STRATEGIC PLAN

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2010 – Present

Georgia State University
Innovation and creative thinking are key to Georgia State University’s successes, and those innovations are helping to shape the national agenda for higher education. Georgia State’s 10-year strategic plan was adopted in January 2011, and the accomplishments in the first five years have been stunning. Here are highlights of just how far our university has come.”

-President Mark P. Becker

**GOAL 1**

**Become a national model for undergraduate education by demonstrating that students from all backgrounds can achieve academic and career success at high rates.**

Georgia State graduates 54 percent of its students today, surpassing its strategic benchmark goal of 52 percent by 2016. This graduation rate is up from 48 percent in 2010, and the university awards 1,754 more degrees annually than it did six years ago. Just as significantly, Georgia State has eliminated the achievement gaps based on race, ethnicity, first-generation status and income level while maintaining its nationally recognized student diversity and seeing an 80 percent increase in the number of Pell-eligible students it enrolls.

**INITIATIVE 1: Increase the level of scholarship support for undergraduate students.**

Since 2010, institutional need-based grants have increased from 178 recipients and $142,044 in awards to 2,129 recipients and $2.8 million in awards in 2015. Since 2010, merit-based grants have increased from 1,098 recipients and $2.3 million in awards to 4,007 recipients and $9.3 million in awards in 2015.

A Scholarship Resource Center was established in 2011 to offer guidance and support to students seeking financial assistance. Since opening, it has had 3,070 visits and 6,000 applications for scholarships. A database now includes more than 400 institutional scholarships and fellowships.

More than a dozen innovative retention programs that support Georgia State students have been implemented in the last five years. Many of these programs have grown significantly even during the recent recession and increases in students’ unmet financial need during this period.

- Panther Retention Grants provide micro grants of less than $1,500 to students each semester to help cover modest financial shortfalls affecting students’ ability to pay tuition and fees. These were designed to prevent students from dropping out. More than 6,300 students have received the grants since the program’s inception in fall 2011, with more than 80 percent of the students being retained or having graduated in the two semesters after receiving the grant.

- The Summer Success Academy uses predictive analytics to identify admitted students for the fall freshman class who may struggle academically in their first year college. It requires that these students attend a seven-week summer session before fall classes. The Academy increased the retention rates for the students enrolled in the program from 50 to 87 percent over the past four years.

- Keep HOPE Alive uses a $500 award for two semesters after a student loses his or her HOPE scholarship. The program requires students to sign a contract, agreeing to meet with their advisors, attend academic skills workshops and participate in financial literacy training to improve their chances of re-qualifying for the HOPE scholarship. Since its inception, the program has helped to double the university’s graduation rates for students who have lost the HOPE scholarship, raising the rates from 20 to 40 percent.

- The Latino outreach and mentoring initiative, designed to support first-generation Latino students and funded by a grant from the Goizueta Foundation, was recognized with a 2015 Shining Light Award by the White House.

- Freshman Learning Communities (FLCs), which create learning communities of students with similar interests, have grown significantly in size and impact since 2010, with freshmen who enroll in the communities up from less than 50 percent to 80 percent today. FLCs are organized around meta-majors such as STEM, Health, Business and Education. Throughout their first year, students are exposed to different majors in their areas of interest, allowing them to make informed academic decisions and reducing changes between majors. A newly implemented career advising platform

**U.S. News & World Report ranked Georgia State 5th in the country among the “most innovative” universities, a list of schools nominated by college and university leaders. The list includes institutions that are making the most innovative improvements in curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology or facilities.**

**U.S. News & World Report ranked Georgia State 14th in the nation for its commitment to undergraduate teaching, among institutions such as Yale, Stanford, Duke and Michigan. The publication identified schools “where faculty has an unusually strong commitment to undergraduate teaching.”**
helps students understand the connections among their choices of academic majors and potential careers by providing students with national employment, hiring and salary data.

