

East Georgia

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Strategic Plan

FY 2024 – FY 2028

East Georgia State College Strategic Plan
For Fiscal Years (July 1 – June 30)
FY 2024 through FY 2028

INTRODUCTION

Presented below are East Georgia State College's (EGSC's) vision and mission statements. EGSC's vision statement provides the long-term context for pursuing a mission that focuses on extending the College's associate degree options to multiple student populations and developing baccalaureate degrees targeted to the needs of its service area. The EGSC strategic plan provides a blueprint for realizing the College's mission. As a guiding document, the plan will be updated as needed.

Vision Statement

Through bold and transformative action, East Georgia State College aspires to significantly increase the educational achievement of its students and to be an indispensable pathway to a more fulfilling and prosperous future.

Mission Statement

East Georgia State College is an associate degree granting, liberal arts institution of the University System of Georgia providing its students access to both academically transferable programs of study and collaborative programs in occupation related fields. The College also offers targeted baccalaureate level degrees that support the University System's initiative to expand educational opportunities. The College prepares traditional and nontraditional students for success in the global 21st century through a technologically advanced teaching and learning environment that fosters personal growth by utilizing an expanding range of resources and amenities, including an on-campus student residential option. The College also continuously engages the communities it serves through public service and cultural enrichment.

GOALS, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

As a unit of the University System of Georgia (USG), EGSC bases its institutional goals on the USG vision and mission statements and system goals. Presented below are the vision and mission statements of the *USG Strategic Plan 2029* as approved by its governing Board of Regents in August 2023, taking effect on September 1, 2023.

USG Vision Statement

The University System of Georgia is determined to be recognized as the best system of higher education in the United States as it advances the prosperity of individuals, the state of Georgia, and the nation through education, research, engagement, and innovation.

USG Mission Statement

Our mission is knowledge: to create it through research, transfer it through teaching, and apply it through service.

Promoting student success is the first and primary goal articulated in *USG Strategic Plan 2029*. EGSC has an institutional goal that directly supports the USG’s student success goal. Both goal statement are presented below

USG Student Success: We will increase degree completion through high quality and lifelong academic options, focused learning and eliminating barriers to access and success for all Georgians.

EGSC Student Success: East Georgia State College provides access to innovative academic programs and engages in college completion initiatives, transforming students and equipping them with tools for success.

This plan focuses on three strategies developed to support the goal of student success. For each strategy, corresponding tactics and action plans to implement the tactics are identified. The College’s student success strategies and tactics are summarized in the following table and discussed below.

Table 1: EGSC Student Success Strategies and Tactics

Strategy No.	Strategy Description	Tactic No.	Tactic Description
1.1	Improve student success in core curriculum courses through focused initiatives	1.1.1	Integrate student learning communities (SLCs) into the core curriculum.
		1.1.2	Increase the percentage of new freshmen completing initial Writing/Math courses within their first academic year (fall through summer semesters).
		1.1.3	Increase the percentage new freshmen who successfully complete 30 credit hours in their first year (fall through summer semesters).
1.2	Increase degrees conferred	1.2.1	Increase the annual number of degrees conferred to 300 by FY 2026.

Table 1: EGSC Student Success Strategies and Tactics (concluded)

Strategy No.	Strategy Description	Tactic No.	Tactic Description
1.3	Increase enrollment and retention	1.3.1	Increase fall semester enrollment
		1.3.2	Achieve targets for semester-to-semester retention rates for each of EGSC's four major demographic cohorts (Black men and women and White men and women) taking at least one class on campus.
		1.3.3	Achieve targets for fall-to-fall 1-year retention rates for each of EGSC's four major demographic cohorts taking at least one class on campus.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TACTICS**Strategy 1.1: Improve Student Success in Core Curriculum Courses through Focused Initiatives**

EGSC's primary student success initiative is the introduction of student learning communities (SLCs), which is detailed in the College's quality enhancement plan (QEP) as part of its 2021 decennial reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

As is common with the implementation of a QEP, adjustments are being made to assure the plan's success. When EGSC's QEP was developed and the first SLCs were formed prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, EGSC had a larger faculty, staff, and student population than it had as of the end of FY 2022-23. Through the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years, SLCs were organized based on a co-requisite model that paired course sections in two different subjects. Because students were required to register for both course sections in an SLC, their course scheduling options were reduced. As the number of course sections being offered declined with fewer faculty and students, organizing SLCs based on the co-requisite model became unworkable.

