

Georgia Perimeter College, Georgia State University

Consolidation Implementation Committee

Meeting to be held June 4, 2015

Centennial Hall, Georgia State University

6-4-15 RECOMMENDATIONS (CONSENT AGENDA)

[Committee 9: On-Line Education \(Academics\):\(reviewed & supported by Tim Renick\):](#)

1. Recommends that instruction in distance education courses should demonstrate comparable quality to instruction in face to face courses, with rigorous expectations and assignments for which faculty assume primary responsibility:

SACSCOC requires that instruction be of comparable quality, regardless of instructional mode. Thus, whether instruction is entirely or partially online, synchronous or asynchronous, Georgia State should expect the same level of quality from its instructors. This expectation should be reflected in the attention paid to course development, and the review of instruction in the assessment of student learning outcomes, and in instructors' annual evaluations and promotion decisions.

2. Recommends that the university should keep comparative data on completion rates and DFW rates in online and face to face courses, by student level:

SACSCOC requires that instruction be of comparable quality, regardless of instructional mode. A national best practice in the measurement of comparable quality is to keep track of completion rates/DFW rates for both online and face to face courses. Because DFW rates tend to be higher in online courses for lower division undergraduates than for upper division undergraduates or graduate students, the rates should be disaggregated by student level. These rates can be reported in the unit's self-study during academic program review, among other uses.

3. Recommends that wherever online general education courses exist at both the downtown campus and Perimeter, the disciplines at both campuses should meet to ensure that overlapping courses are aligned in terms of their Common Course Outlines:

Of the 149 general education courses in the core curriculum, eight are currently taught online by both GSU and GPC (Math 1111 College Algebra, Math 1113 Precalculus, Math 1070 Elementary Statistics, POLS 1101 American Government, POLS 2401 Global Issues, ECON 2105 Macroeconomics, ECON 2106 Microeconomics, and PSYC 1101 Intro to General Psychology). Chairs from the relevant disciplines at both campuses should ensure that these shared courses are comparable in terms of their learning

outcomes, assignments, and expectations.

4. Recommends that new online course descriptions and syllabi should be approved through regular department/college procedures, and new course templates should be reviewed by CII for adherence to university accessibility, security, and design standards:

Proposals for new courses are to be made by faculty who have completed GSU certification/training in distance education. The OWG envisions a two-step approval pathway. Evaluation of subject content remains with the discipline and college; evaluation of the template's compliance with federal and accreditation standards regarding accessibility and security, as well as university-wide design standards, is a central function to be performed by CII.

5. Recommends that online course developers should consult with instructional technologists/designers at CII to ensure compliance with accessibility and security standards, and incorporate best practices related to content design and delivery:

Instructional designers help speed the course development process, ensure that the course shell is federally compliant and meets university-wide design standards, introduce instructors new to distance education to best practices in this instructional modality, and enable even seasoned instructors to improve their use of online education technology.

6. Recommends that academic and student support services should be offered virtually and in person during extended hours. Investment in the growth of such services should keep pace with that of online programs, and all online programs and workshops should comply with ADA:

SACSCOC's Policy on Distance Education requires that academic support services must be "distinct and appropriately related to" distance education. Because distance students are often not on campus and are disproportionately adult learners, they often require extended weekday and weekend hours for such services. These services include: registration, advisement, financial aid, disability services, instructional design, technology support, tutoring, proctoring, computer facilities, library services, and career services.

7. Recommends that the University should ensure continuous quality improvement and effectiveness of its distance education programs by instituting appropriate and specific processes of systematic course evaluation, student evaluation of instructor, student learning outcomes assessment, and academic program review:

The University should develop a method for ensuring course quality and student learning outcomes. In the meantime, the access college would continue to use the Quality Matters rubric until and unless a university-wide methodology is developed. Student evaluation would be based on an instrument similar to that used in face to face courses but modified to capture the unique online characteristics. Curriculum development and program review would remain the responsibility of college-wide disciplines.

8. Recommends that the university's distance education programs should continue to comply with state authorization requirements for online students:

Administration of state authorizations is, at present, an onerous task, and should be the joint responsibility of the head of GSU's centralized administrative structure for distance education and a representative of the Office of Legal Affairs. To ease the authorization burden, the university should become a member of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement as soon as the state of Georgia joins.

9. Recommends that the university should review and adjust existing policies and procedures that ensure Rehabilitation Act/ADA, student identity verification, and FERPA compliance in online courses with respect to the learning management system and online education technology, including third party vendors and services:

Policies and procedures to ensure compliance should include: an online request form for online students with disabilities seeking services (accommodations); review of current online education technology to ensure compliance; a mandatory procurement procedure for all online education technology addressing compliance, regardless of cost; a visibly posted description by CII of compliance requirements for courses that use online education technology; faculty orientation, training, and support in adhering to compliance requirements; and a certification procedure for ensuring course compliance.

