

**REPORTS FROM THE 23 JANUARY 2026
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT— CATHY COX, PRESIDENT

1. BOARD OF REGENTS UPDATE

- a. The Board of Regents held its first meeting of the new year with a new board chair, David Dove, a partner at the Atlanta law firm of Troutman Pepper and the former executive counsel to Governor Brian Kemp. GCSU's former provost, Dr. Costas Spirou, now the USG Chief Innovation and Entrepreneurial Strategies Officer, presented to the Regents "USG Student Entrepreneurs Leading the Way," and featured GCSU December 2025 graduate Will Means in the group of students whose work was highlighted. Means, who earned his degree in finance, has developed an app that provides assistance to students in managing their class schedules, coursework, projects, and like. His app is now being sold in the Apple store and is under review by Google for sale.
- b. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Regents proposed and approved a change to the policy regarding use of standardized tests for admission so that the Classic Learning Test (CLT) would be added to the acceptable tests at some USG institutions – including GCSU. The proposal, which the full Board of Regents approved, was as follows:
 - i. "The Board of Regents directs the USO Division of Academic Affairs to develop a policy on the use of the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admissions purposes, in addition to the SAT/ACT. The policy should be presented to the Board at its February 2026 meeting and apply to students seeking admission beginning Fall 2027. The policy should be designed for all test-optional USG institutions and test-mandatory USG institutions, with the only exceptions being University of Georgia and Georgia Institute of Technology. For these two institutions, only SAT/ACT will be used for admissions purposes at this time. However, it is the goal of the Board to pursue a data-driven approach and after adequate CLT-related admissions and student success data are available, the Board will make further considerations related to the use of CLT across all institutions within the USG."
 - c. (We will await further instruction and direction from the Academic Affairs Office at the USG at the February meeting as to how this policy change will be implemented.)
 - d. The Regents also approved a change to Board Policy 8.3.4.1 proposed by the Committee on Personnel and Benefits regarding the definition of a voluntary resignation by faculty.
 - e. The policy changes are highlighted in yellow, below:
 - i. 8.3.4.1 **Notice of Voluntary Resignation by Tenured Faculty**

All Any tenured faculty members employed under written contract for the fiscal or academic year shall give at least 60 calendar days written notice

of their intention to resign to the direct supervisor as well as the President of the institution or his or her designee.

That requirement notwithstanding, any faculty member employed under written contract for the fiscal or academic year who is absent for 10 or more consecutive business days without approval from the faculty member's direct supervisor may be considered to have abandoned the position and voluntarily resigned from the institution. If the institution determines that the faculty member has done, so, it must notify the faculty member in writing and give the faculty member an opportunity to respond. Each institution must have a process to review extenuating circumstances of the absence.

- f. Following the approval by SACSCOC in December of the consolidation of East Georgia College with Georgia Southern University, the Board of Regents gave final approval to the merger within the University System of Georgia. The Board updated Bylaw 1.6 to strike East Georgia College from the list of USG State Colleges and amended BOR Policy 2.8 Institutional Mission to add "state college" as a secondary function of Georgia Southern University and eliminate East Georgia College as a state college/associate dominant, select bachelor's institution. There are now 25 institutions in the USG.
- g. The Chancellor noted in his report to the Board that the USG had requested significant funds in the state budget to accommodate growth in system institutions (and GCSU should be in line for new growth funding in the next fiscal year), and was awaiting release of the Governor's proposed budget to the General Assembly to determine whether the Governor would support all the funding requested by the USG.
- h. [Note: Two days following the BOR meeting when the governor's budget was released, the \$5 million proposed by the USG for renovation of GCSU's Arts & Sciences building was not included in the Governor's proposed budget. GCSU will therefore have to lobby the legislature on its own to obtain these renovation funds.]
2. **STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS** The annual State of the University Address will be held on Friday, February 6, at 2:00 PM in Russell Auditorium. A reception will be held immediately following on the lawn in front of Russell Auditorium.
3. **HOMECOMING** Homecoming festivities will take place Monday, February 16 through Saturday, February 21. This year's theme is "Ignite the Thunder: The Bobcat Games." Throughout the week, students, faculty, staff, and alumni can enjoy Winter Olympic-style games, activities, office decorating, alumni gatherings, the Homecoming Parade, Tent City, athletic events, and much more. With events for all ages, Homecoming 2026 promises a fun, spirited, and unforgettable experience for the entire Bobcat community. For more information, please visit <http://gcsu.edu/homecoming>.
4. **SPRING COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**
 - a. This Spring we will hold four commencement ceremonies to honor our May and August 2026 graduates. These ceremonies are divided by college, and each ceremony includes graduate and undergraduates. Please note, the ceremonies have moved to new weekday time slots.

- b. Ceremony dates and times are:
 - i. **College of Health Sciences**: Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 2:00 PM (Faculty check in by 1:15 PM)
 - ii. **College of Education**: Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM (Faculty check in by 6:15 PM)
 - iii. **College of Business and Technology**: Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 10:00 AM (Faculty check in by 9:15 AM)
 - iv. **College of Arts and Sciences**: Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 3:00 PM (Faculty check in by 2:15 PM)
- 5. **WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS IN FLAG FOOTBALL, AGAIN!**
 - a. The Georgia College men's flag football team – the Hawgzilla – won the 2026 National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NRSA) tournament in early January, beating NC State for the National Championship. This was the fourth time our men's flag football team had captured the national championship over the past six years. Andrew Oliver was named an All-American and most valuable player. Marcus Prestwood and Nash Darley were also named All-Americans. Additionally, Joe Brewster won the award for most tackles.
 - b. Our women's team was very competitive in the national tournament, reaching the quarterfinals and losing to the University of Central Florida. The competition was held on the campus of Rice University in Houston, Texas.
 - c. We look forward to recognizing the success of our flag football teams and students in the coming weeks.
- 6. **SAVE THE DATES**
 - a. ***State of the University Address***
Friday, February 6, 2026
2:00 p.m. – Russell Auditorium
 - b. ***Homecoming***
February 16 – 21, 2026
www.gcsu.edu/homecoming
 - c. ***Faculty and Staff Service Recognition Brunch***
Friday, March 6, 2026
10:00 a.m. – Magnolia Ballroom
 - d. ***Spring Family Day***
April 11, 2026
West Campus
 - e. ***GCSU Research Day***
April 15, 2026
Magnolia Ballroom
 - f. ***Celebration of Excellence***
Friday, April 17, 2026
9:00 a.m. – Russell Auditorium
 - g. ***Midnight Breakfast***
Monday, May 4, 2026
9:45 p.m. - The MAX
 - h. ***Spring Graduate & Undergraduate Commencement Ceremonies***
Centennial Center