The co-requisite model for organizing SLCs was replaced with a thematic approach in Spring 2023. With the Thematic Approach, four or five faculty members form a group and decide on a common theme they would share between their courses. The faculty notify the QEP Team of their interest in creating a Thematic SLC and seek approval for their proposal. If approved, each section that these faculty members teach of the course would be listed as an included in an SLC. If a student registers for at least two of the courses within this particular Thematic group, then the student would be considered as being part of the SLC. This allows students more flexibility in their choices for an SLC course. The implementation of the thematic approach is detailed in the following tactical action plan.

Tactical Action Plan 1.1.1

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Integrate student learning communities (SLCs) into the core curriculum.	QEP Director	1. Replace the co-requisite model with the thematic approach to increase scheduling flexibility and enhance student engagement. 2. Introduce faculty to the thematic approach in Fall Semester 2023. 3. Organize at least two SLC thematic groups for Fall Semester 2024.	Spring 2024: Faculty recruited and trained to participate in thematic SLCs	Increase number of thematic SLC groups offered in Spring 2025, Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 semesters

Another core curriculum success initiative is to increase the percentage of new freshmen completing their initial writing/math courses within their first academic year. The writing courses are the ENGL 1101/1102 composition sequence. For students starting in the fall semester, progress will be tracked through the following summer semester. The implementation of this initiative is detailed below.

Tactical Action Plan 1.1.2

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Increase the percentage of new freshmen completing initial writing sequence and mathematics courses within their first academic year.	Academic Affairs	1. Redesign learning support courses for ENGL and MATH. 2. Develop a first-year writing program. 3. Review placement and advising process to ensure students are in the correct MATH course.	25% of new freshmen complete initial writing sequence and math courses within first year	40% of Fall 2027 new freshmen will complete initial writing sequence and math courses within first year

The third core curriculum success initiative is to increase the percentage of new freshmen who successfully complete 30 credit hours in their first year. For students starting in the fall semester, progress will be tracked through the following summer semester. The implementation of this initiative is detailed below.

Tactical Action Plan 1.1.3

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Increase the percentage of new freshmen who successfully complete 30 credit hours in their first year (fall through summer semesters).	Academic Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review class schedule and course rotation. 2. Implement a team-based approach to advising and student success support. 3. Offer a summer academic program to incoming freshmen. 	12% of fall semester new freshmen complete 30 credit hours in first year	30% of Fall 2027 new freshmen will complete 30 credit hours in first year

Strategy 1.2 Increase Degrees Conferred

EGSC’s access mission within the USG is realized both by the number of its students who graduate from the College and by the number who transfer successfully to other colleges and universities both inside and outside the USG. Two commonly used measures of success for students seeking an associate degree are the three-year transfer-out and three-year graduation rates of fall semester full-time, first-time cohorts reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Based on recent reports to IPEDS, the combination of these rates indicates that 70 percent or more of students in these cohorts either transfer-out or graduate from EGSC within three years.

Based on the College’s implementation of its Complete College Georgia initiatives, the number of degrees conferred increased annually from a total of 168 in FY 2012 to over 300 beginning in FY 2016 and continuing through FY 2021. In Fall Semester 2017, EGSC launched fifteen associate degrees with disciplinary distinctions and an online Bachelor of Science Nursing Bridge degree, the third baccalaureate degree introduced by EGSC since the College was authorized the USG to offer targeted bachelor degrees in 2011.