10. Recommends that the all campus-based testing facilities should provide test-takers with workstations equipped with regularly updated accessibility software and hardware:

Online education technology changes rapidly, and this is true for both testing software and hardware. The director of campus online testing facilities should work with the compliance officers to ensure accessibility and privacy requirements are met.

11. Recommends that Georgia State's distance education programs should enable a diverse student body—including adult learners, military veterans, students with disabilities, and first-generation college students—to obtain an affordable and accessible education:

One of the advantages of online programs is that it appeals to a diverse population of students in pursuit of higher educational degrees that have previously been inaccessible due to work schedules, family demands, or expense. Online education will attract more diverse students to GSU by granting access to those who were previously denied entry due to these factors.

12. Recommends that online education at GSU should contribute to the affordability of a student's education through the use of e-rates, e-texts, and Open Educational Resources.

Existing courses should be encouraged to include OER or low-cost, non-textbook content wherever desirable:

Affordability is a key tenet of GSU's mission as an urban public university. By using e-rates, e-texts, and Open Educational Resources, online education at GSU will contribute to the affordability of a student's education. Existing courses should be encouraged to include OER or low-cost, non-textbook content wherever possible and desirable.

13. Recommends that Georgia State's distance education programs should, first and foremost, serve students in Atlanta, in the state of Georgia, and in the states administered by the Southern Region Education Board:

As an educational institution in the state of Georgia, GSU's distance education programs need to first serve students in the Atlanta area, in the state of Georgia, and in the states administered by the Southern Region Education Board. Additional State Reciprocity Agreements should be pursued for future expansion of GSU Online.

14. Recommends that investment in distance education programs should target units with a cogent rationale to use this instructional mode and a robust capacity to develop a high-quality program; as well as the program's local, national, and international reach:

Georgia State Online has the potential to use distance education methods to make significant pedagogical contributions, and reach out to student populations to which the university might not otherwise have access. Students enrolling in distance education programs might be in-state, in the region, or further afield, on military bases or overseas. When considering where to invest funds for course and program development, technology, marketing, and so on, administrators should be guided both by the program's pedagogical value and its outreach potential.

15. Recommends that as part of its commitment to adult learners and the USG's Complete College Georgia initiative, the university should look for entrepreneurial opportunities to partner with major employers to give their employees the opportunity to pursue high quality online degrees:

According to the USG in announcing their Go Back Move Ahead program, there are more than 1.1 million Georgians of working age that have some college credit but have not finished a degree. Many employers offer their employees Tuition Assistance Programs for this purpose. GSU should pursue partnerships with major employers to give their employees the opportunity to pursue high quality online degrees as part of our commitment to adult learners and the USG's Complete College Georgia initiative.

16. Recommends that the University should explore mechanisms to ensure an appropriate balance between centralizing the administration of online education, and supporting innovations in distance education by individual faculty, departments, and colleges:

Some distance education functions might be centralized while others left to the colleges and departments. The administrative structure should answer the question: to whom will instructors of hybrid and fully online courses report?

17. Recommends that the University Senate consider the most effective Senate mechanism by which to represent the interests and needs of distance education:

As distance education grows at Georgia State, faculty, staff, and students will need a Senate body for considering new policies and procedures affecting them.

18. Recommends that the university should explore whether to provide a unified online general education curriculum:

An online core curriculum would enable the institution to offer online B.A./B.S. programs.

19. Recommends that the university explore the location and pricing of proctored testing:

Proctored testing is a necessity in distance education, in order to comply with federal regulations requiring verification that the person taking the test is the same person as the student enrolled in the course. Electronic proctoring enables students at a distance to take tests from wherever they are, but is many times more expensive than on-site testing. The university should consider affordability, convenience, and price in its testing policy.

20. Recommends that students should be oriented to the LMS and support services; offered a means to self-assess the adequacy of their academic/technical/organizational skills for online learning; given course-embedded assessments of their online-readiness and progression; and advised as to their capacity to succeed in the online environment:

Given the high drop-out rates in online courses nationwide, the university needs to expend special efforts to ensure that students in Georgia State's online courses succeed. Students who can focus on course content and experiences rather than using technologies, finding resources, and getting themselves organized, are more likely to stay in and succeed in online courses.

21. Recommends that the university examine the best mechanism to assure compliance with accessibility and privacy regulations in distance education:

Ensuring compliance with federal standards regarding accessibility and privacy is a key central function of a university offering significant amounts of distance education. As the recent high-profile case involving Harvard and MIT demonstrated, the federal government is scrutinizing online accessibility and privacy, and federal funding of the university is at stake.

