



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2013-2016**

**September 2013**

Dalton State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Dalton State College.

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## *Statement of Purpose and Mission*

Dalton State College is dedicated to providing broad access to quality higher education for the population of Northwest Georgia, thereby enhancing the region's economic vitality and quality of life. As an institution of the University System of Georgia, Dalton State College offers targeted bachelor's degrees, a full range of associate's degrees and career certificate programs, and a wide variety of public service activities. The College's work is strengthened by partnerships between the College and Northwest Georgia businesses and industries, governments, and schools.

The mission of Dalton State College consists of the following core commitments:

- 1) selection, support, and development of a talented, caring faculty and staff dedicated to scholarship and creating an open, cooperative, technologically enhanced learning environment;
- 2) excellence in a learning environment dedicated to serving a diverse student body, promoting high levels of student achievement, and providing a range of educational and student life opportunities and appropriate academic support services;
- 3) public service through economic development and cultural activities that address the needs and improve the quality of life of the region; and
- 4) continuous improvement in all aspects of its operations through the use of inclusive, participatory planning and meaningful assessment.

In fulfilling its mission, Dalton State College seeks to prepare and inspire its students to be active members within their professions and communities. As Dalton State College looks to the future and its place in a competitive, global society, it seeks to build upon its strengths as one of the most academically respected, student-oriented, and community-centered institutions of its kind.

## *Strategic Goals*

### **I. Increase Student Success**

The College will provide broad access to quality education to the residents of Northwest Georgia.

(Linked to the *University System of Georgia Strategic Plan* Strategic Imperative 1)

### **II. Seek and Steward Resources**

The College will make effective resource management a top priority by seeking new resources and strategically managing the resources it has to continue to grow and evolve into a premier four-year institution.

(Linked to the *University System of Georgia Strategic Plan* Strategic Imperatives 1 & 3)

### **III. Enhance/Expand Campus Life Opportunities**

The College will enhance and expand programs such as arts, athletics, and various other opportunities that are considered necessary components of a rich campus life.

(Linked to the *University System of Georgia Strategic Plan* Strategic Imperative 1)

### **IV. Create a Unique Campus Culture**

The College will make a concerted and intentional effort across all divisions to transform the culture of the institution such that all will feel a strong connection and commitment to Dalton State College and feel supportive of its mission, daily operations, and special events.

(Linked to the *University System of Georgia Strategic Plan* Imperatives 1 & 3)

## *Goals, Strategy and Planning Objectives*

### **I. Increase Student Success**

#### **Strengthen partnerships with P-12**

1. Expand the communication and collaboration between Dalton State faculty and staff and the faculty and staff in the P-12 systems that serve as feeders to DSC.
2. Collaborate with the P-12 systems to improve college enrollment, readiness, and success of high school graduates.

#### **Improve completion/access for students traditionally underserved**

3. Assess the needs of identified student populations that appear to need additional targeted intervention/support services, determining any areas that need special assistance.
4. Review relevant policies and procedures that might serve as barriers to student success and change these if needed.
5. Engage in targeted marketing efforts to reach traditionally underserved student populations.
6. Initiate new services and expand/enhance existing ones to better assist high risk students in being successful.

#### **Shorten time to degree**

7. Provide better advising services to ensure consistency and continuity.
8. Consider alternative course credit allocation, alternative scheduling, and alternative delivery formats to better accommodate working adults.
9. Consider policy revisions that will encourage students to complete their programs in a timely manner.

#### **Restructure instructional delivery**

10. Implement an annual individualized instructional assessment for faculty to identify areas for improvement and develop a plan for addressing those areas.
11. Improve D/F/W rates in all courses that consistently exceed 30% of students enrolled in the course.
12. Increase faculty development opportunities and expectations for involvement with an emphasis on implementation of evidence-based pedagogy and effective instructional practices to improve student success and course completion.
13. Expand hybrid and online course offerings, including quality control measures and training for faculty preparing to teach them for the first time.
14. Improve first year students' retention and success rates through a redesign of the First Year Experience course and overall program.

#### **Transform remediation**

15. Improve student-first time pass rates and ensure that the content of the learning support 0090 classes is such that students are prepared to successfully complete the required English and math courses in their respective certificate programs.
16. Improve student-first time pass rates in ENGL 0098, Reading 0098, and Math 0098 through implementation of alternative instructional design such that students exit on their first attempt and are prepared to successfully complete English 1101 and their selected course to satisfy the math requirement for Area A in the Core Curriculum.