College of Health Sciences	Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 2:00 PM
College of Education	Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM
College of Business & Technology	Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 10:00 AM
College of Arts & Sciences	Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 3:00 PM

PROVOST'S REPORT — HOLLEY ROBERTS, PROVOST

1. PROVOST'S OFFICE UPDATES

- a. **USG POLICY CHANGES** effective January 13, 2026 (see attached on policy changes):
 - i. Board Policy 2.8 Institutional Mission
 - ii. Board Policy 8.2.9 Insurance
 - iii. Board Policy 8.3.4.1 Notice of Resignation by Tenured Faculty
- b. **USG RESOLUTION ON THE CLASSIC LEARNING TEST** - *Resolution approved in January 2026 Board Meeting*
 - i. *The Board of Regents directs the USO Division of Academic Affairs to develop a policy on the use of the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admissions purposes, in addition to the SAT/ACT. The policy should be presented to the Board at its February 2026 meeting and apply to students seeking admission beginning Fall 2027. The policy should be designed for all test-optional USG institutions and test-mandatory USG institutions, with the only exceptions being University of Georgia and Georgia Institute of Technology. For these two institutions, only SAT/ACT will be used for admissions purposes at this time. However, it is the goal of the Board to pursue a data-driven approach and after adequate CLT-related admissions and student success data are available, the Board will make further considerations related to the use of CLT across all institutions within the USG.*
- c. **PUBLIC CV** All instructional faculty must have their CV publicly available through SimpleSyllabus. This requirement was due on the first day of class for spring semester, Monday, January 12, 2026. If you have questions, please check with your department chair.
- d. **PUBLIC SYLLABI** All core IMPACTS and education course instructors must have their course syllabus available in SimpleSyllabus, based on USG policy, for spring 2026 semester. Fall 2026- Syllabi information about all course sections should be available at the time of registration, which begins March 9, 2026. ALL faculty should submit their syllabi in Simple Syllabus on or before February 23, 2026 at noon for department chair approval. All syllabi should be published to the public prior to March 9, 2026.
- e. **CURRICULUM** The graduate program, Master of Science in Applied Artificial Intelligence, from the Bunting College of Business & Technology is currently at the University System Office in the review process with the Integrated Academic Review Team.
- f. **Mission Statement** The revised mission statement is currently at the University System Office in the review process with the Integrated Academic Review Team.
- g. **SEARCHES**

- i. John H. Lounsbury College of Education Dean search will begin very soon. The Provost's Office is finalizing details on the selection of a search firm. The anticipated start date will be July 1, 2026.
- ii. The Bunting College of Business & Technology Dean search is complete, and a finalist was selected. The pre-employment process is near completion, and an announcement will be forthcoming soon.
- iii. Search will soon begin for an Assistant Vice President for Graduate and Research. Dr. Mark Pelton will lead the search.
- h. **ASPIRE MEETING** Georgia College's ASPIRE meeting with the Provost and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Ashwani Monga, will occur on March 2, 2026 – discussion items will include the following: Top 5 strategies for student success, potential new academic programs that are under consideration, programs requiring focused attention – low enrolled and low award programs that are categorized at Unsatisfactory Performance and At-Risk Performance.
- i. **TITLE II RULE UPDATE** Dr. Jim Berger and Brian Watson are collaborating to ensure university compliance of the Department of Justice Title II Rule Update (April 2024)-In April 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an updated rule for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which applies to state and local government entities, including public educational institutions. This rule clarifies that web accessibility is a fundamental requirement under the ADA. The update explicitly requires public entities to ensure digital content and services are accessible to individuals with disabilities, adopting the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA as the technical standard for compliance. Importantly, smaller institutions serving fewer than 50,000 individuals have until April 2027 (three years from publication) to achieve full compliance with these requirements.
- j. **GCSU WELLNESS DAY**, a signature experience of the QEP: Bobcats FIRST, will be held Tuesday, March 3, 2026, for students, faculty, and staff. The Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Life will be hosting this activity filled day, with Assessment Morning and Wellness Afternoon. Classes are redirected to the activities of the day. Please remember that **no instructional time will be lost**. We look forward to seeing you all at Wellness Day!

2. **COLLEGES AND LIBRARY**

a. **COLLEGES OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

- i. **Philosophy, Religion, & Interdisciplinary Studies** Dr. Sunita Manian's book manuscript has been accepted by Routledge press for publication.
- ii. **Art** January 14 to February 11, 2026: Exhibition by Joseph Guay in the Dorothy Leland Gallery
- iii. **Music** January 26 @ 7:30pm: Piano recital by Dr. Yoshiko Arahata, Max Noah Hall
- iv. **Government and Sociology** January 27th @ 5pm, A&S 363Film Screening & Discussion: No Mas Bebes - Newell Scholar, Dr. Janelle Pham.

b. **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

- i. **GCSU Teacher Recruitment Fair** (Friday, January 30th): Over 50

schools/school districts will be in attendance.

