



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STUDENT BODY PROFILE

The University of Georgia—a public, research, land- and sea-grant institution with commitments and responsibilities to the entire state of Georgia—is the birthplace of public higher education in the U.S. It is the state’s oldest, most comprehensive and most diversified institution of higher education with more than 10,000 faculty and staff members and over 39,000 students (undergraduate, graduate and professional, enrolled in 17 schools or colleges). It offers 24 Baccalaureate degrees in more than 140 areas and, pre-COVID, hosted more than 250 study abroad, exchange programs, and field school opportunities. UGA is committed to providing a superior teaching and learning environment, to serving a diverse student body, and to promoting student success.

There is no single undergraduate student profile at the University of Georgia. Rather the institution welcomes diverse students with widely varying backgrounds, interests, experiences, and challenges. The typical UGA undergraduate is of traditional age (≤ 24 years), enters as a first-year student, lives on campus for the first year, and is seeking a first undergraduate degree. In addition, UGA is admitting more transfer students each semester. In Fall 2019, the total undergraduate population numbered 29,848 students, the vast majority of whom hailed from the state of Georgia (88% vs. 11% out-of-state and 1% international). The majority of undergraduate students (94%) were enrolled full time; 57% were female; 30% (self-reported) were of racial/ethnic minority status; 19% were Pell-eligible; 7% were first-generation; and 3% were over the age of 24.

The demand for a UGA degree has risen dramatically in recent years. For the class matriculating in Fall 2019, the Office of Admissions saw a 18% increase in the number of applications since 2018 and enrolled 5,625 students, with an average ACT score of 31 and high school GPA of 4.02. The Office of Student Financial Aid disbursed a total of \$396,692,539 of federal, state, institutional, and other/external programs to 29,184 unique undergraduate students (20% of whom received a Federal Pell Grant with over 200 students self-identifying as independent, i.e., former foster youth, wards of the court, orphans, homeless or with legal guardians).

UGA is among institutions with the highest retention and graduation rates nationwide; they surpass those of our comparator peers and exceed or are on par with our aspirational peers (see Appendix A, Tables 1-3). It has an exceptional first-year retention rate of 94.4% (2019 cohort) which is down from the 95.5% for the 2018 cohort—a dip that we attribute to disruptions caused by COVID-19. The average time to degree has steadily declined from 4.10 years (students who graduated in 2011) to 3.95 (students who graduated in 2020, see Appendix A, Table 4). The six-year completion rate increased slightly to 87.2% (from 87.1%) for the 2014 cohort, and the four-year completion rate increased dramatically to 71.4% (up from 68.7%) for the 2016 cohort. We attribute a significant portion of this increase to the Double Dawgs programs that provide pathways for students to graduate more quickly from a Bachelor’s program and advance directly into a Master’s program.

This year UGA expanded the New Approaches to Diversity program to promote the recruitment, retention, and academic success of underrepresented, first-generation, rural and other traditionally underserved students. To increase affordability, we eliminated all lab and course material fees, and we tripled private financial support for graduate students who encounter unexpected hardships.

Among public universities, the University of Georgia is one of the nation’s top three producers of Rhodes Scholars (24 over the past two decades). UGA is also home to hundreds of major scholarship winners, including: 1 Churchill Scholar, 2 Beinecke Scholars, 7 Gates Cambridge Scholars, 7 Marshall Scholars, 60 Goldwater Scholars, 21 Truman Scholars, 18 Udall Scholars, 56 Boren Scholars, 5 Schwarzman Scholars, 3 Mitchell Scholars and 143 Fulbright Student Scholars.

UGA’s challenging learning environment and innovative programs continue to garner national attention and recognition. U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Colleges” edition for this year ranked UGA 15th among public universities; Kiplinger Magazine ranked UGA 16th among the 100 Best Values in Public Colleges; and the New York Times ranked it 10th in their College Access Index.

UGA's comprehensive degree programs, in concert with its innovative learning environment, demonstrate that UGA—thanks to its faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends—is creating leaders who are shaping the future of our state, nation, and world.

IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES

The teaching and learning environment at UGA features a large number of the high-impact practices identified by AAC&U; those most widely used include a first-year experience (our award-winning First Year Odyssey Seminar that is required of all first-year students), Launchpad (a living/learning community for first-year students focused on entrepreneurship), global learning, service learning, internships and undergraduate research opportunities.

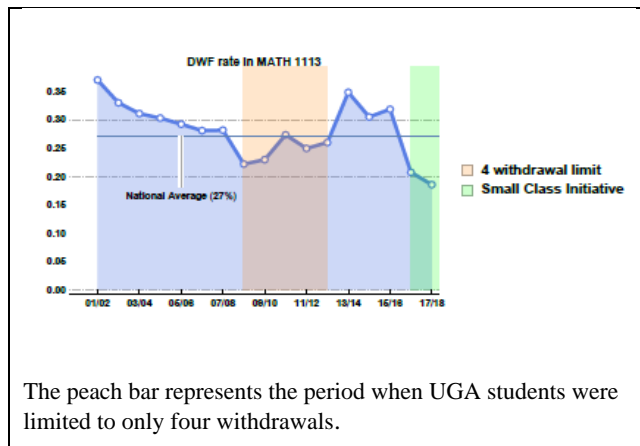
A distinctive feature of every UGA undergraduate degree is the Experiential Learning (EL) Requirement which began in Fall 2016. Between Summer 2016 and Summer 2020, 35,152 unique students completed 89,457 approved EL activities. UGA students meet the requirement by engaging in creative endeavors, study abroad and field schools, internships, leadership opportunities, faculty-mentored research and service-learning; in addition, UGA students will now have the opportunity to gain real-world experience in connection with the new Innovation District for EL credit. With the requirement for experiential learning, UGA took the bold move of recognizing that today's students need flexibility around what, how, where and when learning happens.

In Fall 2017, UGA made another bold move by launching the Double Dawgs pathways to enable students to earn both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in five years or less. To date, UGA has approved 217 Double Dawgs pathways and has 1,108 unique students enrolled in the pathways. We attribute the dramatic rise in the four-year completion rate to the impact of the Double Dawgs pathways and will continue to track these students to measure and assess the impact of this rigorous program.

The 2017 President's Task Force on Student Learning and Success made a number of recommendations to enhance teaching and learning on campus, including the wider adoption of strategies to promote active learning in more courses and the renovation of traditional classrooms to accommodate active learning and other evidence-based pedagogies. To support this recommendation UGA has spent over \$2.5 million to transform traditional classrooms into active learning spaces. In addition, the Active Learning Summer Institute has trained 55 faculty in active learning strategies, prompting course redesigns in 55 courses/sections across the curriculum affecting 27,552 students (see Appendix B, Table 1). Highlighted here are results from CHEM 1211 and 1212, both of which have dramatically decreased their DFW rates through the implementation of active learning strategies and the use of PLAdawgs (UGA's peer learning assistants sponsored through a STEM grant from the USG). Between Fall 2016 and Spring 2020, the DFW rate in CHEM 1211 decreased from 34.5% to 13.1%; even more remarkable was the decrease in DFW rates for CHEM 1212 over the same time period: from 44.8% to 7.9% (See Appendix B, Table 2).

The PLAdawgs program has put peer learning assistants in several other STEM classes with positive results. Through Propensity Score Matching, students in sections of STEM courses with PLAdawgs were determined to have performed statistically significantly higher (between 0.02 and 0.13 better, on a 4.0 scale) than their counterparts in sections taught by the same instructor but without the peer learning assistants. Based on these results, we hope to be able to expand this program.

