

Forward Together: The 2031 Strategic Plan



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

University of Georgia
Forward Together: The 2031 Strategic Plan

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Since its last strategic plan was launched in 2020, the University of Georgia has soared to new heights of excellence across every facet of its teaching, research, and service mission. Measures of student success have risen to all-time highs, while the University has consistently ranked as one of the top public universities nationally and a pacesetter for student life and affordability. Enrollment and applications for admission have climbed to record levels, and the academic credentials of UGA’s entering students have never been stronger. Alongside these achievements, the institution’s research enterprise has flourished. Since 2020, research and development expenditures have surged to historic highs, sponsored awards have eclipsed previous records, and commercialization output continues to set the national standard. Capital investments—including the Holmes-Hunter Academic Building, the Science and Ag Hill Modernization Initiative, and numerous other projects—have elevated and transformed the campus, with more than 2.5 million square feet of new and renovated space launched since 2020.

Propelled forward by its land-grant and sea-grant identity, the University of Georgia has also solidified its reputation as a national leader in public service and outreach. During the past six years, UGA has been recognized with higher education’s most prestigious awards for community engagement, while individual programs have garnered national attention for innovative strategies to promote rural economic development, youth mentorship, and community-based problem-solving. Thanks to these and other award-winning efforts, the University annually generates billions of dollars of economic impact on the state of Georgia. Meanwhile, during the past six years, private giving to the University has continued to reach historic levels—surpassing \$300 million for the first time ever in Fiscal Year 2025—as UGA’s dedicated supporters have enthusiastically stepped forward to create scholarships, establish endowed faculty positions, and catalyze a host of key institutional initiatives.

Amid this remarkable trajectory, the UGA 2031 Strategic Plan envisions new levels of success over the next five years by setting forth a series of institutional goals in response to three strategic imperatives:

1. Advance and strengthen instructional excellence and student success
2. Accelerate and expand research and innovation that improves society
3. Deepen UGA’s commitment to serving communities across Georgia and beyond

University-level Goals

A wide-ranging data collection process involving institutional benchmarking, a University-wide survey, and dozens of stakeholder focus groups developed a collection of themes related to the aforementioned imperatives. Based on these themes, a UGA Strategic Planning Committee—comprised of faculty, staff, students, and alumni from across the University community—generated goals responsive to each imperative and aimed at advancing the University’s mission. These goals specify areas for institution-wide attention and effort over the next five years and

define broad areas of emphasis for UGA's major academic and administrative units as they develop their own five-year strategic plans during the coming year. With unit-level plans responsive to the University's strategic goals, the entire UGA community will move forward together in reaching higher and pushing further to serve our students, our state, and our world.

I. Advance and strengthen instructional excellence and student success

1. Expand high-impact practices to improve student success and career readiness
2. Promote the adoption of innovative, evidence-based, and technology-enhanced instructional practices
3. Integrate well-being and holistic development across the student experience
4. Foster lifelong learning through educational experiences inside and outside the classroom

II. Accelerate and expand research and innovation that improves society

1. Accelerate research and scholarship and foster innovation and entrepreneurship
2. Strengthen the research ecosystem by optimizing operational efficiency
3. Cultivate a collaborative culture that catalyzes interdisciplinary research and recognizes the full breadth of scholarship
4. Diversify research funding and streamline private sector engagement
5. Raise awareness of the impact of UGA research and innovation through consistent and coordinated communication