- ii. **Deal Center Mini-Grants:** Made possible through the generous funding from the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy, \$10,000 was granted to 12 different projects. Grant recipients include: 24 junior elementary education teacher candidates; 6 CoE faculty members, and 3 MAT graduate students.
- iii. **John H. Lounsbury Distinguished Lecture Series on American Education** (this is the 8th lecture; first time the lecturer is from GCSU)
 - 1. Thursday, February 5th at 6:00 pm in Peabody Auditorium
 - 2. Lecturer: Dr. Harold Mock

c. **COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

- i. Georgia College & State University's nursing program has earned recognition as one of the best in 2026 by RegisteredNursing.org. #1 **Ranked Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program in Georgia:** <https://www.registerednursing.org/articles/best-psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner-pmhnp-programs-in-georgia/#show>
- ii. Multiple authors from the College of Health Sciences published a paper on responses from ChatGPT related to common health questions patients might ask in the deep south. <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/jphds/vol5/iss3/6/>

d. **COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY**

- i. **Business Incubator Grant** The Knight Foundation awarded a grant of \$130,000 to the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship to support creation of a Business Incubator.
- ii. **Dr. Mohammad Jizi** has been ranked among the top 1.67% accounting researchers by Scholars GPS. Additionally, he was ranked among the top 1.95% for governance research and 2.51% for sustainability research.
- iii. **Upcoming Events**
 - 1. Donuts and Dogs Day – Mon Jan 26th 9:00-11:00 a.m.
 - 2. Executive Forum – Feb 2nd 5:30 p.m.
 - 3. GCSU Wit Day – Fri Feb 20th
 - 4. Atkinson Honors – Thurs Apr 9th 6:00 p.m.

e. **UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**

- i. **Affordable Learning Georgia Grant** Faculty interested in applying for an Affordable Learning Georgia (ALG) grant should submit their intent to apply form to the Office of Grants and Sponsored Projects (OGSP) no later than February 26. Application review and feedback from OGSP is available between March 2-6; final documents are due to OGSP on March 18. For more information, please contact Paula Knight, library champion for ALG at paula.knight@gcsu.edu or ext. 1693.
- ii. **Print Collection** Due to ongoing reconstruction, some items from the library's print collection have been removed from the shelves and temporarily placed in storage. Items currently in storage are listed as Unavailable in the GIL Catalog. Copies of removed titles can be requested from other USG libraries through GIL Express. Contact the Access Services desk for assistance.

3. **SCHOOLS AND HONORS COLLEGE**

a. **THE GRADUATE SCHOOL**

- i. **Graduate Academic Standing** The Graduate School is piloting a program that will use the Graduate Academic Standing data as an early-alert tool to identify students who may benefit from targeted support to improve their GPA and return them to good standing, as well as students who may be unsuccessful and at risk of continued academic difficulty.
- ii. **Graduate Student Withdrawal** Currently gathering and organizing spring 2026 graduate student withdrawal data. A Spring 2026 communication plan of tailored emails and personal calls to encourage re-enrollment for summer 2026 and fall 2026 will be launched.
- iii. **Graduate Research Travel Grants** The Graduate School is accepting Graduate Research Travel Grant applications for the spring cycle of grants. A total of \$3,500 in funding is available to award graduate students who are accepted to present their own original scholarship at professional conferences and meetings. The application is available on the Graduate Opportunities webpage and the application deadline is February 15, 2026.
- iv. **Grad Connect – Virtual Chat Series Expanded:** The virtual chat series returns re-imagined and expanded. The Graduate School has partnered with the School of Continuing & Professional Education with an exciting new add-on to the chat series—Navigate: A Lunch 'n Learn Series. Both experiences will be hosted online and are designed to inform, connect, and support graduate students in their academic and professional journey. Grad Connect and Navigate will feature guest speakers and career focused topics. The virtual events will take place every other Wednesday, offering a one-hour session at noon and an after-hours session at 5:30 p.m. Navigate sessions will be recorded and posted to a dedicated YouTube channel, allowing students to view them on demand at their convenience.
- v. **Graduate & Professional Student Appreciation Week 2026** is April 13 – 17, 2026. Activities and events will be announced soon. The Graduate School's Annual Spring Reception will be held on Thursday, April 16 from 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. in the Pat Peterson Museum Education Room.

b. **HONORS COLLEGE & NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

i. **Honors College**

1. **Legends of Honors** On Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 6:30 PM, Sam Rauschenberg ('07 Economics)—Vice President of Growth & Impact at Achieve Atlanta and the Honors College's 2024-2025 Alumni Achievement Award Recipient—will deliver a Zoom based [Legends of Honors presentation](#): “An Unexpected Journey: How a Tenth-Generation Southerner Came to Wrestle with the South’s Legacy and Why it Matters Today.” To register, please click on the embedded link.
2. **Fulbright Canada - Mitacs Globalink Summer Research Internship** Four students have been selected for the Fulbright Canada - Mitacs Globalink Summer Research Internship. These students will conduct research alongside faculty at research

institutions across Canada with funding provided by Fulbright Canada and Mitacs. The four recipients are: Morgan Collins (Chemistry, Junior), Bridget Mainor (Psychology and Philosophy, Junior), Chloe Melton (History, Junior), Kayley Owens (Chemistry, Junior).