Despite the size of its student population, UGA maintains small class sizes, having on average 31 students per class with a 17:1 student-to-instructor ratio. The Small Class Size Initiative (SCI) is keeping that ratio low. The SCI reduced class sizes by hiring additional faculty and creating more than 300 new course sections in high-demand classes, bottleneck courses and courses that historically have had high failure rates. This allowed us to increase overall enrollment in several of those courses while simultaneously reaping the benefits of small class size in terms of student success. For example, the Mathematics department received SCI funds to add sections of pre-Calculus and Calculus classes with enrollments capped at 19. The results are excellent



(see figure to left and Appendix B, Table 3). UGA students in MATH 1113 are failing or withdrawing from these courses at rates below the national average; equity gaps for race and gender are narrowing (note in particular that the DFW rates for Black/Latinx/Multiracial students are now on par with that for White and Asian students); and more students are progressing into the next course in the sequence on schedule and completing it successfully. The SCI is also producing positive results for PHYS 1211 and ENGR 1120 in both of which we were able both to increase overall enrollment and increase the class GPA. In addition, with the smaller class sizes the percentage of incompletes steadily declined in PHYS1211 and the withdrawal rate declined in ENGR1120 (see Appendix B, Table 4).

Although we are still seeing equity gaps in several STEM courses, the early gains in Math, Chemistry, Physics and Engineering offer models going forward, as does our targeted peer tutoring in STEM courses which we instituted this year. Assessment data for that program shows that peer tutoring is having a very positive impact; for example, in Fall 2019, students who attended 10+ sessions experienced an increase from their self-reported midterm grades to their final course grade of, on average, 1.8 for MATH and 2.0 for CHEM on a 4.0 scale.

Clearly UGA has built a vibrant, world-class learning environment which, thanks in part to innovations such as the Experiential Learning requirement, Double Dawg pathways, and other special initiatives, is attracting the very best students from across the state and nation and around the world. It is equally clear that they are flourishing here.

MOMENTUM UPDATE: OBSERVATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

SECTION 3.1 EXISTING MOMENTUM WORK

PURPOSEFUL CHOICE

Strategy or activity	The online Orientation Intake Survey launched in Summer 2019 and continued in summer 2020. Each student had to submit the survey before their New Student Orientation appointment. The survey asks students about their choice of major and how confident they are that it is the right major for them and includes the questions from the Holland Interest Inventory. This information is then uploaded to SAGE (our campus-wide online advising tool) so a student's advisor has that information to help guide that first one-on-one advising appointment during Orientation.
Summary of Activities	This strategy is fully implemented. We will continue to tweak the questions in future years as needed.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	In Summer 2020, approximately 96% (up from 80% in 2019) of incoming students completed the survey. This high rate of response means both that the vast majority of students are reflecting on their choice of major before they even begin to register for classes and that advisors have access to important information before students arrive for their first advising appointment. Approximately 19% (down from 22% in 2019) of students matriculating in Fall 2020 were neutral, unhappy, or very unhappy with their major choice. Those students' advisors were able then to start a conversation about majors at Orientation and, if appropriate, refer them immediately to the Exploratory Center for counseling with a specially trained advisor about a major. Students who ultimately decided to switch majors thus avoided accumulating extraneous credit hours.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	The survey is very useful in getting important information into the hands of advisors and creating a space where students are prompted to reflect intentionally on their choice of major even before they register for their first class. We are pleased with the results and will continue to use the survey as a strategy to promote intentional choice among our students.
Changes because of COVID-19	One modification caused by COVID-19 was the pivot to a fully remote New Student Orientation during summer 2020; this meant that crucial information was available to students in the online pre-orientation modules and remained available even after they matriculated at UGA. Advisors reported that students were much better prepared for their orientation advising appointments and better able to articulate their questions or concerns about their choice of major and other issues. This enabled advisors to concentrate on critical questions such as major choice and career aspirations and not spend so much time on technical issues.

TRANSPARENT PATHWAYS

Strategy or activity

We clustered our 140+ majors into seven meta-majors: creative, leadership, service, life, technology, culture and nature. These seven groups reflect very broad conceptions of post-UGA aspirations and are aligned to specific programs of study. They are based on the overlapping core and pre-requisite courses for each major so students stay on track for 4-year graduation if they change majors within a meta-major. They also take into account the Holland Interest Inventory (which students take as part of the Intake Survey, see above).