III. Deepen UGA's commitment to serving communities across Georgia and beyond

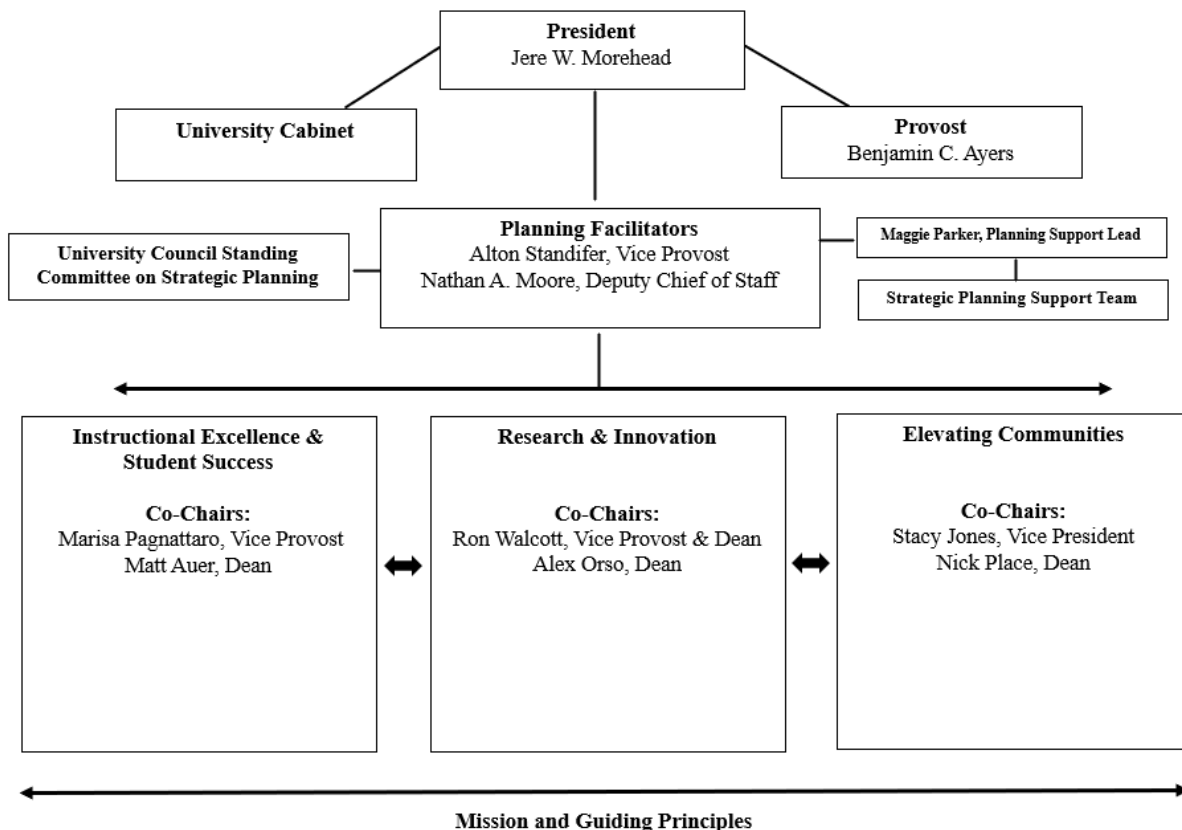
1. Grow awareness, understanding, and opportunities for students to engage with communities in Georgia, across the nation, and globally in alignment with the land-grant and sea-grant mission
2. Expand opportunities for faculty and staff to embrace and support the land-grant and sea-grant mission
3. Expand accessibility to UGA resources and promote UGA's impact through innovative communication with audiences in the state, nation, and world
4. Leverage UGA's multidisciplinary strengths to promote community health and well-being

Comprehensive Planning Process

Strategic Planning Committee Membership and Structure

To guide the development of the University’s next strategic plan, the President assembled a team of faculty, staff, students, and alumni from across the institution. This collaborative and structured planning process was designed to harness broad perspectives, align institutional strengths with emerging opportunities, and chart a shared vision for the University’s future. The 30-member UGA Strategic Planning Committee was organized into three ten-person working groups corresponding to the strategic imperatives. Two members of each working group were asked to serve as co-chairs and formally lead the planning efforts surrounding each strategic imperative.