Committee 28: Legal Affairs and Handbooks:
(reviewed & supported by Kerry Heyward)

1. Recommends as OWGs develop and merge policies and procedures for the consolidated Georgia State University, policies and procedures should be similarly formatted pursuant to the prior Georgia State University's standards on policies and procedures, including (1) a clear delineation as to what is policy and what is procedure and (2) a clear identification of the responsible unit/department for each policy and procedures at the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendation will standardize policies and procedures at the consolidated Georgia State University, providing consistency and greater efficiencies.

2. Recommends that if there is an approved policy and procedures for the consolidated Georgia State University, then it should be followed and it supersedes all previous applicable policies and procedures:

Recommendation will ensure that any newly approved policy and procedures for the consolidated Georgia State University trump existing policies and procedures at either institution.

3. Recommends that if a new policy and procedures for the consolidated Georgia State University has not been approved, then the prior Georgia State University policy and procedures on that topic should be followed:

Recommendations sets forth a clear priority order for existing policies and procedures.

4. Recommends that if there is no prior Georgia State University policy and procedures on a topic, but there is an existing Georgia Perimeter College policy and procedures on a topic, then applicable Georgia Perimeter College unit/department responsible for such policy and procedures shall present it to the applicable Consolidation Functional Area Coordinator for remittal to an existing Consolidation Committee for consideration or for approval or denial from the consolidated Georgia State University library of policies and procedures:

There may be some Georgia Perimeter College policies and procedures that will not be considered by current Consolidation Committees; this recommendation provides a vetting process for those policies and procedures.

5. Recommends that when there is no approved policy for the consolidated Georgia State University, there may be instances where neither prior institution had a relevant policy, or where it is necessary or beneficial to modify prior policies pending the development of a final policy for the consolidated Georgia State University. In such cases, the following officials have the authority to issue written guidance interpreting, amending or modifying prior policies from either institution:

- A. The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs of the consolidated Georgia State University for all policies related to academic affairs, including, but not limited to, faculty matters, student affairs, and research;**
- B. The Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration of the consolidated Georgia State University for all policies and procedures related to operations, including, but not limited to, finance, facilities, and information technology;**
- C. The President of the consolidated Georgia State University in any subject area.**

Any amendments or modifications to policies and procedures pursuant to this authority shall be considered interim changes, and will be reviewed as soon as possible by the applicable consolidated Georgia State University administrator or governing body in order to finalize a policy for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendation sets forth a process by which issues that have no “home” Committee can get vetted and approved or denied, at least on an interim basis through the consolidation implementation process. Following consolidation, the issues will be vetted through the appropriate governing bodies or applicable administrator.

6. Recommends that, following consolidation, any prior Georgia Perimeter College institutional memoranda of understanding regarding cooperative organizations be transferred to the consolidated Georgia State University (unless specifically retained in the name of Georgia Perimeter College or its cooperative organization). The Committee further recommends that all associated policies and procedures related to cooperative organizations of the prior Georgia State University be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Upon consolidation, Georgia Perimeter College’s institutional memoranda of understanding will cease to exist (unless specifically retained in the name of Georgia Perimeter College or its cooperative organization) and they should be transferred to the remaining entity to ensure continuity of service. Recommendations will also standardize the cooperative organization process at all campuses.

7. Recommends that any prior Georgia Perimeter College legal agreements be transitioned to the consolidated Georgia State University. Following consolidation, the Committee further recommends that all legal agreements follow the prior Georgia State University contracting policies and procedures, including compliance with procurement processes, review by the Office of Legal Affairs, and execution by an authorized signatory of the consolidated Georgia State University:

Upon consolidation, Georgia Perimeter College will cease to exist and its legal agreements should be transferred to the consolidated Georgia State University to ensure

continuity of service. Recommendations will also standardize the contracting process at all campuses and ensure all proper compliance, legal, and administrative oversight occurs.

8. Recommends that the consolidated Georgia State University follow the prior Georgia State University signature authority delegation policy and procedures:

Recommendation will standardize the signature authority process at all campuses.

9. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University Office of Legal Affairs and the Division of Human Resources, along with other applicable units/departments, oversee any prior, pending, or threatened (a) unfair labor practice charges or complaints before the EEOC or any other federal, state, or local labor relations boards; (b) faculty or staff grievances; or (c) arbitrations, mediations, or the type of proceeding for the consolidated Georgia State University. Further, the Committee recommends that prior Georgia State University policies and procedures for these areas be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize the legal and human resources process at all campuses.

10. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University Division of Finance & Administration and University Auditing and Advisory Services Office, along with other applicable units/departments, oversee internal, external, and University System of Georgia auditing and advisory services for the consolidated Georgia State University. Further, the Committee recommends that prior Georgia State University policies and procedures for these areas be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize the auditing process at all campuses.

11. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University Office of Legal Affairs be responsible for all litigation and handling of outside counsel for the consolidated Georgia State University. Further, the Committee recommends that all prior Georgia State University legal policies and procedures be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize the legal process at all campuses.

12. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University policies and procedures regarding the Compliance Hotline be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University, including staffing of the Hotline Triage Committee:

Recommendation will standardize the Hotline reporting process at all campuses.

13. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University Office of Legal Affairs be responsible for all consent decrees, judgments, or other decrees or orders, settlement agreements, and other binding documents for the consolidated Georgia State University. Further, the Committee recommends that all prior Georgia State University legal policies and procedures related to such legal matters be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize these processes at all campuses.

14. Recommends that, following consolidation, any prior Georgia State University and/or Georgia Perimeter College licenses, permits, governmental approvals and clearances necessary to conduct business be transitioned to the consolidated Georgia State University (unless specifically retained in the name of Georgia Perimeter College or its cooperative organization). The Committee further recommends that all associated policies and procedures related to such licenses, permits, and governmental approvals and clearances follow the applicable prior Georgia State University policies and procedures:

Upon consolidation, Georgia Perimeter College's licenses, permits, and governmental approvals and clearances will cease to exist (unless specifically retained in the name of Georgia Perimeter College or its cooperative organization) and they should be transferred to the remaining entity to ensure continuity of service. Recommendations will also standardize the licensure, permitting, governmental approval/clearances process at all campuses.

15. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University Office of Safety & Risk Management be responsible for all insurance, safety, and risk management processes (including loss and claims information) for the consolidated Georgia State University. Further, the Committee recommends that all prior Georgia State University policies and procedures related to these areas be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize these processes at all campuses.

16. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University policies and procedures relating to compliance with the Clery Act, as overseen by the Police Department and the Office of Legal Affairs, be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize these processes at all campuses.

17. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University policies and procedures relating to the Georgia Open Records Act, as overseen by the Office of Legal Affairs, be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize these processes at all campuses.

18. Recommends that the prior Georgia State University policies and procedures relating to worker's compensation be approved for the consolidated Georgia State University:

Recommendations will standardize these processes at all campuses.

[Committee 31: Business Operations and Contracts:](#)
[\(reviewed & supported by Jerry Rackliffe\):](#)

1. Recommends that the consolidated University use TouchNet Payment Plan module for student payment plans:

Georgia Perimeter College uses Nelnet as its third party provider for student tuition and fee payment plans. Georgia State University uses Touchnet Payment Plan module to manage student tuition and fee payment plans in-house. The committee recommends handling this important function in-house using TouchNet to better control the costs, communication and enrollment for the consolidated University's students.

2. Recommends that the consolidated University use BlackboardPay to process student Financial Aid cash payments and other student refunds:

Georgia Perimeter College uses HigherOne as its third party provider for student refunds. Georgia State University allows students to choose BlackboardPay for the same purpose. While both solutions can provide the same functionality, Georgia State University is currently using the dual stripe feature on its Panther card id through BlackboardPay while Georgia Perimeter is not. This recommendation results in a lower number of students inconvenienced by a change in refund processors and lower cost to the consolidated University due to re-carding.

3. Recommends that the consolidated University use ACS to manage its student loan Portfolio:

Georgia Perimeter College has few loan programs and services its loans in-house. Georgia State University uses ACS, a 3rd party loan servicer, to manage its loan portfolio. This recommendation enables outsourced loan servicing for Georgia Perimeter College loan programs transitioning to the consolidated University, with no disruption for Georgia State University's existing loan programs.

4. Recommends that the consolidated University use TouchNet e-Statement module to provide a printer-friendly version of 1098-T forms for students:

Georgia Perimeter College uses Banner exclusively to produce 1098-T's for its students and makes the forms electronically available to students through its student information system. Georgia State University uses the same process in Banner but also uses the TouchNet e-Statement module to provide a more printer-friendly version. This recommendation will result in an added benefit for GPC students.

5. Recommends that the consolidated University use Travel Inc. as the preferred travel agency:

Georgia Perimeter College currently does not use a travel reservation system. Georgia State University uses the Travel Inc. travel agency to purchase airline tickets and find hotels. Travel Inc. provides a web based system utilizing Concur software. The Travel Inc. system can save money on the purchase of airline tickets, is easy to use, is efficient, and provides a variety of reports for review. The committee recommends the use of Travel Inc. as the preferred travel agency.