c. **SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

- i. **Afterschool Achievement** To support the *Imagine 2030* Strategic Plan, Afterschool Achievement is seeking to partner with the academic colleges to support GCSU service-learning students and to provide supplemental programs to youth during afterschool times 3:30-6:30 pm. If you are interested in partnering, please contact Sequena Stanton, Director of Afterschool Achievement at sequena.stanton@gcsu.edu or call 478.445.5613.
- ii. **High Achievers Program** The students in the High Achievers Program are seeking collaborators and guest speakers. Get involved by contacting Program Coordinator, Mr. Kenneth Daniels at kenneth.daniels@gcsu.edu or 478.445.8509.
- iii. **The YES Programs** provide service-learning opportunities to Georgia College students through partnerships. Academic and enrichment services are also provided to the attendees of the YES programs. For more information about how to get involved, contact Sequena Stanton at sequena.stanton@gcsu.edu.
- iv. **Academic Outreach**
 1. **Partnership** Academic Outreach is excited to resume programming with the Life Enrichment Center, Homeschool Group, and High Achievers Program. In partnership with the Old Governor's Mansion, the Academic Outreach team will provide hands- and minds-on programming in science and history to 4th graders from Twiggs County.
 2. **Stream Monitoring** Join us on February 13 for the monthly stream monitoring. For more details click here: <https://givepul.se/git0n4>. Reach out to Ruth Eilers at ruth.eilers@gcsu.edu to collaborate and get involved.
- v. **Communities in Schools Milledgeville Baldwin County**
 1. **Dr. Suess Day/Read Across America** CIS Milledgeville/Baldwin County is celebrating Dr. Suess Day/Read Across America in early March with volunteer readers coming to each of our primary and elementary schools.
 2. **Uniform Drive** In partnership with the Leadership Baldwin Class of 2026, CIS Milledgeville/Baldwin County will host a community wide uniform drive to collect new and gently used uniforms for students in need in Baldwin County. Black, navy, or khaki pants and any color polo-style shirts will be accepted. Contact Courtney Bentley, courtney.bentley@gcsu.edu to volunteer and get involved.
- vi. **Continuing & Professional Education**

1. **Dance Lessons** Many [dance lesson options](#) are available to join. Beginning Ballet, Ballroom Dancing and a NEW Thursday lunch time Line Dancing class.
2. **Band Instrument Repair Course** CPE is partnering with the Center for Music Education and Band Instrument Repair Academy for a summer workshop, [Band Instrument Repair Course](#).
3. **Ed2Go** All GCSU employees have access to the Ed2Go catalog at a discount. If you're interested in continuing your education in something fun and new, or developing new skills, checkout our catalog here: <https://www.ed2go.com/gcsucorp/>. For more information contact Angie Woodham, Director of Continuing & Professional Education at angie.woodham@gcsu.edu

vii. **Historic Museums**

1. **Music at the Mansion** A spring concert in partnership with the GCSU Music Department is scheduled for April 18 at 6pm on the lawn at the Mansion. Guests are encouraged to bring blankets/chairs and enjoy an evening of music and history. Admission is free; donations are encouraged. Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion is scheduled to welcome over 300 students in the next two months. Please contact Angela Criscoe at angela.criscoe@gcsu.edu or Suzy Parker at suzanna_parker@gcsu.edu if you have requests for the Old Governor's Mansion or Sallie Ellis Davis House.
2. **Andalusia** Preparations are in place for Flannery O'Connor's 101 birthday celebration. The exhibit title and event information will be announced next month. Please contact Cassie Munnell at cassandra.munnell@gcsu.edu or Angela Criscoe at angela.criscoe@gcsu.edu if you have requests for Andalusia.

4. **OFFICES AND PROGRAMS**

a. **ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

- i. **Freshman Application** As of January 20, 2026, Fall 2026 freshman applications have increased by 17% compared to the same date last year. Freshman deposits are also up 12% year-over-year.
- ii. **Institutional Scholarship Applications** The GCSU Financial Aid Office is accepting institutional scholarship applications through the February 1, 2026, deadline. Scholarship applicants who would like to be considered for need-based scholarships are required to complete the 2026-2027 FAFSA by March 1, 2026. The scholarship application has been advertised via emails, postcards, bookmarks, social media, yard signs, etc. Questions regarding the scholarship application may be directed to scholarships@gcsu.edu.
- iii. **Graduate Programs Fair** In collaboration with the Graduate Admissions Office, the Career Center will host a GCSU Graduate Programs Fair on February 11, 2026, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Magnolia Ballroom. This recruitment event will showcase all GCSU graduate

programs and is ideal for students exploring graduate school options and planning for the admissions process. The event is open to the public.

- iv. **GC in DC & Legislative Internships** Lunch and Learn will be held on February 18, 2026, from 12 to 1 p.m. in Lanier 140. Students, faculty, and staff are invited to learn more about the Legislative Internship Program, which offers students the opportunity to spend a semester in Washington, D.C. or work at the Georgia State Capitol. This information session will provide an overview of the program, application process tips, and expectations for these experiential learning opportunities. The session is open to students of all majors, and free pizza will be provided.
- v. **President's Scholarship Competition** GCSU's annual President's Scholarship Competition held on December 5, 2025, proved successful, allowing the university to award scholarships to the most academically talented future Bobcats.
- vi. **Sophomore Explore Day** will be held on February 11, 2026, offering high school sophomores and their guests an interactive and informative opportunity to experience life at GCSU.
- vii. **Admitted Student Day** will be held on March 7, 2026, provides an opportunity for admitted students to confirm and celebrate their decision to attend GCSU. Formerly known as Springfest, this event will also give students who are still exploring their options regarding enrollment the chance to discover the vitality and quality of a GCSU education.
- viii. **Junior Day** will be held on April 18, 2026, offering high school juniors the opportunity to learn about the admissions process, engage with various departments and faculty members, and explore the GCSU campus.
- ix. **New Student Orientations** will be held on June 2, June 3 (Bridge Scholars Program), June 4, June 9, June 11, July 21, July 22 (Transfer Orientation), and July 23.

b. **OFFICE OF GRANTS AND SPONSORED PROJECTS**

- i. **Grant Submissions Reminder** Please be reminded of the [submission procedures](#) for the Office of Grants & Sponsored Projects. All grant proposals to federal entities, state entities, or professional associations must be routed for internal approval before submission may occur. After the proposal has been approved internally, the office will assist with submission of the proposal to the funding agency. It is important to include this internal process when developing proposals. Proposals should be routed for approval at least five working days prior to the submission deadline.

c. **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

- i. **Learning Center**
 - 1. SI Requests for Fall '26 will be announced early February via Front Page and department emails.
 - 2. Learning Center hours are Monday - Thursday 9a-7p and Friday 9a -2p.