In support of the three working groups, a nine-member Strategic Planning Support Team was also established and asked to bolster the work of the UGA Strategic Planning Committee by analyzing survey and focus group data, assisting with the formulation of goals, helping to identify appropriate key performance indicators, and specifying existing and potential data sources by which the indicators could be measured. Vice Provost of Academic and Community Engagement and Chief of Staff to the Provost Alton Standifer and Deputy Chief of Staff to the President Nathan Moore were appointed by the President to co-facilitate the strategic planning process, while Interim Assistant to the Provost and Director of the Office of Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness Maggie Parker was appointed to lead the efforts of the Strategic Planning Support Team.



Strategic Planning Committee Membership

Instructional Excellence & Student Success	Research & Innovation	Serving Communities
Marisa Pagnattaro (Co-Chair) <i>Vice President for Instruction and Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning</i>	Ron Walcott (Co-Chair) <i>Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School</i>	Stacy Jones (Co-Chair) <i>Vice President for Public Service and Outreach</i>
Matt Auer (Co-Chair) <i>Dean, School of Public and International Affairs</i>	Alex Orso (Co-Chair) <i>Dean, College of Engineering</i>	Nick Place (Co-Chair) <i>Dean and Director, College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences</i>
Erik Atkinson <i>Dean of Students</i>	Robin Buell <i>Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar Chair in Crop Genomics</i>	Yvette Daniels <i>Past President, UGA Alumni Association</i>
Gregory Broughton <i>Assoc. Professor, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences</i>	Jody Clay-Warner <i>Professor and Director, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences</i>	Stephan Durham <i>Professor and Asst. Dean, College of Engineering</i>
Jennifer Chapman <i>Principal Lecturer and Director, Terry College of Business</i>	Jamie Cooper <i>Professor and Department Head, Mary Frances Early College of Education</i>	Michelle Elliott <i>Director, Archway Partnership</i>
Juan Meng <i>Professor and Department Head, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications</i>	Derek Eberhart <i>Assoc. Vice President for Research</i>	Martin Kagel <i>Assoc. Provost for Global Engagement</i>
Megan Mittelstadt <i>Assistant Vice President for Instruction and Director of the Center for Teaching & Learning</i>	Morgane Golan <i>Graduate Student, College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences</i>	Nate Nibbelink <i>Professor and Assoc. Vice President, Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources</i>
John Neely <i>President, Student Government Association</i>	Jonathan Murrow <i>Professor and Assoc. Dean, AU/UGA Medical Partnership</i>	Allisen Penn <i>Assoc. Dean, College of Family and Consumer Sciences</i>
Bo Rutledge <i>Professor, School of Law</i>	Marshall Shepherd <i>Professor and Assoc. Dean, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences</i>	Lisa Renzi-Hammond <i>Professor and Director, College of Public Health</i>
Susan Sanchez <i>Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine</i>	Mark Tompkins <i>Professor and Director, College of Veterinary Medicine</i>	Henry Young <i>Professor and Department Head, College of Pharmacy</i>

Strategic Planning Committee Support Team Members

Maggie Parker (Chair) <i>Director, Office for Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness</i>	Lea Campbell <i>Associate Director, Office for Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness</i>	Chad Cleveland <i>Associate Vice President, Finance & Administration</i>
Krista Coleman-Silvers <i>Assistant Vice President & Director of Space Planning and Management</i>	Matt Grandstaff <i>Executive Communications Manager, Office of the President</i>	Angela Hurt <i>Assistant Vice President & Chief of Staff, Marketing & Communications</i>
Kristen Linthicum <i>Executive Strategic Account Manager, Marketing & Communications</i>	Kathy Ortstadt <i>Assistant Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations</i>	Kelly Slaton <i>Interim Senior Director, Office of Institutional Research</i>