## **II. Seek and Steward Resources**

### **Grow and manage existing assets while developing new opportunities to increase resources**

17. Continue to support the work of the institution by providing supplemental resources from private donors in the form of endowments, operating funds, student scholarships, real estate, and special projects.
18. Create an infrastructure to support sponsored operations and encourage faculty and staff to seek public and private external funding opportunities as needs arise and appropriate sources are identified.
19. Seek public/private and community partnerships to assist in securing additional resources for the institution.

### **Update/implement the Sasaki Master Plan and create a framework for campus facility expansion**

20. Engage the services of a consultant to update the Sasaki Master Plan and help determine an implementation strategy, including athletics.
21. Proceed with portions of the Master Plan that are already in progress.
22. Revisit the use of land for Wood Valley after pay-off in 2015.
23. Collaborate with the facilities staff from the Board of Regents' office on the system-wide space utilization plan.

### **Grow and manage human resources to help develop and nurture diverse and mutually beneficial relationships**

24. Continue to commit resources for professional development for faculty and staff as resources allow, realizing that this is an investment in the overall quality of the institution.
25. Increase diversity in hiring and retention of faculty and staff to broaden the representation of sub-groups in the population among our employees, to enrich our campus culture, and to ensure equal opportunity and equity.
26. Implement the recommendations of the recent salary study as resources allow.
27. Conduct a campus climate study to identify areas of the institution that need attention and develop an action plan to address those issues.

### **Implement smart business practices to increase sustainability, reduce risk, ensure compliance with Board of Regents/state/federal regulations, and engage in evidence-based decision-making**

28. Encourage all DSC employees to promote a more sustainable environment by actively participating in recycling efforts on campus for paper, aluminum, and plastic.
29. Continue to install low energy lighting throughout campus buildings and install more efficient temperature controls in buildings.
30. Institute a number of new and/or expanded risk control activities and policies to comply with all state and federal laws.
31. Engage in data-driven decision-making and, based on such data, make program additions/revisions/terminations and revise processes and procedures in an effort to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations.

### **Determine best practices and implement appropriate methods for increasing efficiency and service excellence in campus processes**

32. Identify processes utilized in various departments and conduct audits to determine where improvements are needed.
33. Engage in formal assessment processes and continuous improvement.

### **III. Enhance/Expand Campus Life Opportunities**

#### **Deliver activities after business hours and on weekends**

34. Provide academic arts on campus (theatre and music) and increase program offerings for the entire student body to include both after business hours and weekend activities.
35. Provide athletic activities after business hours and on weekends beginning fall 2013.
36. Provide increased student support services, program offerings, and resources for the entire student body to include both after business hours and weekend services.
37. Increase participation in residence life and campus programming.

#### **Develop joint service-learning opportunities between academic affairs and student services**

38. Implement at least one service learning project by spring 2016 in conjunction with a class for each school each semester.
39. Strengthen student understanding of social responsibility and stewardship in those students who participate in a service learning project.

#### **Provide adequate facilities for campus life activities and services**

40. Renovate the Bandy Gymnasium and the Pope Student Center to provide adequate and safe recreational space.
41. Replace existing housing stock with a new residence hall(s).
42. Renovate the Library to expand/enhance the Learning Commons.

#### **Enhance programming resources and support programs that reflect our diverse population**

43. Seek funds to hire a support services professional with expertise in diversity and inclusion who will develop/expand and promote quality of programs and services.
44. Revise Dalton State's website to include online resources that represent and/or address the needs of our diverse population.
45. Create opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to participate in diverse experiences.

#### **Diversify student leadership and student engagement opportunities on campus**

46. Establish Greek organizations on campus.
47. Increase the number of new leadership and involvement opportunities for campus residential students.

## **IV. Create a Unique Campus Culture**

### **Transform the culture of the College**

48. Conduct a campus climate assessment to help identify areas for improvement and then develop a plan based on results.
49. Engage in “branding” and identify what makes Dalton State unique.
50. Establish campus traditions, including annual events, events associated with athletics, and family-oriented events.
51. Explore the feasibility of providing/improving campus-level support services.
52. Incorporate diverse perspectives into courses and co-curricular activities as appropriate.
53. Encourage all faculty, staff, and students to engage in service to the campus and the larger community.