- Many other instructional innovations and programs have been added or expanded to increase student success, including redesigned and flipped courses in numerous departments, optimized course scheduling and the expansion of Supplemental Instruction into more than 200 course sections every semester. With the creation of a Center for Instructional Innovation in 2011 there have been 67 faculty digital champions supporting the development of online classes and instructional models to meet the needs of students. The Digital Literacy Community Initiative now includes 15 courses. A Center for Instructional Effectiveness was established in 2014 with a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning to improve the instructional effectiveness of our faculty. The Center introduced a Certificate in College Teaching for graduate students, training for International Teaching Assistants and expanded its support for first-time professors.

The University Assistantship Program has been expanded to support Honors College students. Incoming freshmen are matched with a department or office of interest to provide an experiential learning opportunity as they work on special projects or research, typically earning a stipend of up to $2,500 for their work. There are now a record 232 assistantships ranging from research lab work to participating in special ensemble performances.

Georgia State’s top academic scholarship supporting honors students, the Presidential Scholarship has been expanded from seven scholarships in 2012 to 10 in 2015. This scholarship provides eight semesters of tuition support, a stipend for textbooks and living expenses, a paid university assistantship and a stipend of up to $2,500 for research, typically earning a stipend in academic field-relevant businesses that are considered a critical component of their undergraduate major and/ or minor curricula. In 2014-15, more than 13,000 signature experiences were completed by students, more than 4,000 students were involved in civic engagement and more than 1,000 internships were completed. Preliminary evaluation data suggest that students realize advances in critical thinking, communication, professional networking and confirmation of academic goals during signature experiences.

A cooperative education (co-op) program has been added as an option in select departments. Co-op students work full-time for six months as paid co-op employees in academic field-relevant businesses that are considered a critical component of their academic program. Students can complete two separate co-op placements of work directly related to their majors and do not take classes during their co-op placements. Between co-op placements, students return to complete their academic studies as full-time students. In 2014-15, 16 students enrolled in co-op.

**INITIATIVE 2: Establish a Student Success Center.**
A University Advisement Center was established in 2013 to improve communication and support of undergraduate students. More than 40 new professional advisers were hired. This resulted in the student/adviser ratio being lowered from more than 700 to one to the national average of 300 to one. In addition, Georgia State implemented a cutting-edge, analytics-based advising tracking system, GPS Advising, in 2012. Based on more than 2.5 million historical Georgia State grades, the system tracks 800 different attributes related to academic progress for each undergraduate every day. In 2014, academic advisers had 43,000 one-on-one meetings with students that were prompted by alerts from GPS Advising. In part because of such interventions, the number of unneeded courses — courses students enroll in and pay for that do not advance students towards completion of their degrees — has declined by an average of five credit hours per graduating senior over the past two years, saving students an estimated $10 million in tuition and fees annually.

**INITIATIVE 3: Implement an Undergraduate Signature Experience.**
The Undergraduate Signature Experience Program, created in 2012, includes experiential learning options for students. It includes internships, research experiences, community service-learning projects, field studies, study abroad trips, clinical rotations, student teaching, honors thesis preparation and other experiential opportunities for students outside the classroom. There are six broad categories of signature opportunities available to students: Arts, City, Global, Professional, Research and Service. There are more than 350 signature experience options. All departments with undergraduate programs offer at least one signature experience option and 49 percent of all departments require a signature experience in their undergraduate major and/ or minor curricula. In 2014-15, more than 13,000 signature experiences were completed by students, more than 4,000 students were involved in civic engagement and more than 1,000 internships were completed. Preliminary evaluation data suggest that students realize advances in critical thinking, communication, professional networking and confirmation of academic goals during signature experiences.

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INITIATIVE 4: Establish an Honors College.

