 academic year, three mini-grants were awarded to faculty in the School of Liberal Arts for improvements to currently existing OERs from previous grants. This adds to the total of 19 grants and mini-grants awarded to DSC. In terms of large-scale grants, DSC appears to have reached a plateau. Despite this fact, faculty are still saving hundreds of thousands of dollars for DSC students, with many positive outcomes in learning and retention, as seen in the table in Appendix E. Additionally, three specific projects have attained global attention: Dr. Zhou/Mr. Brown's compiled book on educational theories, Dr. Burran/Dr. DesRochers self-created BIOL 1107/1108 lab manuals, and the Department of Communication's self-created COMM 1110 textbook. The table below provides outcome data on the effects OERs had on student success.

#### **Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants—Outcomes**

Area	Grant Activity	Outcomes
<b>American Government</b>	No-cost materials used in a required core course	In the 2016-17 academic year in which no-cost materials were used, the DWF rate fell from 17% to 11%. Cost savings to students was particularly substantial since this is a required core course.
<b>Communication</b>	2016 OER grant for a basic public speaking required course	Completion with C or better increased from 78% in 2015 to 88% in 2017-18. In the two years of use, the textbook has saved \$200,000 for students.
<b>Psychology</b>	Psychology professors piloted use of OER	The average GPA for students in PSYC 1101 increased from 2.66 to 2.86 two semesters after the implementation of the OER text, a 7.6% increase.
<b>School of Education</b>	Adoption of OER text	Students rated their OER text (5-point scale): Access to Learning Material 4.69, Content 4.71, Cost 4.83, and effectiveness in helping them learn 4.8.

Emphasis for the upcoming academic year will be on dual enrollment courses in an effort to reduce costs for the college as well as the student.

#### *G2C Course Redesign*

The college's G2C Steering committee and MATH 1111 and ENGL 1101 Redesign Committees completed the first year of the course redesign process which is overseen by the John Gardner Institute. The college's Comprehensive Plan was accepted and included a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) for ENGL 1101 and MATH 1111 as this initiative moves forward. The cross-course recommendations are all situated in the G2C Principles and involve aspects of course structure and teaching approaches/pedagogies, monitoring student performance, and faculty development. As such, the following recommendations were made by the working subgroups and accepted by the John Gardner Institute staff.

#### Course Structure and Teaching Approaches/Pedagogies

- Employ strategies to foster growth in students' academic mindset
- Reduce class size
- Integrate or embed academic/supplemental support
- Incorporate "small teaching" activities and assignments
- Monitoring Student Performance
- Monitor "at risk" student behaviors that might influence DFWI rates
- Faculty Development
- Offer department-specific faculty development

In the next phase of the G2C-related work at Dalton State College, faculty teaching sections of ENGL 1101 and MATH 1111 that include course redesign elements will have the opportunity report what they are doing and the extent to which they are doing it. Once

these data are entered, faculty involved in the process and members of the Steering Committee and Course-Specific Committees will be able to compare outcomes in redesigned and non-redesigned sections of the courses; this will be particularly helpful as faculty determine what practices, if any, they wish to scale (Appendix F).

### *Intrusive Advising*

Advising has undergone a great deal of development over the past year as the new director reshaped and monitored activities to ensure compliance with the Momentum Year and G2C. The advising model is a hybrid model with the director aligned in academic affairs and professional advisors assigned and housed within specific academic schools. With only 7 professional advisors, caseloads remain high and averaged 408 in the fall and 360 in the spring. Faculty members in most schools advise upper classmen. Transactional terminals registered 4,754 office visits with current students, plus an estimated 1,300 walk-ins and non-admitted student visits. There were 39,607 contacts via email and approximately 1,318 by phone. An advising budget was created for FY 2019, which supported travel for six of the staff to regional and state advising conferences.

Students are advised about the appropriate course selections for graduation requirements. Professional advisors counsel students on relevant areas such as DSC policies and procedures and standards for scholastic achievement and perform degree audits using DegreeWorks and Banner. Face-to-face student contact is encouraged to build relationships, but the main mode of communication continues to be email due to the demographics of the student population. All professional advisors use an electronic appointment scheduler to improve the ease of access and transparency of availability. Additionally, expanded registration campaigns with phone calls, flyers, computer stations in the hallway, and opportunities in the residential hall were implemented Spring 2019. Success in these early registration efforts resulted in 200 more students registering during the first week.

The USG Momentum Year goals have guided several activities in advising. To address purposeful choice, Dalton State continued its process to identify and guide incoming undecided students. The “undeclared” option was reinstated on the application. Through contact by the director of advising, 84 students were able to select a major that best aligned with their current goals. Students who did not respond to outreach prior to orientation were required to choose a major during orientation. The professional advising staff were charged with the task of following up with all students through advising sessions and special invitations to specific career program opportunities such as “Find your Fit, Find your Future” and referrals to Career Services.