# University System of Georgia Strategic Plan

August, 2013

## *Framework of the Strategic Plan and Public Agenda for the University System of Georgia*

Public higher education has changed dramatically in the last ten years. Concerns about affordability are greater than ever, and pressures on quality continue to increase. Questions are raised about the value of getting a bachelor's degree at the same time data show that the jobs of the future will require higher levels of education. Unemployment rates among college graduates remain much lower than those without. But state support has declined and costs of attendance have shifted even more to families and students. Yet other large industrial nations, like China and India, are threatening the long-held U.S. leadership position in higher education and number of college graduates. To compete economically, Georgia must raise the attainment levels of its citizens.

Building upon the Governor's and USG Regents' Complete College Georgia initiative, the Strategic Plan and Public Agenda of the University System of Georgia will accelerate higher education's commitment to educational attainment, accountability, partnerships, performance, value, and global competitiveness. College is increasingly a prerequisite to a middle class life and is a key to economic development and creating strong communities. Our universities and colleges are providing the transfer of research, information, and critical thinking skills that will ensure Georgia's strong future in the knowledge-based economy. This public agenda for USG makes college completion and knowledge transfer a top priority through a series of actions and measures of progress with additional commitments to the Governor's Strategic Goals for Georgia.

Both the Governor's Strategic Goals and this USG Strategic Plan and Public Agenda share the goals of educating Georgia's citizens for success in the global economy with a commitment to preparation for life-long learning and involvement in society. Academic programs, research and services that correspond with job growth and creation will strengthen areas of distinct advantage for Georgia in the global marketplace. Higher education is a central contributor to the educational, economic, social, and cultural future of the state and has a major impact on health and quality of life measures. Through efficient deployment of research, teaching, and service and increased attention to public and private partnerships, the university system will ensure that it is a responsive and transformational enterprise for the citizens of Georgia. Use this website to track the forward progress of our public agenda for academic excellence, economic development, innovation and adaptation.

## **Strategic Imperative 1 - Commitment to Academic Excellence and Degree Completion**

*The future of our state depends on Georgians obtaining meaningful college credentials at a significantly higher rate than today. This commitment to degree completion will target the emerging workforce represented by our youth as well as the existing adult workforce, many of whom have some college but no degree.*

- **Develop Partnerships for College Readiness.**

The USG will develop more intentional partnerships with K-12 education and the Technical College system and better utilize programs and assessments to ensure academic readiness for all students. We will define the success of our partnerships by what benefits our students and the State of Georgia. Collectively, Georgia's educational partners will ensure that more Georgians graduate from high school ready for college and careers and increase the number of students participating in postsecondary education and earning degrees.

- **Reaffirm Commitment to Collegiate Access and Affordability.**

The USG will maintain its longstanding commitment to collegiate access, affordability, and value. Overall costs to students and families must be mitigated by affordable degree options and through continuance of a cost effective, access tier of colleges. Our access tier will accomplish this goal through a rigorous, focused commitment to educating students while minimizing some of the amenities that increasingly define, but also increase the cost of, a college education. Finally, private sector and alumni support is an absolute requirement to support our continued efforts to increase need-based grants and aid.

- **Develop New, Flexible, and Affordable Degree Options.**

The USG is committed to the development of new and flexible general education and degree program pathways that promote affordable and high-quality course and degree completion options to Georgians. Next generation academic program structures and innovations in distance learning, prior learning assessment, and open courses and learning resources provide opportunities for great expansion of the academic enterprise.

- **Ensure Student Support for At-risk Populations.**

The USG will continue the work to ensure student support for at-risk student populations, whether economically challenged or underprepared academically. From influencing aspirations for college to establishing services and support for enrolled students, the USG and its educational partners recognize that postsecondary education is increasingly a prerequisite to a middle class life and is a key to economic development and creating strong communities.

- **Commit to High-Quality Programs, Teaching, and Learning.**

The USG is committed to maintaining and improving the quality and diversity of academic programs, teaching, and learning opportunities. By placing an emphasis on academic program reviews, accreditation standards, faculty development opportunities, and pedagogical improvements, the universities and colleges will ensure the continual improvement of programs, curriculum, learning outcomes, and assessments.