After a long history of various honors programs at Georgia State, the Honors College was created in 2011 to advocate for the educational experiences and resources needed for high-ability students and moved to new and expanded facilities in 2013. The Honors College fosters a vibrant community to advance undergraduate scholarship, enhance research, foster service and compete for prestigious awards and fellowships. Since its creation, a record 1,600 students have been selected to participate. The College’s 2015 entering freshman class averages a high school grade point average of 3.8 and SAT scores that are more than 20 points higher (1320) than they were in 2012. The Honors College also has produced 10 national award recipients: a 2015 Goldwater Scholarship winner; a Marshall Scholarship finalist; numerous Fulbright winners and winners of several other prestigious national awards and fellowships. In keeping with the university maxim that students from all backgrounds can succeed, the Honors College student population is about 50 percent Pell Grant eligible, has numerous first-generation college students and mirrors the diversity of the university.

GOAL 2
Significantly strengthen and grow the base of distinctive graduate and professional programs that assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders.

INITIATIVE 1: Expand support for doctoral programs.

An Office of Graduate Studies was established, and an Associate Provost for Graduate Studies was appointed in 2014 to increase focus on doctoral- and master’s-level programming, recruitment and retention. Professional development workshops for graduate students addressing a range of topics occur monthly, and the first campus-wide Graduate Student Orientation was held in fall 2015, with more than 400 new students attending.

The University Fellows Program was started in 2011 as a university-funded program to increase the quantity and quality of doctoral students enrolled at Georgia State by providing assistantships for the best students in strategic areas. The program has supported more than 170 doctoral students since 2011, with a budget of $2.2 million annually. The Office of Graduate Studies’ Final Year Fellowship Program targets students’ progression to degree completion by providing a monthly stipend to support doctoral students completing dissertations. A fellowship adviser assists graduate students applying for prestigious awards from foundations such as Fulbright, Ford and Melkonian and federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, Supplemen-
GOAL 2 continued

INITIATIVE 2: Leverage our national reputation in professional degree programs for the development of societal leaders.

Interdisciplinary and professional degree offerings have been implemented and include the Doctorate in Education, Doctorate in Nursing Practice, M.S. in Analytics, Dual MPH/JD, Master’s in Law, Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Health IT and a new Entrepreneurship minor that can be completed as part of any undergraduate degree at the university.

Several specialized programs designed to develop leadership and professional skills have been initiated or expanded.

- The Women Lead Program provides undergraduate female students access to community partners, leadership training, networking and strategic career development to encourage them to strive for top leadership positions across various sectors upon graduation. The program engages young women through learning in the classroom, developing mentoring relationships, and organizing and leading programs on campus.
- The Panthers on Wall Street (PWS) Program immerses promising students in the heart of America’s financial district. It includes 20 undergraduate and master’s students who are competitively selected and travel to Wall Street to visit with top firms. Since the program’s inception, 25 percent of PWS participants now work in New York City. The program is self-sustaining as donations from PWS alumni provide the funds necessary to run each year’s program.
- In the heart of Atlanta’s financial district, Georgia State’s Buckhead Executive Education Center is the primary location for students studying in the graduate or executive programs offered by the J. Mack Robinson College of Business. Opened in 2005 as the location for Robinson’s Executive MBA Program, the Center serves thousands of students participating in more than 20 different degree-programs, including the new MS in Analytics, and in non-degree programs. The center features technically advanced lecture-style classrooms, flexible classrooms, numerous conference and group study breakout rooms.

GOAL 3

Become a leading public research university addressing the most challenging issues of the 21st century.

In 2015, Georgia State secured $101 million in annual research awards, which included $70.2 million in federal funding — the highest external grant funding in the university’s history. Federal sponsorship accounts for 70 percent of the total research volume, a 21 percent increase from the previous year. This funding includes increases of 33 percent from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and 18 percent from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In fiscal year 2015, Georgia State ranked sixth in the nation for percent growth in NIH funding.

In the last five years, research awards have almost doubled. Georgia State is ranked in the top 10 for notable growth in NIH research funding over the last decade.* NIH is the largest source of funding for medical research in the world.

The number of principal investigators with more than $1 million in external funding has increased from nine in 2010 to 18 in 2015, seven of whom have portfolios of more than $2 million.

In the 2014 NSF Higher Education R&D expenditures data for all institutions, Georgia State ranked 105th for all non-medical school research and development expenditures, ahead of a number of Association of American Universities institutions.