Strategic Planning Committee Charge

In August 2025, President Jere W. Morehead charged the UGA Strategic Planning Committee to develop a new five-year strategic plan for the University of Georgia, with a launch date of July 1, 2026. To guide the committee's work, the President outlined three strategic imperatives—each critical to the institution's continued advancement—that should undergird the University's next strategic plan:

1. Advance and strengthen instructional excellence and student success
2. Accelerate and expand research and innovation that improves society
3. Deepen UGA's commitment to serving communities across Georgia and beyond

The President charged the committee with developing three to five University-level goals under each imperative to be executed over the next five years. Pursuant to the President's charge, the goals were required to:

- be overarching to encompass the University's major academic and administrative units;
- be clear, measurable and directly tied to strategic imperatives;
- include a select number of key performance indicators with clear data sources;
- be developed with broad input from faculty, staff, and students;
- align with the vision and guiding principles;
- reflect the budgetary realities of the institution.

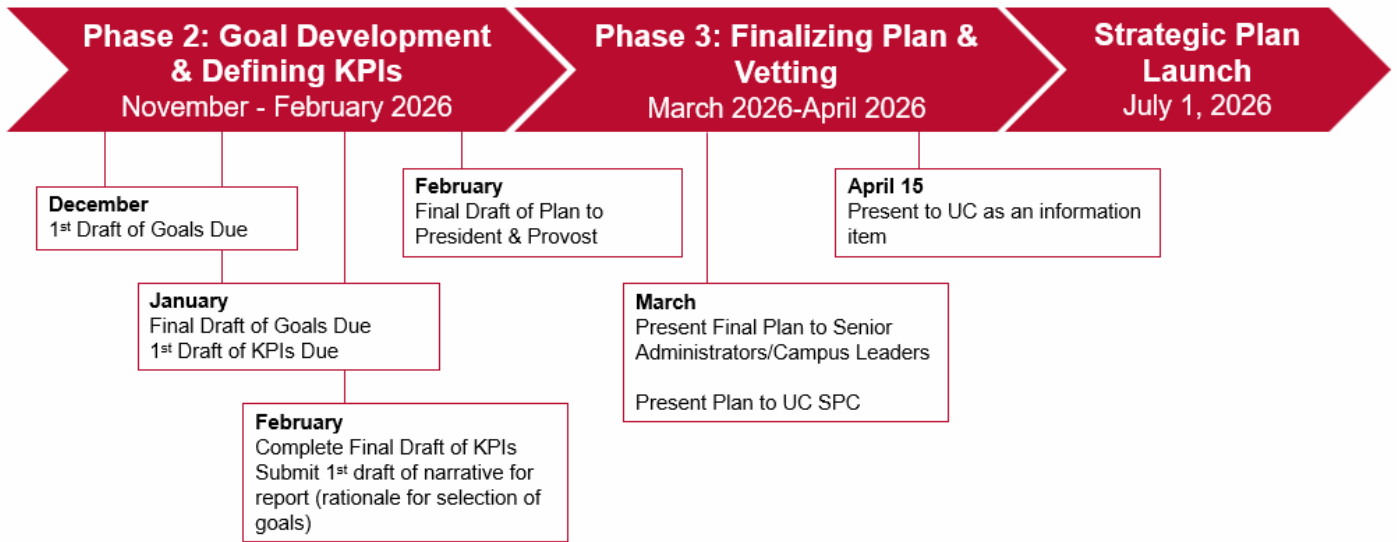
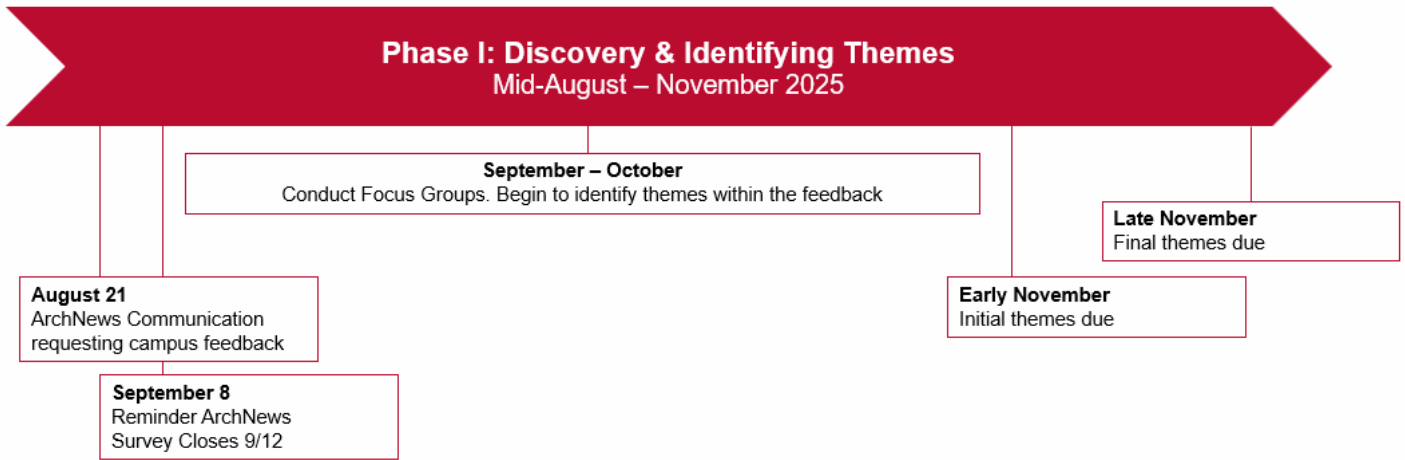
President Morehead also issued a set of principles to guide and shape the strategic planning process, urging the committee to develop a plan that was mission-centered; dedicated to continuous quality improvement; committed to supporting faculty, staff, students, and alumni; innovative and ambitious; flexible and responsive; and fiscally responsible and efficient.