To support growth mindsets in advising, professional advisors conducted intensive reviews of their individual email communications utilizing the *wise feedback* suggestions provided by Motivate Lab. The director of advising attended the USG Mindset Summit and returned with potential approaches for a faculty committee to develop a workshop on implementing growth mindsets in the classroom.

Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) were developed for each degree program. These full-time degree maps include 30-credit hours in the first year (including Area A English and Math and specific coursework in the program of study when possible). Critical coursework and milestones have been included. The GPSs were pressure tested during Spring 2019 to discover areas of concern. These tests identified some scheduling conflicts and ambiguities with upper-division course offerings. The college recently was awarded a Title V grant that will allow the institution to purchase software that should optimize the scheduling of classes to improve the pathways.

The average first-time student attempted 11.6 hours in Fall 2018. While below the 15-credit hour goal, professional advisors have worked with incoming freshmen during orientation on expectations. Professional advisors pre-enrolled all incoming freshmen following the pathways. An orientation registration survey was used to assist professional advisors with pre-enrollment. Questions included information on transfer or dual enrollment credits and intentions to work and potential work schedules. Orientation presentations included information on the potential degree programs of that school, reading a class schedule, what a college schedule might look like, and tips for success in college. Based on plans generated from the Momentum Summit on transition programs, orientation sessions were added in a computer lab for learning to access key tools with a specific session for transfer students.

With the new academic standing policy that was implemented during the 2017-2018 academic year, advising created an academic success contract which encourages at-risk students to identify barriers to success and then create a course of action (Appendix G). Implementation of academic success contracts through one-on-one meetings between professional advisors and at-risk students began in Fall 2018 with 146 contracts signed, followed by 111 in the Spring. Questions reflecting more growth mindset have been added for Fall 2019.

An analysis of reasons for withdrawal from courses can be found in Appendix H. The most consistent reason for fall and spring semesters was to protect the student’s GPA, with work and academic difficulties ranking closely in second and third place. Outreach to faculty to utilize the academic alert system was initiated with the goal of increasing its usage this upcoming academic year. It is hoped that by identifying students early, processes can be put in place to increase success.

### *Partnerships with Local Industry and the Community*

Each school has developed and maintained partnerships in the community in an effort to provide more enriched academics outside the classroom as well as offer students opportunities to engage on a professional level with leaders in their respective fields. In schools such as Education and Health Professions, the curricula are specifically based on these interactions to support the course outcomes. The School of Health Professions has more than 71 MOUs with different agencies in which students are placed. These MOUs support the clinical aspects of the health profession experience and are critical to the success of students in each of the programs. The School of Education has partnerships with the Dalton Public Schools and the Whitfield County Schools. In both school systems, DSC has obtained state grants that support work related to literacy and parent engagement. Teacher candidates work within the communities and the school districts with parents and children to reinforce learning throughout the school year. The Professional Development Schools (PDS) in both systems allow DSC faculty to teach on site at the school; students then have the opportunity to apply what they learned immediately in the classroom.

The School of Science, Technology, and Mathematics has made great strides in partnering with corporations to provide students with internships. These include large manufacturers as well as local environmental units and include entities such as MFG Chemical and the Tennessee Aquarium. Each semester MFG Chemical hosts the Organic Chemistry classes for tours of their facility and hires current students as interns. MFG currently employs six DSC graduates in full time positions. The School also partners with the Tennessee Aquarium, 8 zoos, 2 federal and several state agencies, 7 non-governmental organizations, and SUNY-Oswego on the American Turtles SAFE Program (<https://www.aza.org/aza-safe>). This partnership provides multiple opportunities for students to participate in research projects related to animal husbandry, conservation, and genetics. Through DSC's partnership with the aquarium, two graduates have been placed there as full-time employees and 10 students have received paid internships. In addition, the School has 30-50 partnerships at any point in time to provide students with experiences that support and enhance the curriculum.

Similarly, the Wright School of Business, in opening its DIA (Dalton Innovation Accelerator) in downtown Dalton, has provided students with invaluable interactions with many of the titans of local industry. The Accelerator has provided students with opportunities to discuss innovative ideas with leaders in the Dalton area. In addition, the WSOB has an MOU with Freightwaves and teaches its Sonar freight futures software to the Logistics and Supply Chain students. This training allows students critical experiences while addressing local industry needs. Upon graduation, DSC students are able to move into positions in a seamless manner with employers having to spend less time teaching these skills after they are hired.

Most recently, the DSC students had the opportunity to compete in a statewide competition through Freight Tech. This experience enabled students to engage with other private and public institutions across the US. The team placed third in this competition and demonstrated the strength of the WSOB Logistics and Supply Chain program.