INITIATIVE 1: Enhance a research culture.

Since 2011, 61 faculty scholars and researchers have been hired via the Second Century Initiative (2CI) and other strategic hiring. The primary goal was to build nationally and internationally recognized strength and critical mass using cluster hiring around common scholarly themes. This hiring initiative was intended to enhance Georgia State’s overall faculty quality, interdisciplinary richness, competitiveness and recognition for excellence in research. The 2CI and related strategic hiring has been transformative in enhancing the quantity and quality of scholarship and research at Georgia State.


Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) Eminent Scholars are among the nation’s top researchers and brightest minds in their fields. Since the strategic plan began, GRA Eminent Scholars at Georgia State have increased from three in 2011 to seven in 2015.

To honor and support faculty researchers, the Distinguished Visiting Scholars Program was established to bring faculty visitors to the campus to increase the presence of faculty from underrepresented groups and increase the likelihood of recruitment of these underrepresented faculty. There have been five Distinguished Visiting Scholars since 2012.

A Distinguished University Professorship also was established...
to recognize a sustained and outstanding record in scholarship and instruction, and to provide the impetus for continuing high achievement. There have been 25 Distinguished University Professors appointed since 2012.

Regents’ Professorships are bestowed on distinguished Georgia State faculty whose scholarly achievements are recognized nationally and internationally as innovative and renowned. There are 32 Georgia State Regents’ Professors — 14 of whom have been added since 2010.

INITIATIVE 2: Establish University-Level Research Centers.

Public and private funding agencies are focusing increasingly on finding solutions to interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research problems that will have a significant societal and economic impact. To assure Georgia State’s competitiveness in attracting research funding to address these critical challenges, the strategic plan called for the establishment of University Research Centers built on successful interdisciplinary collaborations to address challenges facing our rapidly changing society. In FY15, the five University Research Centers have secured more than $20.5 million in funding. Six University-Level Research Centers have been created to date: 1) the Center for Molecular and Translational Medicine, 2) the Center for Diagnostics and Therapeutics, 3) the Center for Behavioral Neuroscience, 4) the Center for Nano-Optics, 5) the Center for Obesity Reversal and established in fall 2015 — 6) the Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development.

In 2010, Georgia State’s first university-level Research Institute was established — the Institute for Biomedical Science (IBMS). IBMS is a leading multidisciplinary research and education institute dedicated to advancing fundamental and innovative biomedical research that improves human health and educates future generations of leading biomedical scientists and health professionals related to biomedical sciences. The Institute has partnerships with universities around the nation and in nine countries. In FY15, it generated more than $6.9 million in research funding.

INITIATIVE 3: Create a Georgia State Faculty Fellowship Program.

A Georgia State Faculty Fellowship Program was developed in 2011 to allow faculty to have time to facilitate completion of applications for preeminent international and national fellowships or awards. Since the program was developed, there have been 18 fellows and of those, 10 have received external awards.

A RECORD-BREAKING YEAR FOR RESEARCH

Annual research awards of $101 million received in fiscal year 2015 exceeded the $100 million milestone — a first in the university’s history.

Awards total of $20 million more than the previous year.

Federal sponsorship, accounting for more than 70% of the total research volume, grew by 21%.

INITIATIVE 4: Enhance supporting infrastructure for the conduct of research.

Research administration support services have been strengthened by expanding central research administration management, adding online administrative systems and adding new, distributed research administration staff in colleges and departments to provide more local services. Research information has been strengthened with Research Solutions Vertical where all research grants and compliance management functions are now digital. ScholarWorks, an open source archive of scholarly output for faculty was introduced. The CURVE (Collaborative University Research and Visualization Environment), opened in the University Library in 2014, is a technology-rich discovery space supporting research and digital scholarship. A new Chief Innovation Officer was hired in 2014 to direct the university’s Information Systems and Technology Department and to help define and implement innovative strategies and technology solutions to advance the university.

A new research lab building adjacent to the Petit Science Center is scheduled to be completed in June 2016 and will provide expansion space for new research faculty who need state-of-the-art wet labs and related core facilities.