Life
Applied Biotechnology (B.S.A.B.)
Avian Biology (B.S.A.)
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (B.S.)
Biological Science (B.S.A.)
Biology (B.S.)
Cellular Biology (B.S.)
Communication Sciences and Disorders (B.S.Ed.)
Consumer Foods (B.S.F.C.S.)
Environmental Health Science (B.S.E.H.)
Exercise and Sport Science (B.S.Ed.)
Food Science (B.S.A.)
Genetics (B.S.)
Microbiology (B.S.)
Pharmaceutical Sciences (B.S.)
Poultry Science (B.S.A.)
Psychology (B.S.)
Animal Health (B.S.A.)
Animal Science (B.S.A.)
Athletic Training (B.S.Ed.)
Dairy Science (B.S.A.)
Dietetics (B.S.F.C.S.)
Health Promotion (B.S.H.P.)
Nutritional Sciences (B.S.F.C.S.)
Honors Interdisciplinary Studies (B.S.A.)

The meta-majors respond to the maturation of students’ interests / goals over their 4-year tenure at UGA. For example, within the Life meta-major, a student who falls into the “Social” category on the Holland Inventory (purple on the chart to the left) may find that a B.S. in Dietetics, Health Promotion or Nutritional Sciences would be a better fit than the B.S. in Biology which is an “Investigative” major (orange on the

chart).

Summary of Activities	We launched the meta-majors in 2018 in the Exploratory Center and have been organizing our majors fair around them since then.
Outcomes/Measures of progress	We do not currently track this but will begin to do so as soon as the meta-majors are more widely accepted across campus.
Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	We have learned that we need to offer training to our academic advisors on how to use the meta-majors, and we need to promulgate them among undergraduate students. In addition, we need to work with partners across campus to incorporate the meta-majors in more career fairs, student affairs events, and other campus-wide activities.
Changes because of COVID-19	COVID-19 required moving our majors fair online which is making the meta-majors better known among both advisors and undergraduates.

ACADEMIC MINDSET

Strategy or activity

We created a **unique UNIV curriculum within the Division of Academic Enhancement:** UNIV 1201, UNIV 2301 and a suite of literacies courses. This curriculum gives students opportunities to obtain skills that lead to success in college and beyond, including learning how to learn, motivation, critical and creative thinking, decision-making, identity development, wellness, career choice and academic mindset.

Summary of Activities

This strategy is fully implemented and the UNIV courses are fully enrolled (508 students).

Outcomes/Measures of progress

Responses to our pre- and post-surveys indicate that many students are recognizing their ability to improve and do well. Here is a representative sample of the kind of response we are seeing: “[I was] encouraged ... to form my own hypotheses about things work and then ask ... if I'm correct, which helped a lot with my confidence and I am no longer afraid of being wrong.” Next step is to do a sentiment analysis on these comments and continue to track students’ changing attitudes about their ability to succeed.

Lessons Learned and Plans for the Future	The curriculum informs students about academic mindset and gives them the tools to develop a growth and entrepreneurial mindset. At present, the curriculum is at capacity and cannot be scaled up. The Division of Student Affairs is developing a curriculum within Housing and we will be working with them to include this work on academic mindset.
Changes because of COVID-19	The sudden pivot to remote instruction in March 2020 prompted us to create the eLC Experience, an online non-credit “course” designed to equip students with the resources and strategies needed for success in virtual and hybrid classes. The course, based on UNIV 1205E (Learning Online: Strategies, Skills, and Success), draws on online learning and student development research to help students be successful in this setting. Every undergraduate and graduate student was automatically enrolled so that it appeared on their D2L dashboard when they logged in. Over 10,000 unique students engaged the eLC Experience and a revised version was opened this fall.

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND OBSERVATIONS

The Orientation Intake Survey is working exactly as planned, has been supported by New Student Orientation and fully embraced by our academic advisors. The UNIV curriculum is also very effective at not only informing students about academic mindsets but also equipping them with the tools to develop a growth and entrepreneurial mindset. We still have some work to do to take full advantage of the meta-majors, but that work has begun. UGA faculty and staff have adapted to the disruptions to instruction caused by COVID-19 and have undertaken a number of innovative strategies to engage students in a more remote environment. The eLC Experience “course” has been a timely and effective tool to put in the hands of students to help them be successful and to navigate this changing learning landscape.