Process and Timeline

As it began its work, the committee carefully reviewed a series of reference documents, including select peer institution strategic plans, recommendations from the University Council's Standing Committee on Strategic Planning, and previous University of Georgia strategic plans. From August 2025 to November 2025, the committee broadly engaged University stakeholders to gather critical feedback, analyze and synthesize related data, and identify key themes. This comprehensive data collection effort included the administration of a campus-wide survey, the facilitation of nearly 60 internal and external focus groups, and moderated discussions at UGA's branch campuses in Griffin, Tifton, and Gwinnett. From November 2025 to February 2026, the committee drafted and finalized the strategic goals while formulating key performance indicators and assessing available data sources. The committee presented the plan to the President and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost in March 2026. The committee will present the plan to the University Council as an information item in April 2026. The Strategic Planning Committee timeline is included below.

The University of Georgia's new strategic plan will take effect on July 1, 2026.

Strategic Planning Committee Timeline



Forward Together: The 2031 Strategic Plan

Strategic Imperative 1: Advance and strengthen instructional excellence and student success

The University of Georgia’s learning environment has been widely recognized for its world-class quality and transformative impact. Cutting-edge instruction remains a hallmark of the UGA educational experience, while the University’s faculty and staff continue to forge innovative curricular and co-curricular experiences designed to train future leaders. In recent years, the University has redoubled its commitment to personalized advising, small class sizes, and tailored academic support, investing significant resources to attract renowned faculty and talented staff to boost teaching and learning. Meanwhile, the University’s vast array of educational offerings has been strengthened by significant capital projects, while new facilities slated to open soon—including the West Campus Dining, Learning and Well-Being Center and a new first-year residence hall—will further enhance UGA’s learning environment. Taken together, an enviable collection of educational offerings and world-class faculty, combined with new and renovated facilities, have generated unprecedented student success, with retention rates, graduation rates, and career outcomes rivaling America’s foremost universities and UGA ranked No. 1 nationally in student life.