INITIATIVE 5: Enhance Georgia State’s contributions to the sciences, and health and medical research and education.

Contributions to health and medical education include the establishment of the new School of Public Health (SPH) in 2013, which offers master’s, Ph.D. and graduate certificate programs. Students in the SPH have increased from 227 in 2013 to more than 300 in 2015 and the school now has more than 500 alumni. Faculty and staff in the School of Public Health are focused on educating students, research, implementing solutions to societal problems and partnering with community organizations to develop answers to the public health challenges faced by communities in Georgia and cities across the globe. The SPH strategically focuses its research and educational programs in areas such as urban health disparities, chronic diseases, tobacco regulation and violence prevention.

Georgia State is classified by the Carnegie Foundation in the Highest Research Activity category.

The number of patents granted over three years since the strategic plan began has increased by a record 300%. 

GOAL 3 continued
GOAL 4
Be a leader in understanding the complex challenges of cities and developing effective solutions.

INITIATIVE 1: Form the Georgia State University Council for the Progress of Cities.
The Council for the Progress of Cities was established in 2011 with representatives from every college and school to coordinate researchers across campus who focus on urban-relevant and focused research, and to identify urban research strengths from among the more than 80 faculty who self-identify as being interested in urban problems and scholarship. The Council has identified three primary areas of urban research strengths: urban well-being and health disparities; poverty and inequality in cities and urban areas; and resilient cities and urban areas. A pilot internal research grant program provided seed funds to advance urban research.

The Council has developed five primary objectives: 1) increase the quantity and quality of academic scholarship based on urban topics within disciplines and through interdisciplinary collaborations; 2) increase links with governmental and community organizations that are addressing issues of urbanization and metropolitan growth; 3) increase the extent to which Georgia State has on the development, implementation and evaluation of urban and metropolitan policies and programs; 4) develop a consortium with other university-based academic entities addressing issues of urbanization and metropolitan issues; and 5) develop a university-wide Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies curriculum and concentrations or interdisciplinary graduate programs focused on urban and metropolitan issues.

INITIATIVE 2: Highlight the arts and media.
The Creative Media Industries Institute (CMII) was established in 2014 to expand the quality and quantity of workforce training, expand research capacity, increase entrepreneurship opportunities and develop curriculum in the creative media industries. A Woodruff Foundation grant for $22.8 million supports the Institute’s new facility which will open in fall 2016. CMII programs focus in the areas of communication/media, entrepreneurship, game and production specializations, interactive media, data visualization, media analytics, arts management and new media studies.

In June 2015, Georgia State entered into a partnership with Georgia Public Television to introduce GSU-TV, a digital sub-channel with student-produced original series and a growing library of repurposed content. GSU-TV offers students the opportunity to participate in a practicum where they are responsible for developing and producing broadcast programming for the channel.

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GOAL 5
Achieve distinction in globalizing the university.

This consortium was established in 2015 and is called the Global Partnership for Better Cities (GPBC). It includes faculty from partner universities in South Africa and Hong Kong. The first Global Partnership Symposium on Better Cities will occur in Atlanta in spring 2016. The GPBC is founded on joint-research projects taking place in Atlanta, Hong Kong, Johannesburg and Cape Town to advance understanding of western, eastern and southern hemisphere conceptual frameworks for studying cities and addressing their challenges. The partnership has started student exchanges, scholar visits for completing research and development of joint courses across universities.

Georgia State has identified five strategic countries in which to focus its activities internationally. Five emerging-market task forces have been formed to focus on joint activities and university links in 1) Brazil, 2) China, 3) Korea, 4) South Africa and 5) Turkey. More than 90 bilateral agreements among universities in these and other strategic countries have been established. Each task force has developed an external advisory board of prominent civic, community and academic leaders who are dedicated to advancing initiatives in the task force countries.
INITIATIVE 2: Promote externally funded research on the challenges facing emerging nations.
Two initiatives have provided internal seed grant funds to deepen partnerships and prepare research grants for external funding:

- The International Strategic Initiatives Grant Program leverages external funding in support of internationalizing the university. In 2013, the Office of International Initiatives (OII) awarded multiple seed grants totaling $100,000. Annual Georgia State commitments over the 16-year history of the program resulted in the award of more than $1.6 million in seed grants that helped leverage some $60 million in external funding from public, private, governmental and non-governmental institutions.