## **Strategic Imperative 2 - Commitment to Economic Development and World Class Research**

*The USG will ensure that Georgia remains a leader in an increasingly competitive and complex global economy by supporting business recruitment and retention, driving business creation, and spurring research and creativity that make the state a center of innovation, discovery, and entrepreneurship.*

*Academic programs, research, and services that correspond with job growth and creation will strengthen areas of distinct advantage for Georgia in the global marketplace. Through efficient deployment of research, teaching, and service and increased attention to public and private partnerships, the university system will ensure that it is a responsive and transformational enterprise for the citizens of Georgia.*

- **Focus on Economic Development.**

The USG will drive the growth of our state's knowledge-based economy and entrepreneurial ecosystem while supporting the economic development efforts of our government, businesses, and communities across the state. The USG will work with partners to identify economic development needs, to enable research and innovation, and to provide a visible gateway to the vast assets of the system. Whether through business and industry relationships, education and training with military partnerships, internship activities, or other direct linkages of academic programs to career opportunities, the system and its campuses will strive for programmatic rigor and relevance as well as strong ties to the state's need for research and services in the knowledge economy.

- **Lead in Community Development Partnerships.**

The USG and its member universities and colleges will reaffirm the commitment to being strong stewards of the public's trust and provide leadership of community development partnerships. Higher education is a central contributor and voice to the educational, economic, social, and cultural future of the state. The system and its campuses are committed to providing timely and direct connections to local businesses, services, and community development.

- **Pursue Excellence in Research and Graduate/Professional Education.**

The USG is committed to positioning Georgia as an international center of research, discovery, innovation, and entrepreneurship. System coordination toward this goal is critical because, collectively, the pooled resources of the USG research universities, key university partners in the public and private sector, and centers of research, graduate education, and innovation on other USG campuses represent a powerful collection of assets. Georgia's top-tier research assets and opportunities must be grown to ensure that the state's full potential is realized in the knowledge economy.

- **Make Commitment to International Education.**

The USG is committed to increasing international education opportunities through student and faculty exchanges and to ensuring that all students in the system graduate as active and aware participants in the global economy and society.

### **Strategic Imperative 3 - Commitment to Accountability & Efficiency and Leadership in Higher Education**

*We will ensure that the research, teaching and service resources and assets in higher education are efficiently and effectively utilized and serve as an investment in the future of Georgia. Partnerships must continue to be developed that include corporate relations, philanthropic organizations, external sponsorship, and increased fundraising.*

*Further, the system and its leadership are committed to a critical exploration of the overall higher education enterprise so that Georgia remains a leading state and system of institutions amid the disruptive innovations in technology, business, and education.*

- **Commit to Measures of Performance and Accountability.**

The USG and its institutions are committed to measuring performance and being accountable for its decisions. In addition to adoption of systemwide completion metrics and a new funding formula driven by outcomes rather than enrollments, the system will eliminate low-enrollment academic programs and limit the approval of new degrees without sufficient data demonstrating need. Data-driven decisions about facilities management and construction, budget allocations, and the need for new programs and facilities will become standard. Institutions will steward their resources and reputations through managing risk, meeting legal and ethical obligations, and by proactively managing operations in a fiscally sound manner.

- **Continue to Seek Operational Efficiencies.**

The USG is committed to pursuing operational efficiencies and being a model steward of resources. Institutional consolidation, reducing administrative costs, closer monitoring of degree programs, and improving and expanding the shared services function all contribute to greater resource management. The USG must manage its current physical space far more effectively, build fewer new buildings, and invest in repurposing current facilities to serve the modern student more efficiently. Facilities funding decisions will be linked to space utilization data and demonstrated need.

- **Embrace Goals of Currency, Relevance, and Innovation.**

The USG is committed to timely and thorough review of programs, services, and policies for currency and relevance. Disruptive innovations within the higher education enterprise require that we think critically about current strategies and position our university and college system for the challenges and opportunities that will come in the next decade. The USG and its institutions must remain proactive to stay abreast of the rapidly changing world of public higher education. As one of the largest and most complex systems in the nation, the USG must remain a leader in finding new ways to serve students at the least cost and highest quality.

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