d. **MENTORED UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ENDEAVORS**

- i. **GCSU Research Day** Mark your calendar for the fourth annual Georgia College & State University Research Day on **April 15, 2026**. Special events will begin on April 14th, including the Kickoff Keynote Address, sponsored by the John E. Sallstrom Honors College, which will feature Dr. Scott Huettel, a Neuroscientist from Duke University.
 1. The 4th Annual GCSU Research Day will celebrate and showcase student success through mentored projects in research and creative endeavors, as well as projects from *GC Journeys*. We welcome all undergraduate and graduate students to share their work with the campus community. We hope that all faculty and staff will encourage every student to present or support their peers on this day.
 2. Please note that on Research Day, **classes will be reassigned** to welcome all members of the GCSU community to participate and to encourage submission of all types of projects and exhibitions, including projects related to *GC Journeys*.
 3. Visit the [**GCSU Research Day**](#) webpage to learn more
 4. The [**Submission Portal**](#) is now open. Please use the link to submit proposals.
 5. Submission deadline: March 2, 2026
 6. Event date: April 15, 2026
 7. For more information, please contact:
 - a. Dr. Kevin Bucholtz, Associate Provost for Student Engagement and Academic Excellence (kevin.bucholtz@gcsu.edu)
 - b. Dr. Tsu-Ming Chiang, MURACE Faculty director (tm.chiang@gcsu.edu)
 - c. Natalie Churchill, MURACE Coordinator (natalie.churchill@gcsu.edu)

5. **CENTERS AND INSTITUTES**

a. **CENTER FOR TEACHING & LEARNING**

- i. **Academic Affairs Small Grants Program Application** opens February 1 and closes February 15 @ 5:00 p.m. Self-Register through GeorgiaVIEW/D2L.
- ii. **Community-based Engaged Learning Application** opens February 1 and closes February 15 @ 5:00 p.m. Self-Register through GeorgiaVIEW/D2L.
- iii. **Small Grants Workshop** will be held 1/28 @ noon & 1/29 @ 2:00. Register [here](#).
- iv. **Peer Feedback on Teaching** will be offered from January 26 through February 20. Register [here](#).

b. **SANDRA DUNAGAN DEAL CENTER FOR EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

- i. **Mini-Grants** Awarded almost \$10,000 in mini-grants to faculty and students in the JHL College of Education.
- ii. **Hosted Dr. Trina Spencer** at GCSU with 55 attendees. Topics discussed were myths and misconceptions about science of reading implementation.

- iii. **Implementation Science Research Grant** The Deal Center awarded 5 FY2026 Implementation Science Research Grant Competition: <https://www.galiteracycenter.org/implementation-research> for a total of \$249,978.
- iv. **Program Manager Julie Sirmans and Program Specialist Caroline Lacksen** presented at the Middle GA RESA Literacy Conference.

c. **FLANNERY O'CONNOR INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES**

- i. **Film Screenings**
 - 1. January 28, Russell Auditorium, *Night of the Hunter* (1955), Introduction and Q&A with Jonna Smith, Department of English, GCSU
 - 2. February 23, Russell Auditorium, Ryan Coogler's *Sinners* (2025), Introduction and Q and A with Blue Profit, Department of English, GCSU
- ii. **Flannery O'Connor Book Club**
 - 1. January 29, Flannery O'Connor Book Club *Wise Blood* (chapters 1-7)
 - 2. February 19 Flannery O'Connor Book Club, *Wise Blood* (Ch. 8-end)
- iii. **Zoom Lecture**
 - 1. February 5, 7 pm Zoom Lecture: Flannery and the Archives with Farrell O'Gorman
- iv. **Southern Gothic Lecture Series**
 - 1. February 26, Kendra Hamilton: The Gullah/Geechee People as the Nation's Founding
 - 2. February 27, Kendra Hamilton informal discussion on Sinners with Film, English, and Creative Writing Students

STAFF COUNCIL REPORT — KIMBERLY SCOTT, CHAIR

1. **ELECTIONS** We are preparing for elections for our next term by collecting nominations. Our Elections will be open in February, and new members will be finalized in March.
2. **CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE** Staff Council is revising the rubric and the process based on feedback from the internal auditor. Also revising the eligibility to align with Faculty nominations and awards. Our nominations for this will be open in February and end in March. The awards ceremony is April 17th.
3. **ELEVATE YOU STAFF MINI CONFERENCE** We are planning for this and will be releasing the date soon for a save the date in May. Waiting to confirm some other events on campus and then we can confirm and release our date.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT — SERENA SEMERE, PRESIDENT

1. **TOWN HALL** The Student Government Association is excited to be back on campus and actively engaging with students. On Monday, January 26th, from 3:00–5:00 p.m., SGA will host its first Town Hall of the semester in the Donahoo Lounge. The event will

include guided discussions focused on student mental health, academic affairs, and campus communication and safety. The purpose of this Town Hall is to hear from students about how SGA can better serve their needs in these areas and to collaborate with SAPC on the information gathered.

2. **Elections and Homecoming** Sign-ups for SGA Elections officially opened today. We are also preparing for Homecoming Week, which will include elections for both SGA Executive Board positions and Homecoming Court. Informational meetings for these elections are scheduled for the first week of February.
3. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE** SGA passed its first bill of the semester, allocating \$1,000 to Campus Corner. These funds will be used to purchase essential items that better meet student needs, including laundry supplies, hygiene products, dental care items, and other basic necessities.