The Criminal Justice program in the School of Liberal Arts has multiple arrangements with local law enforcement to provide experiences for students in an effort to offer a view of the legal system in a manner that supports curricular goals. Students are provided guest lectures by local law enforcement and interact with many of the agencies in the community. In the Department of Communications, the concentration in film has enabled students to engage on a professional level through the Georgia Film Academy in an industry that is growing exponentially. Students are provided opportunities to work on professional movie sets and with leaders in film and production. All these activities provide students with purpose in their coursework and add to successful retention.

### *International Education*

Students can no longer conceive of work in any of the programs at DSC without considering the global effects of their major. The newly re-organized Office of International Education (OIE) has provided opportunities for both faculty and students to engage in studying globally. Through its participation in the Nine University Consortium, faculty and students have received financial support to study in Africa and Asia. The full annual report of the OIE can be found in Appendix I. Two faculty were supported to study business in Africa while two students were provided similar opportunities in Japan through the consortium. On its own, DSC continued to offer study abroad to London and Paris for its education students as well as Peru for its business students. The accomplishments during the 2018-2019 academic year included the development of an international certificate which was issued to four students, two in business, one in education and one in liberal arts. DSC will also be part of the new program Georgia Goes Global (G3) which will work in tandem with programs DSC already offers. This system driven initiative will commence this coming academic year. The effects that experience in international venues have on students is often life altering and provides students with new passions and commitments to their study at DSC. The financial commitment remains a barrier for most students, but it is hoped with G3 and possibly some increased funds through the DSC Foundation more students will be able to take advantage of this important aspect of academic learning.

### *New Faculty Academy Outreach*

In a grassroots effort to build and sustain a future workforce of faculty who utilize different methods of pedagogy, understand student learning obstacles, and offer opportunities for professional growth, DSC embarked upon a New Faculty Academy (NFA) that begins with a basic orientation and provides monthly meetings on a variety of aspects of teaching and learning. This academy guides them in employing teaching and learning techniques that the evidence indicates improves instructional excellence, student retention, and assists students in progressing towards graduation and their career goals. Cross-disciplinary sessions explored various aspects of teaching and learning proven to improve retention and student success. These included strategies for motivating students towards studying and course preparation, designing transparent assignments that help a student appreciate what is required of them, encouraging a positive academic mindset in students, using classroom assessment techniques to help their students assess their progress through a course with prompt in-class feedback, imbedding High Impact Practices where possible in a particular course, effectively using classroom discussion techniques that address or promote equity for all students, building interactive and effective lectures, and incorporating classroom response systems and inquiry-based learning for student engagement, among others.

An assessment of the process was carried out in order to determine the impact on the faculty as well as identify areas that might be improved for future iterations of the academy. A group of 15 new faculty members participated in the first year-long academy. Eleven of the 15 new faculty completed the academy with perfect or near-perfect attendance. Of the 20 major topics included throughout the year, faculty agreed or strongly agreed that 17 of them were relevant or useful to the development of their teaching and learning (4.5 out of 5 or greater). The program was rated a 4.6 out of 5 overall. During the end of year reflections that were presented, faculty indicated significant innovations in teaching as well as other benefits from the program including the social supportive benefits from participating in a cohort program (Appendix J). When new faculty members were asked whether these were useful and relevant to them as a new faculty member, 14 out of 15 new faculty indicated that the academy significantly improved their confidence in their position. All had implemented between one to five of the evidence-based techniques covered within their classroom with all having plans for future adoption. Techniques adopted included implementing “small teaching” changes, modifications to course design, classroom assessment techniques, high impact practices, and adopting classroom response systems like Kahoot, a game-based learning platform.

In addition, new faculty were observed teaching throughout the year and offered confidential personal consultations with a teaching and learning expert to guide their modification of their classroom experience and 3- to 5-year action plan. All participating faculty rated the observation of teaching and personal consultation at a level of 5 out of 5, noting that it highly assisted their course development and creation of goals towards further changes. A pre-test, post-test analysis of familiarity and comprehension of the evidence-based teaching and learning techniques covered throughout the year showed an average improvement of 56% correct answers at post-test compared to pre-test, with a range from 12% to 100% improvement in correct answers. In summary, this program was highly successful based on a variety of criteria and will be offered again utilizing the same design during the 2019-2020 academic year.

### *Chancellor's Learning Scholars Program*

The new system-wide program that supported faculty to develop learning communities in their individual institutions was initiated during the 2018-2019 academic year. Five scholars, one from each school, were identified. Faculty worked either in pairs or on their own to address a particular learning pedagogy in a manner that would expand throughout the faculty base. Three different communities were generated; two on small teaching and one on academic mindset. Groups were cross disciplinary and permitted reflective exchanges among the groups supporting learning outcomes that were not necessarily specific to one program or school. These groups will continue in the 2019-2020 academic year with the addition of one new scholar. The outcomes of learning communities on changes in pedagogy are well documented. Progress as these communities expand will be monitored along with their effects on student success.