SECTION 3.2 FOLLOW UP FROM MOMENTUM SUMMIT III - “CAMPUS-WIDE” MOMENTUM APPROACH ACTIVITIES (BEYOND THE CLASSROOM)

PURPOSE

Priority Work	The Exploratory Center (EC)
Description of Activities	The EC opened in Fall 2016. Seventeen advisors currently advise intended-business majors, intended-journalism majors, and exploring students—those who are undecided about a major or are considering changing their major.
Activity status and plans for 2020	This strategy is fully implemented and will continue moving forward.
Lessons Learned	In Fall 2019-Summer 2020 the EC advisors had 14,358 appointments. Given that volume of traffic, it had to create an online referral system, host group discussions for exploring students with Career Center counselors, and give presentations to student groups across campus to increase awareness of the center and prepare students to have a productive one-on-one appointment with their EC advisor.

MINDSET

Priority Work	Academic Coaching
Description of Activities	UGA students are very well-prepared, and failure is inconceivable to most of them. But the demanding pace of a research institution like UGA often poses significant and unexpected challenges for our students, many of whom have never experienced any kind of failure. Academic Coaching offers UGA students the opportunity to meet with certified and trained Coaches to discuss their pathways to success. Academic Coaching empowers students to identify their strengths, explore evidence-based study strategies, reflect on their own learning and ultimately develop a growth mindset. Typically, the coach and student work together over four sessions to create a strategic learning plan—one that lays the groundwork for awareness of what strategies and practices will be necessary for success in UGA’s academic environment.

Activity status and plans for 2020	Given the success of the initial pilot, we began scaling the program within the Division of Academic Enhancement and then expanding it to some of the colleges. We hope to introduce certified coaching in two other colleges in 2020-21.
Lessons Learned	An impact report from 2018 found an average increase of 0.73 in term GPA for students who participated in Academic Coaching. During the 2018-2019 academic year, coaches met with 744 unique students over 1,227 visits; during the 2019-20 year, the number of visits grew by 16%. COVID-19 moved all coaching appointments online. Preliminary data from Spring 2020 suggests that remote coaching was just as effective as in-person coaching.

PATHWAYS

Priority Work	Holistic Degree Maps are being created for all programs of study to provide students with a holistic, longitudinal view of their chosen major. Each map will address attainable, appropriate action items across all aspects of the college experience: academics, experiential learning, community engagement, global competencies, wellbeing and career preparation. Charting a course through these milestones will deepen the purposeful choice process and outline clear pathways through a major toward graduation. The maps demonstrate the interconnected nature of each aspect, and the value of building on each prior year's experiences as students move through their time at UGA.
Description of Activities	The Holistic Degree Maps for the majors within the Mary Frances Early College of Education are finished and available online. Other majors are producing their maps using the template developed for the Education degrees.
Activity status and plans for 2020	Over 130 maps still need to be created and, given the disruptions caused by COVID-19, it is difficult to establish a realistic timeline for completion.
Lessons Learned	Advisors within disciplines find it challenging to reach consensus on what should be included; partners within Student Affairs and Career Services are providing critical assistance.

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES "BEYOND THE CLASSROOM":

Increasing financial access: an important focus of our recently completed \$1.2 billion capital campaign was to remove financial barriers for our students. Donations to the campaign created over 500 endowed scholarships, totaling a commitment of more than \$77 million to help students from low-income backgrounds earn a degree.

Success: this year the Division of Student Affairs launched the Office of Student Transitions Student Transitions to provide dedicated support, in coordination with campus partners, for key times of student transition, offer additional targeted transition support for identified student populations and create new transition programming, including a Student Affairs program for new students to help them succeed, grow as individuals and find their place at UGA.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND COMPLETION TEAM

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