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE — ANDREW J. ALLEN, CHAIR

1. **NO MEETING, NO REPORT**

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE — BRAD FOWLER, CHAIR

1. **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOW-UP** The AIPRC was asked by the Presiding Officer of the Senate, Dr. Stephanie Jett, to follow up with entities that have specific roles identified in GCSU's new AI policy. The AIPRC was tasked with ensuring that these entities are aware of the new policy's implementation and understand their assigned responsibilities. The committee agreed that the chair would communicate with each entity through email. These communications have been delivered.
2. **BEST PRACTICES FOR STUDENT AI USE FOR ASSESSMENTS** Based on conversations with the Presiding Officer of the Senate and Dr. Mandy Jarriel, Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, the committee deliberated about potential guidance to GCSU faculty with recommendations for communicating AI expectations to students on all assessments. The committee decided that guidance from the AIPRC committee sent through ECUS to the University Senate would not be the appropriate delivery channel. Instead, we agreed that we would send a formal recommendation to Dr. Jim Berger, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), to create, publish, and disseminate a best practices document with the aforementioned recommendations. We included in the formal recommendation a request to have CTL share the best practices document with the Counsel of Deans, asking the deans to share the document with all faculty. The recommendation has been sent to Dr. Berger.
3. **AI FACULTY AND STUDENT QUERY DATA** The committee has been asked to collect data regarding the number of queries that the CTL has received about AI from GCSU faculty and the number of AI-based academic abuse incidents reported to the Division of Student Affairs. That data has not yet been requested.
4. **USG AI POLICY REVIEW** I have been asked to join various AI Policy stakeholders in a meeting on February 9th with the representatives from the USG's Office of Internal Audit, Compliance, Ethics and Risk Management to go over their review of GCSU's AI policy.

BELONGING AND INCLUSION POLICY COMMITTEE — HEDWIG FRAUNHOFER, CHAIR

1. **POLICY OUTREACH** In the meeting on January 9, 2026, BIPC identified and decided to contact GCSU offices that work on student well-being, inclusion, and belonging to ascertain if policy updates or new policies would be helpful for their work. David Anderson of the Student Disability Resource Center has accepted our invitation to join us at our Feb. 13 meeting to discuss faculty support and training initiatives, existing collaborations with Facilities (Operations and Planning) to support physical access to campus buildings, and other potential policy needs.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY SENATE — STEPHANIE JETT, CHAIR

1. **FACULTY EVALUATION** FAPC's motion (if passed) removes the definition of noteworthy for the purpose of evals and T&P
 - a. This should not be seen as a loosening of standards for GCSU, but the start of a conversation where we get to define it for ourselves.
 - b. If it's not passed, let's drill down to the why? What are the concerns from faculty and admin?
2. **AI POLICY REVIEW** AIPRC Chair, Dr. Fowler, and stakeholders for the implementation of the policy across campus are meeting with Rhonda Fowler (internal audit) soon prior to a meeting with the USG.
 - a. They have been reviewing policies as they come in and will be providing feedback on our policy. It's NOT an audit, but just a review in the early stages.
 - b. We knew this policy would be fluid, so we're not worried.
3. **GCSU WELLNESS (QEP) DAY** You'll hear more about this event later in the meeting, but I've heard the feedback regarding our upcoming redirected days (Wellness Day and Research Day), and I want to speak to the 'why' behind them. We all agree that student health and wellbeing are foundational. If a student isn't well, they cannot reach the academic heights we set for them. I recognize that change is difficult and that schedule shifts can be disruptive. But I want to reiterate: You are not losing class time. We have preserved your instructional hours while providing students with the necessary breathing room to recharge. The days redirected on March 3rd and April 22nd are replaced by two additional days at the end of the term. This isn't a choice between academics and wellness—it is a choice to support both. Let's lead by example and show our students that we value their resilience as much as their academic pursuits.
4. **REMINDER OF DECORUM** We are leaders on campus. Even though I (Stephanie) love to keep things light, we are professionals who should be taken seriously and act in ways that command some degree of respect. We should also be respectful of each other. Please keep these things in mind when you walk into your committee meetings and the larger Senate meetings. Let's all work together to maintain the status of the Senate on campus and be the leaders our constituents expect and deserve.

FACULTY AFFAIRS POLICY COMMITTEE — JENNIFER FLORY, CHAIR

1. **FACULTY EVALUATION**
 - a. **Context**

- i. The Provost expressed concern about expanding criteria from three to five categories. She noted that schools that keep evaluation criteria embedded have fared better than those formally adopting five categories.
- ii. Given the extensive work completed by the Provost's Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Task Force in 2022, she suggested removing language tying "noteworthy" to a 4 or 5 on the Likert scale rather than restructuring categories.
- b. **Deliberation**
 - i. Holley provided context to the concerns.
 - ii. The committee reviewed a version of policy edits that delete references tying "noteworthy" to Likert 4–5, and noted one additional USG-required item remains to be incorporated.
- c. **Action/Vote** After extended discussion, the following motion passed unanimously.
- d. **Motion (Approved)** That the University Senate endorse the proposed revisions to the GCSU Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures to align with the revised USG policy by:
 - 1. Removing any language that ties "noteworthy" to receiving a 4 or 5 on the Likert scale in post-tenure review; and
 - 2. Recommending that departments and colleges define "noteworthy" in their promotion and tenure documents, including evidentiary expectations.

2. **FAPC WORKING GROUP**

- a. **Kick Off** Last week.
- b. **Membership (by Unit)**
 - i. College of Arts & Sciences (CoAS): 4
 - ii. College of Business & Technology (CoBT): 2
 - iii. College of Education (CoE): 2
 - iv. College of Health Sciences (CoHS): 2
 - v. Library: 1
- c. **Working Group Members (Faculty)** Scott Butler, Jamie Downing, Jehan El Jourbagy, Jennifer Flory, Marcia Henry, Sabrina Hom, Paula Knight, Bekir Mugayitoglu, Suzanna Roman Oliver, Amy Sumpter, Aric Wilhau
- d. **Working Group Members (Administrators)** Mandy Jarriel, Winston Tripp
- e. **Objectives and Crews**
 - i. Workload Crew
 - 1. Confirm current teaching load by college/library.
 - 2. Compare GCSU loads with peer/aspirant institutions.
 - 3. Recommend a simple, equitable university workload policy.
 - ii. PTR Recognition Crew
 - 1. Develop a concise list of recognition and rewards for positive post tenure reviews to recommend to Academic Affairs.
 - iii. Professional Leave Crew
 - 1. Review the Professional Leave policy, procedures, and rubric for alignment with USG policy; ensure equity and clarity across colleges and departments.

f. **Operational Note**

- i. There is a concern about the cadence of meetings and output.
- ii. The Working Group will address cadence and scope at the kick off, and shift tasks back to FAPC as needed—especially items from the Workload Crew.