### *Honors Program*

During the 2018 academic year, the college appointed a coordinator for the newly established Honors program. The coordinator subsequently named an advisory board to provide input into the development of the program. A total of 108 new freshmen with a 3.5 unweighted grade point average and a 21 on the ACT or a 1080 on the SAT were invited to apply. Thirty applications were received, and 20 students were accepted into the inaugural cohort. Of the 20 students who were accepted, 17 completed their first semester in the Honors Program. Among the three students who did not complete the first semester in the Honors Program, one did not attend Dalton State College, one was called to active military duty, and one decided not to be a part of the program. In the Fall 2018 semester, BIOL 1107K, COMM 1110, HIST 2111, PSYC 1101, POLS 1101, and ENGL 1101 were offered as honors sections. These courses were taught by seven faculty members. For the Spring semester, PSYC 3325, CHEM 1211K, BIOL 1108K, ENGL 2130, HIST 2111, MATH 2254, ENGL 1102, BIOL 3510K, BHEM 1212K, COMM 1110, and BIOL 1108K were offered as honors

sections, with eight additional faculty joining the cohort of those teaching the sections. Future plans include academic opportunities to attend other structured outreach programs including those both on and off campus. In addition, a monthly meeting of all honors students will occur to build a community of learners and strengthen their academic growth.

### *Governmental Affairs*

The college established the Office of Governmental Affairs (OGA) in January 2019. During a very short period of time, 16 students participated in a job shadowing program that was initiated by its director. In addition to the job shadowing, trips to the capitol provided other faculty and students with interactions with state legislators and information regarding processes as bills progress through the system. Moving forward, students will be given the opportunity to apply for the Governmental Leadership Intern Program (GLIP). This will permit students unique experiences to work closely with a designated legislator for a full semester. Access to high level legislative speakers to individual classes occurred and will continue into the coming academic year. A new oral history project through the Library and the Bandy Heritage Center commenced in fall 2019 with funding from outside community agencies. The OGA is providing students with real world timely experiences that draw and expand content in the classroom. The new civic engagement project which is being developed in conjunction with Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will work closely with the OGA to provide both content and participation.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

### **Successful and Less Successful Strategies and Activities**

The implementation of high-impact practices, the expansion and continued use of Open Education Resources, the New Faculty Academy, the Chancellor's Learning Scholars Program, and the use of intrusive advising have been especially successful. In particular, the "train the trainer" approach used by the High-Impact Practices Committee and the Chancellor's Learning Scholars has led to more widespread participation, with most schools showing faculty participation rates of 70% or greater. The G2C Course Redesign is on track, with successful completion of all year 1 activities and requirements. The full impact of the new Perspectives courses cannot be determined until the college can begin requiring the course of all incoming freshmen, something that cannot be done until Fall 2020 after the renovations of the classroom buildings are fully complete. The guided pathways initiative has been somewhat less successful. While the advising team and faculty devised guided pathways for full-time students in all majors, more than 30% of the college's population attend part-time, and pressure tests revealed some problems with upper-level sequencing. These issues are being addressed this year through the development of guided pathways for part-time students and through the purchasing of new scheduling software.

### **Plans for the Coming Year**

The college will focus on the following activities during the coming year:

- The High-Impact Practices Committee will work to increase faculty understanding of the eight quality matrices required to meet high impact practice standards.
- The ENGL 1101 and MATH 1111 Redesign Committees will pilot the action plans that are detailed in the college's Gateway to Completion Comprehensive Report and continue to assess the effects on student learning.
- The Chancellor's Learning Scholars Program will be expanded to include addition faculty learning communities.
- The Honors Program will include additional hours of student volunteer service and engage in monthly meetings to build a stronger community of learners.
- The advising team will continue its work with guided pathways, developing these for the college's large part-time student population, and expanding support to assist undecided students in selecting an appropriate major and degree path.
- The college will purchase scheduling software with funds from a Title V grant to improve course scheduling which should aid progression and reduce problems identified in the guided pathways pressure tests conducted in the spring.

## **STUDENT SUCCESS AND COMPLETION TEAM**

The following individuals will participate on Dalton State's Student Success and Completion Team:

**Dr. Adrian Epps**, Interim Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

**Dr. Jodi Johnson**, Vice President for Vice President  
for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

**Dr. Mary Nielsen**, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts



**Ms. Elizabeth Hutchins**, Director of Advising

**Ms. Katelyn Humphrey**, Assistant Director of  
Recruitment and Orientation

**Mr. Matt Hipps**, Associate Professor of Political  
Science and Coordinator of Student Transitions