

Georgia College Public Safety certified by Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police

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Ed Densmore, GACP; Major Brian Freese, GCPD; President Cathy Cox, GCSU; Chief Wes Hardin, GCPD; Dr. Kerry Stallings, USG. (Gil Pound/GCSU)

On Tuesday, the Georgia College & State University Department of Public Safety achieved state certification through the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police, reaching a level attained by only 15% of law enforcement agencies across the state.

The GACP State Certification Program gives law enforcement agencies a blueprint for effective, professional law enforcement by laying out best practices and defining standards.

“This certification means that our officers and personnel are committed to accountability, transparency and to continuous improvement, just as we are in every department on this campus,” Georgia College President Cathy Cox said.

“This is not just a win for Georgia College Public Safety, but equally for the stakeholders and the community this agency serves,” said Dr. Kerry Stallings, police chief for the University System of Georgia.

As shared by GACP State Certification Coordinator Ed Densmore, applying agencies must meet well over 140 standards set forth by GACP to become accredited. Applications advance through multiple levels of review, including a certification committee of 12 senior command staff from accredited agencies around the state as well as a joint committee of four chiefs of police and one sheriff representing agencies that have attained accreditation.

“Certification means an agency is holding itself to the standards expected by the state of best practices and policies,” Densmore said.

Once a law enforcement agency applies for certification, it has three years to complete the process.

“We were lucky enough to do it in less than two, which says something for the hard work that our deputy chief, Maj. Brian Freese, has put in,” said GCSU Public Safety Chief Wes Hardin. “A lot of the credit also goes to our frontline officers, our frontline supervisors, our dispatchers and people who work behind the scenes. It does not matter how pretty policies and procedures are. Our men and women have to live and practice them every day.”

This marks Georgia College’s second public safety certification obtained in less than a year after being certified as StormReady® by the National Weather Service in September 2025.