3. **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY MEETING** Check with Hedy Fraunhofer regarding disability accommodations and support for faculty.

RESOURCES, PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE — TALECIA WARREN, CHAIR

1. **No WRITTEN REPORT**

STUDENT AFFAIRS POLICY COMMITTEE — AMY PINNEY, CHAIR

1. **CENTENNIAL CENTER POOL** We wrapped up our attention to the pool, and that item is now off the agenda.
2. **THE MAX** We got an update for SGA regarding complaints about The Max; the update includes concern about recent TikToks. We received assurances that the administration is well aware of the issue, and changes are taking place. SGA is also aware.
3. **THE BOBCAT CODE** We got an update on the Bobcat Code and that issue will continue to reside with SGA.
4. **THE FEBRUARY MEETING** will be at the Serenity Den, where we will continue our conversation about student mental health.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS — JOYCE NORRIS-TAYLOR, CHAIR

1. **ELECTION OVERSIGHT** Elections for university senators for the 2026-2027 academic year are ongoing.
2. **AT-LARGE SENATOR ELECTION** Nominations for the At-Large Position will be submitted via Qualtrics February 2-6, with voting February 9-13, 2026.

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE (UCC) UPDATE — ANGEL ABNEY, CHAIR

1. **UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE November 21, 2025**
 - a. **Action Items**
 - i. College of Arts & Science
 1. Department of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy. Modification of Industrial Chemistry Modification. Remove CHEM2255, the Sophomore internship from the program.
 - a. Donovan Domingue attending as representative
 - b. Unanimously Approved
 - ii. College of Business & Technology
 1. Department of Economics & Finance: Modification in Financial Analysis Concentration. Drop FINC 3830 from the list of required

courses for finance Majors & Edit the Course requirements for the finance major.

- a. J. J. Arias attending as representative
- b. Unanimously Approved
2. Department of Economics & Finance: Modification in Financial Technology Concentration. Replace FINC 4330 with FINC 4340 and move FINC 4330 to the list of non-required but eligible courses for the concentrations.
 - a. J. J. Arias attending as representative
 - b. Unanimously Approved
3. Department of Economics & Finance: Modification of Minor in Finance: Add FINC 3100 as a required course; drop FTA class requirement and remove FINC 4101 from the list of requirements.
 - a. J. J. Arias attending as representative
 - b. Unanimously Approved
4. Department of Economics & Finance: Modification to BS in Finance. Drop FINC 3830 as a required course and edit course requirements.
 - a. J. J. Arias attending as representative.
 - b. Unanimously approved

iii. College of Education

1. No Action Items

iv. College of Health Science

1. No Action Items

b. **Information Items**

i. College of Arts & Science

1. **New Course Proposals**

- a. Department of History and Geography. HIST 4300: European History in Film. Effective Summer 2026.
- b. Department of History and Geography. HIST 4400: Native American History. Effective Fall 2026.
- c. Department of History and Geography. HIST 4725: Colonial Africa. Effective Fall 2026.
- d. Department of History and Geography. HIST 4935: Intro to Digital Humanities. Effective Fall 2026.
- e. Department of World Languages and Cultures. Span 4020. Advanced Conversation. Effective Fall 2026.

2. **Modification of Existing Courses**

- a. Department of Art. ARTS 2810: From Renaissance to Mod World. Catalog Description Change. Effective Spring 2026
- b. Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences. BIOL 1107 & 1107L: Principles of Biology I/Lab. Combining Course and Lab. Effective Fall 2026.
- c. Department of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy. PHYS 3001. Statics. Course Deletion. Effective Fall 2026.

- d. Department of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy. PHYS 3002. Dynamics. Course Deletion. Effective Fall 2026.
- e. Department of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy. PHYS 3200. Thermodynamics for Engineers. Course Deletion. Effective Fall 2026.
- f. Department of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy. Chem 4500. Advanced Inorganic Chemistry. Catalogue Description Change—Pre-requisite change. Effective Fall 2026

- ii. College of Business & Technology
 - 1. **New Course Proposals – None**
 - 2. **Modification of Existing Courses**
 - a. Department of IS&CS. CBIS 2220: Principles of Information Systems. Pre-Requisite Change. Effective Fall 2026
- iii. College of Education
 - 1. **New Course Proposals – None**
 - 2. **Modification of Existing Courses – None**
- iv. College of Health Sciences
 - 1. **New Course Proposals**
 - a. Department of Exercise Science. KINS 3204: Physiology of Exercise II.
 - 2. **Modification of Existing Courses**
 - a. Department of Exercise Science. KINS 3103: Structural Kinesiology. Change Course Number: KINS 3103 to KINS 2103. Effective Fall 2026
 - b. Department of Exercise Science. KINS 3233: Methods of Resistance Training. Change Credit Hours: from 2 credit hours to 3 credit hours. Effective Fall 2026

- 2. **GRADUATE COUNCIL November 7, 2026**
- a. Did not meet—No Action Items
- 3. **GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE November 14, 2025**
- a. **Action Items**
 - i. GC1Y/2Y Proposals
 - 1. Consideration of GC1Y 1000, “The Art Forum” proposal. Sandra Trujillo joins the discussion. Questions about field trip component, syllabus learning objectives. Unanimously approved pending edit to syllabus learning objectives.
 - 2. Consideration of GC1Y 1000, “Video Games and Narrative Ethics” proposal, Jonna Smith joins the discussion. Suggestion regarding sequencing/placement of syllabus statements, instructor qualifications for course (and who could be added to the course as possible instructors). Unanimously approved, pending syllabus reordering and addition of instructors.
 - 3. Consideration of GC2Y 2000, “Contemporary French Thought”. Sabrina Horn joins the discussion as proposer. Designed as a

summer semester/study abroad GC2Y option. Request for the syllabus detail to be expanded with specific assignments, “career-ready” competencies articulated, and more clearly-defined writing intensive/scaffolding process for required writing assignment(s). Unanimously approved, pending syllabus edits from discussion.