However, the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on enrollment starting in Fall semester 2020 reduced the number of degrees conferred to 282 in FY 2022 and 247 in FY 2023. Presented below in Table 2 is a summary of degrees conferred by EGSC from FY 2018 through FY 2023. Note the decline in the number of AA Liberal Arts degrees conferred and its corresponding decline as a percentage of all associate degrees conferred as more students earned associate degrees in specific disciplines.

Table 2: EGSC Degrees Conferred Summary

Degrees Conferred	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	Total
AA Liberal Arts	200	163	151	136	110	90	850
Total Associate Degrees	297	295	282	307	250	220	1651
AA Liberal Arts ÷ Associate Degrees	67.3%	55.3%	53.5%	44.3%	44.0%	40.9%	51.5%
Bachelor Degrees	5	27	21	15	32	19	119
Total Degrees Conferred	302	322	303	322	282	239	1,770

While retaining its access mission, EGSC is undergoing a transition in how it realizes that mission. In August 2021, the College closed to new admissions its three baccalaureate and thirteen of fifteen associate degree programs that were introduced in Fall Semester 2017 because the number of degrees conferred in those programs were too low. Subsequently, to underscore its access mission, EGSC was approved by the USG to offer meta majors in the natural sciences and the social sciences and to begin offering degrees in collaboration with the USG's eMajor initiative. As of the start of FY 2024, the USG authorized the College to offer the following degrees:

- Associate of Arts in Elementary Education
- Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts (formally Associate of Arts, Core Curriculum)
- Associate of Arts in Social Sciences (beginning in Fall Semester 2021)
- Associate of Science in Business Administration
- Associate of Science in Natural Sciences (beginning in Fall Semester 2021)
- Associate of Science in Financial Technology eMajor (beginning in Spring Semester 2023)
- Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice eMajor (beginning in Fall Semester 2023)
- Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership eMajor (beginning in Spring Semester 2024)

Over the next three fiscal years, EGSC is unlikely to award many bachelor degrees because the teach-out plans for the three baccalaureate programs that were closed to new admissions in Fall Semester 2021 has been completed and the two eMajor bachelor programs will be introduced in FY 2024. Close to 70 percent of the associate degrees conferred are awarded to students assigned to the Swainsboro Campus. Over the five-year planning horizon of this strategic plan, EGSC will endeavor to award an increasing number of associate degrees to its students on both the Swainsboro Campus and at EGSC-Statesboro located on the campus of Georgia Southern University as presented in Table 3 below. The implementation of this initiative is detailed in the Tactical Action Plan 1.2.1 that follows.

Table 3: Projected Associate Degrees Conferred

Associate Degrees Conferred	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
EGSC Statesboro	60	65	75	80	80
Swainsboro Campus	180	195	205	220	220
Total Associate Degrees	240	260	280	300	300

Tactical Action Plan 1.2.1

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Increase the annual number of degrees conferred to 300 by FY 2027.	Academic Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a team-based approach to advising and student success support. 2. Implement “graduation before transfer” initiatives. 3. Provide professional development opportunities for faculty that focus on teaching excellence. 4. Offer additional bachelor’s degree programs. 	239 degrees conferred in FY 2023	300 degrees conferred in FY 2027 and FY 2028

Strategy 1.3 Increase Enrollment and Retention

Increase Enrollment on Campus

Presented in following table is a summary of EGSC fall semester headcount enrollment by location/mode of delivery from Fall Semester 2017, when fall to fall enrollment began declining, to Fall Semester 2023, along with projected enrollment through Fall Semester 2027. The last row in the table lists the target percentages for each location/mode of delivery for fall semesters 2024 through 2027. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online only students accounted for a third of headcount enrollment. Reducing the target percentage for online only students increases the targets for students taking at least one in-person class at all locations.

