

# Georgia College unveils 100% online AI Strategy master's degree — no computer science background required

A new Master of Science in AI Strategy degree — an innovative program meant to equip individuals from any background with the skills to harness the power of emerging technology in any business or industry — is coming to Georgia College & State University.

The program was recently approved by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and is currently accepting applications for the fall 2026 class.

"This is not a software engineering program," said GCSU President Cathy Cox. "Instead, this degree will give students a holistic understanding of how AI can help make operations more efficient and boost ROI across industries. A business that is trying to find the right AI solution for its needs will want to hire a graduate with this degree."

The demand for AI-savvy professionals continues to grow nationwide, with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting more than 300,000 AI-related jobs to be created annually through 2034.

The AI Strategy degree — which comprises 30 credit hours and can be completed in one year on a full-time enrollment plan — will blend the

liberal arts principles of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, complex problem solving and effective communication with an understanding of enterprise operations. Students will emerge from the program with the tools they need to leverage artificial intelligence — one of the most consequential workforce transformations in history — to benefit their business.

"The graduates this program produces won't just know how to build AI systems, they'll know what those systems mean, who they affect and how to make them serve human ends," said Dr. Ward Risvold, assistant professor of business communications and director of The AI Lab at GCSU, who already leads undergraduate AI courses at the university, as well as AI training workshops for faculty, staff and workforce development groups. "That's what a liberal arts foundation gives you that a coding bootcamp never can."

Georgia College has also established partnerships with leading enterprise software platforms including Celonis, SAP, IBM WatsonX, UiPath and Base44, according to Dr. Jeannie Pridmore, chair of Information



**Fouts Bros Inc. President and CEO Scott Edens, left, with Fouts employee and GCSU alumnus Grant Motley on the factory floor. Fouts Bros is investing in enterprise level AI solutions and Edens plans to hire interns from the new Master of Science in AI Strategy program.**

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Systems & Computer Science in GCSU's J. Whitney Bunting College of Business & Technology.

"These enterprise technology partnerships give students hands-on experience with the same AI platforms used throughout industries," Pridmore said. "Graduates of our Master of Science in AI Strategy program will be prepared for high-impact roles like AI Solutions Architect, Enterprise AI Consultant

and AI Product Manager in industries including healthcare, finance, retail, consulting and government."

Designed for working professionals, the master's degree is offered fully online with flexibility in mind. Applicants are not required to hold a computer science degree, as the curriculum is structured to teach foundational machine learning frameworks from the ground up.

The program also offers optional in-person experiences and study abroad opportunities.

The AI Strategy degree will be offered through the university's Department of Information Systems & Computer Science, which is fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The program is also fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

GCSU's College of Business & Technology earned multiple top rankings in U.S. News & World Report's 2026 Best Colleges list, including No. 1 in undergraduate business programs in Georgia among all public schools in the 12-state regional South, No. 2 undergraduate computer science program in the same category, and No. 2 master of business administration degree in Georgia.

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