4. Consideration of GC1Y 1000, “The Art of Argumentation”, proposed by Nathan Bedsole (not present). Suggestion for more measurable objectives in the Learning Goals section, addressing career-ready CoreIMPACTS competencies within the syllabus, and grading. Unanimously approved, pending a revised syllabus, reflective of proposed edits from discussion.

ii. Section Modifications

1. Consideration of section modification— adding D. Burt to GC2Y 2000, “10 Plants that Changed the World”. Approved unanimously.
2. Consideration of section modification— adding S. Auerbach to GC2Y 2000, “Human Revolutions”. Approved unanimously.

iii. CORExplore Proposals

1. None submitted

b. **Information Items**

- i. Suggestion for committee members to offer to assist faculty who are proposing GC1Y/2Y courses for the first time, prior to formally receiving proposals at the committee level. Reminder of the timeline for new 1Y/2Y course approval.
- ii. GC1Y/2Y website cleanup of old courses and prior versions of course listings and websites.
- iii. No updates re: development of GC Learning Outcomes for areas P, A, S, at this time.
- iv. Consideration of the spring '25 Syllabus Audit follow up tasks. Development of GCxY “non-section” that could be taught by any faculty on campus, S. Jordan facilitated discussion with outside faculty and reported to committee. Current process includes development of a course shell and appropriate learning outcomes. Will meet again prior to January GEC meeting.
- v. Discussion of developing a pilot process for review of existing GCxY sections for compliance with established rubrics/policies, starting spring 2026. Desire for a formative evaluation from outside the GEC, possibly involving some sort of peer review.

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA FACULTY COUNCIL UPDATE — ROB SUMOWSKI, GCSU REPRESENTATIVE

1. **ONLINE MONTHLY MEETINGS** October 21, 2025, December 16, 2025
2. **FALL MEETING WITH CHANCELLOR PERDUE AND USG ADMINISTRATION** November 13-14, 2025 at Georgia Tech. The key meeting during Fall Semester 2025 was this session with Chancellor Perdue and USG administrative staff.

- a. **HIGHLIGHTS: NOVEMBER 13-14 MEETINGS WITH CHANCELLOR PERDUE, ASHWANI MONGA, AND KARIN ELLIOTT FROM USG** Most USG institutions are grappling with many of the same concerns we have discussed at GCSU: the rollout of merit pay during Summer 2025, the Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE) and whether it will be mandated at all USG institutions, inconsistencies in the calculation of summer pay, faculty evaluations, the definition of the term *noteworthy* and where it should fit within the Likert scale, the need for a USG-wide salary study, and the handling of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- b. **CHANCELLOR SONNY PERDUE KEY POINTS**
 - i. **AI Concerns** USG will offer access to TurnItIn Clarity beginning in January 2026 to assist institutions in AI detection. A goal will be not just to stop the use of AI by students but to also provide instruction on how to use AI appropriately.
 - ii. **The Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE)** is the new accreditation option at USG institutions' disposal. Georgia Southern and Columbus State are currently using CPHE. The Chancellor anticipates that most of our institutions will continue to use SACS-COC. He noted that SACS has streamlined many of its more cumbersome processes in response to the emergence of CPHE and he speculated whether the presence of CPHE may have actually inspired SACS to become streamlined, more efficient, and more institution-friendly. The Chancellor says he has no plans to mandate whether institutions should use CPHE or SACSCOC. He stated he does "not wish to mandate any accrediting agency based on some ideological view."
 - iii. **Higher Education Compact** The Chancellor noted that USG will not sign onto the current administration's higher education compact. He said he does not feel the feds are a quality road map in mandating what USG should do.
 - iv. **Summer 2025 Merit Raises** The Chancellor acknowledged that he wasn't sure USG did the best job communicating how to handle merit raises. He said USG should also better train evaluators on who should receive merit raises. He stated he was open to USGFC's suggestions and ideas on how better to handle future rollouts. He thinks there may be merit raises again next year. USG will try to figure out a better way to handle merit raises next time. He noted that different campuses do performance evaluations in different ways. He said USG will try to handle future merit raises in a more standardized way.
 - v. **USG Administration** acknowledged concerns with the definition of the term *noteworthy* and where it should fit in with the Likert scale. It is anticipated this will be up to each institution's discretion.
 - vi. **Salary Inconsistencies and Salary Study** USG recognizes that newer hires are coming in at higher salaries than faculty who have been here a while. He would like to see USG come up with a unified job description across institutions (which he noted would make merit pay easier), though he also acknowledged that positions with the same title may be very

different across fields and across institutions. He stated this is complex and that there are many positions that may not compare well with each other.

- vii. **Chancellor Perdue anticipates a 2026 USG-wide Salary Study** for faculty and staff to begin in January 2026 with a consultant leading it. USGFC also has its own salary study committee. The Chancellor offered USGFC a role during discussions about salary inconsistencies.
- viii. **USG has discussed the possible merger of USG's health plan** with the state health benefit plan used by P-12 institutions. Because there are differences in the programs, it would cost the state \$175 Million to merge us with the other plan. Covering GLP weight loss drugs alone would cost \$33 million. Such a switch would result in substantial increases in USG employees' health premiums.
- ix. **During the 2026 GA General Assembly**, USG will request that institutions be allowed to continue to keep money from fiscal year to fiscal year rather than implementing a "use it or lose it" policy. He would like to see institutions be able to build up strategic reserves.
- x. **Faculty Visas** Research I universities have concerns about faculty from out of the country running into problems renewing their visas in light of shifting policies regarding immigration. The USG is willing to assist such faculty if they need USG to formally sponsor them in their efforts to renew visas.
- xi. **Faculty Evaluation** And in the FWIW category, here is an interesting note from the State University Sector Committee Meeting: Some institutions use a single rubric to evaluate faculty at all levels. According to its USGFC representative, Dalton State utilizes one rubric to evaluate faculty in the following positions: lecturer, assistant, associate, and full professor.