Table 4: EGSC Fall Enrollment 2017-2023 and Projected Enrollment to Fall 2027

Fall Term	Percent Change	Total Enrollment	Swainsboro Campus	EGSC Statesboro	EGSC Augusta	High School	Online Only
2017	-4.7%	3,003	1,012	1,078	429	101	383
2018	-2.0%	2,942	942	1,075	386	96	443
2019	-6.8%	2,741	885	973	357	33	493
2020	-11.9%	2,415	662	634	246	76	797
2021	-16.2%	2,023	582	425	236	100	680
2022	-6.1%	1,900	585	413	193	151	558
2023	-6.9%	1,768	526	370	191	191	490
2024	1.8%	1,800	594	450	252	234	270
2025	4.3%	1,877	619	469	263	244	282
2026	7.1%	2,010	663	503	281	261	302
2027	9.5%	2,200	726	550	308	286	330
Target % of Fall Enrollment			33%	25%	14%	13%	15%

Several actions are being taken to address and reverse recent declines in fall semester enrollment. In collaboration with Modern Campus, EGSC has completed the redesign of its website, focusing on attracting new students. Thanks to generous support provided by the USG, EGSC will be utilizing the Slate customer relations management (CRM) platform to attract and retain students. In addition, the College will emphasize the recruitment of high school students to take classes in person through dual enrollment. The implementation of this initiative is detailed in the tactical action plan below.

Tactical Action Plan 1.3.1

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Increase fall semester enrollment.	Student Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement Slate CRM for recruitment and admission. 2. Increase engagement with high schools for dual enrollment opportunities. 3. Offer additional bachelor’s degree programs. 	Fall 2023 1,768 head count enrollment	Fall 2027 2,200 head count enrollment

Increase Semester to Semester Retention on Campus

An analysis of student retention by location and mode of delivery for each of the College’s four major demographic cohorts was conducted for the 2018 through 2023 academic years. These cohorts include Black and White men and women. Retention rates were calculated for fall-to-spring, spring-to-fall, and fall-to-fall retention. The highest retention rates occurred from fall-to-spring and the lowest rates occurred from fall-to-fall semesters.

Swainsboro Campus

The COVID-19 Pandemic has triggered challenges to student retention on the home campus in Swainsboro. Overall, the fall-to-spring retention rate dipped from 81% for Fall 2019 to Spring 2020 to 71% for Fall 2020 to Spring 2021, before recovering to 78% for Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 and Fall 2022 to Spring 2023. The Fall 2019 to Spring 2020 retention rates for Black women (84%) and Black men (87%) exceeded those of White women (76%) and White men (77%). For Fall 2020 to Spring 2021, the retention rate for White women (80%) was 10 points or more above the other three cohorts (64% to 69%). For Fall 2021 to Spring 2022, the retention rate of Black women (68%) lagged behind the rates of the other three cohorts (80% to 86%). For Fall 2022 to Spring 2023, the gaps in retention rates among the four cohorts narrowed, with the retention rates for both White women and White men (81%) leading the rates for Black women (73%) and Black men (75%).

Overall, the spring-to-fall retention rates on the Swainsboro Campus were lower than the fall-to-spring rates but varied within a narrower range (51% to 55.5%), with the retention rate reaching its highest in Spring to Fall 2020. The spring-to-fall retention rates of both the White women and White men cohorts exceeded those of the Black women and men cohorts, with the exception of the Spring to Fall 2020 rates, when Black women (60%) had the highest retention rate. The retention rates of Black men were the lowest among the cohorts and ranged between 41% to 50%.

EGSC Statesboro

Fall-to-spring retention rates for EGSC Statesboro have been 7 to 13 points lower compared to those on the Swainsboro Campus. Overall, the fall-to-spring retention rate dipped from 74% for Fall 2019 to Spring 2020 to 64% for Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 and 65% for Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 before recovering to 72% for Fall 2022 to Spring 2023. Throughout the period analyzed, retention rates for both Black and White women were less variable and greater than those for Black and White men. Retention rates for Black men (57%) and White men (53%) were lowest for Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. Retention rates of all the cohorts improved with much narrower differences for Fall 2022 to Spring 2023: Black women (75%), White women (74%), White men (72%) and Black men (71%).