- The Global Partnership for Better Cities program provides grants to internal faculty groups to travel to partner universities in South Africa and Hong Kong and develop proposals with local scholars who have a unique focus on cities in their urban areas. These grants leverage external funding in support of internationalization of university urban research in relationship to goal four. Topics have centered on urban resilience, transnational and migrant wellbeing, urban health, housing, infrastructure and municipal government finance.

INITIATIVE 3: Establish a Georgia State University International Center.
Georgia State established a new International Center, which opened in 2015 in Dahlberg Hall. Its location in the center of campus brings space, visibility and coordination to international programs, activities and services. It houses the Office of International Initiatives, which is responsible for the strategic integration and coordination of the university’s international initiatives, partnerships, grants, program development and management, events and activities, study abroad programs and the Confucius Institute. Between 2011 and 2014, more than 100 events were organized by the office during International Education Week (IEW). IEW is a joint U.S. departments of State and Education initiative to promote international education at U.S. schools, colleges and universities. In 2015, the Office of International Initiatives was named the International Education Program winner in the Governor's International Awards.

INITIATIVE 4: Enhance the global competency of students, faculty and staff.
A new Global Studies Institute was established in 2014 in the College of Arts & Sciences, and the first director was appointed in 2015. The institute, with a core interdisciplinary faculty, focuses on pressing international problems and opportunities through collaborative research, undergraduate and master’s degree programs, outreach activities and international centers. It also integrates the Asian, Hellenic, Latin American and Latino, Middle East, and Human Rights and Democracy centers.

Since the strategic plan was adopted in 2011, the number of international students studying at Georgia State and the number of students studying abroad have increased. International students at Georgia State have increased from 1,574 in fall 2011 to 2,148 in fall 2015, providing students with the opportunity to live and learn with students from 157 countries.

“Big thinking and Big plans produce Big results.”

-President Mark P. Becker
The largest numbers of Georgia State’s international students come from China, India, and Korea, mirroring national trends in international student enrollment.

Students who participate in study abroad opportunities have increased from 636 in 2011 to 836 in 2015. Georgia State faculty-led study abroad program offerings have increased from 32 in 2011 to 52 in 2015. Study Abroad Programs award more than $1 million in Georgia State study abroad scholarship support to allow those students who have limited opportunities to live and study abroad, thanks in part to the mandatory student international education fee approved by Georgia State students. The number of study abroad scholarship awards has increased from 356 International Education Fee scholarship recipients in 2011 to 541 in 2015, and from four Global Experience Scholarship recipients in 2011 to 54 in 2015.

New international programs have been created to increase Georgia State’s international educational footprint, including the Guangzhou Overseas High School Program, the Southwest Jiaotong University 2+2 Biology Program, the University of International Business and Economics 1+1 MBA and MPA Dual Degree program and the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program.

A Faculty Mentoring Program for Visiting Scholars was created to assist interested partners with professional development for their faculty. The program encourages cross-cultural exchange and builds research networks for mentees and mentors. Since 2013, 18 international faculty scholars have been mentored on campus by their Georgia State peers.

A four-week Summer Institute was created in 2012 to give opportunities to more than 40 Georgia State faculty to teach international students at Georgia State. Since its inception, more than 300 international students have come to Georgia State during the summer semester to participate in the program. More than 150 Georgia State students also have participated in the Global Ambassador Program, where they serve as a cultural liaison between the international students and Georgia State, attend special events and local excursions, facilitate small-group outings and host “Dinner in America” in homes. Global Ambassadors earn a leadership certificate and strengthen their intercultural communication and leadership abilities, increase global networks and learn more about different cultures and languages.