Overall, the spring-to-fall retention rate at EGSC Statesboro was only 1.6 points below the rate on the Swainsboro Campus for Spring to Fall 2019. However, for subsequent years the overall EGSC Statesboro spring-to-fall retention rates were 8-10 points below the rates for the Swainsboro Campus. Although spring-to-fall retention rates tended to be lowest for Black men (42% to 46%) the range of retention rates was much larger for Black women (36% to 51%), White women (39% to 51%), and White men (35% to 54%).

In April 2022, EGSC hosted a ribbon cutting to celebrate the opening of its new location on the campus of Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. Previously, EGSC served its students at an off-campus site in Statesboro. With the relocation of EGSC Statesboro to the Georgia Southern campus, EGSC will seek to retain a higher percentage of its students in Statesboro through conferral of an associate degree.

EGSC Augusta

Overall, fall-to-spring retention rates for EGSC Augusta have been lower by 6 to 9 points compared to those on the Swainsboro Campus. Black men (57% to 63%) had the narrowest range of fall-to-spring retention rates. White women (68% to 79%) had the highest fall-to-spring retention rates for three of the four periods analyzed. Black women (60% to 74%) and White men (62% to 79%) had more variable fall-to-spring retention rates.

Overall, the EGSC Augusta spring-to-fall retention rates were 2 to 6 points below the rate for the Swainsboro Campus. Black women (40% to 53%) had spring to fall retention rates above 50% for three of the four periods analyzed. Black men (45% to 52%) had the narrowest range of spring to

fall retention rates. Spring-to-fall retention rates for White women (38% to 57%) and White men (38% to 72%) were more variable.

The College’s tactical action plan to improve campus semester to semester retention rates is presented below.

Tactical Action Plan 1.3.2

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Achieve targets for semester-to-semester retention rates for each of EGSC’s four major demographic cohorts taking at least one class on campus.	Student Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement Slate CRM for student success. 2. Implement a team-based approach to advising and student success support. 3. Update programs of study to ensure students take at least one course related to their discipline of choice in the first year. 	On campus fall to spring retention averages 72%; On campus spring to fall retention averages 50%	Raise on campus fall to spring retention to an 80% average; raise on campus spring to fall retention to a 65% average

Increase Fall to Fall Retention on Campus

Swainsboro Campus

The fall-to-fall retention rate on the Swainsboro Campus reach its highest point for Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 (47%) but then slipped by 10 points for Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 (37%), before partially recovering for Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 (42%). The fall-to-fall retention rates of both the White women and White men cohorts exceeded those of the Black women and men cohorts, with the exception of the Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 rates, when Black women (51%) had the highest retention rate. The retention rates of Black men were the lowest among the cohorts and ranged between 28% to 44%.

EGSC Statesboro

The EGSC Statesboro Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 retention rate of 38% was only 1 point less than the Swainsboro Campus, but subsequent overall fall-to-fall retention rates dropped to 8 to 11 points below those on the Swainsboro Campus. The range of fall-to-fall retention rates was more narrow for Black men (28% to 35%) compared to Black women (25% to 42%), White women (28% to 40%), and White men (19% to 37%).

EGSC Augusta

Because EGSC students in Augusta are offered only 30 credit hours, the successful outcome for these students is expected to be to transfer to another college or university. Therefore, EGSC Augusta students are not included in the target fall to fall retention rate for the College.

Tactical Action Plan 1.3.3

Tactic	Responsible Office(s)	Action Steps	Status	Target
Achieve targets for fall-to-fall 1-year retention rates for each of EGSC’s four major demographic cohorts taking at least one class on campus.	Student Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement Slate CRM for student success. 2. Implement a team-based approach to advising and student success support. 3. Update programs of study to ensure students take at least one course related to their discipline of choice in the first year. 	On campus fall to fall retention rates Swainsboro/ Statesboro averages 38%	Raise on campus fall to fall retention in Swainsboro/ Statesboro to 50% average