Underpinning this success are a host of ambitious initiatives aimed at strengthening learning opportunities for every UGA student. The University’s celebrated Experiential Learning Initiative has continued to expand, with over 2,800 hands-on learning opportunities introduced since its inception. In addition to this award-winning effort, in 2022 the University introduced the Active Learning Initiative, a five-year, \$6 million campaign to foster a culture of active learning across the institution. More recently, the University has significantly expanded the Peer Education Program, a multi-faceted effort to expand peer learning, and launched two new writing centers and a new Creative Engagement Wing in the Miller Learning Center—all curated to enhance student learning.

Against this impressive backdrop, the strategic plan charts a course for further success in instruction and student success through four goals. Goal 1.1 recognizes that the future of the workplace is rapidly changing. As technology begets new occupations and transforms others, the value of foundational skills will become even more pronounced. Increasingly, employers of all types and sizes prioritize competencies such as analytical reasoning, creative thinking, communication, and leadership. While UGA students certainly acquire these skills via coursework and co-curricular activities, the strategic plan prioritizes these proficiencies and related learning opportunities in order to equip students with skills that will play a vital role in their lives and careers. By leveraging the commitment of on- and off-campus partners who serve our students, UGA is well-equipped to achieve this goal.

The Experiential Learning program, for instance, provides tailored hands-on learning opportunities for every UGA student, ranging from undergraduate research and work-study to study abroad and service-learning. The Center for Undergraduate Research (CURO), the Office of Service-Learning, and the UGA Innovation District are just a few of the many units dedicated to providing students with transformative learning experiences outside the classroom. And with

more than 190 study abroad programs—including two international centers in Oxford, England and Cortona, Italy—as well as 380 Double Dawg pathways providing students a competitive advantage in today’s economy, UGA students can position themselves for success with an advanced complement of knowledge and skills. In addition, the Comprehensive Learner Record—a new digital credential that documents validated competencies—will help all UGA students visualize and communicate their accomplishments to future employers.

Goal 1.2 seeks to empower faculty to adopt innovative, evidence-based strategies to strengthen instructional excellence. With a host of offerings devoted to instructional excellence, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will play a central role in achieving this goal by helping faculty develop engaging, transformative classroom learning experiences. In support of the Active Learning Initiative, for instance, the CTL’s Active Learning Summer Institute helps faculty redesign courses to increase student engagement and success. Importantly, Goal 1.2 acknowledges the exigent challenges to teaching and learning posed by generative artificial intelligence (AI) and seeks to embolden faculty to adopt effective AI teaching strategies that align with course learning outcomes. Indeed, the strategic plan envisions UGA as a national leader in AI-enhanced education and therefore encourages the utilization of centrally offered workshops, faculty fellowship programs, and one-on-one consultations that support the integration of generative AI tools into classroom instruction.

Turning to Goal 1.3, the strategic plan recognizes the significant challenges related to mental health and well-being faced by today’s college students and the outsized impact these difficulties can have on student success. To address these important issues, UGA provides a broad range of clinical and non-clinical resources aimed at fostering a more active and healthy student body. Key to this critical work are the efforts of multiple campus units working collaboratively to give students convenient, high-quality access to wellness care and resources. Highlighting these cooperative efforts, Goal 1.3 seeks to build on the tremendous progress made in recent years and urges the University community to further strengthen the effectiveness of wellness programming by maximizing available resources, enhancing administrative collaborations, attracting additional well-being support from private sources, and proactively addressing emergent issues. Recognizing the role that financial security plays in the lives of so many of our students, this goal also challenges the University to build on its recent extraordinary track-record of securing private support for students with financial need.

The final goal embraces the tremendous role that UGA plays in cultivating a life-long disposition toward learning among our students, as well as the extraordinary dividends this mindset produces for our graduates when they depart the University. Indeed, we strongly believe that students who develop intellectual curiosity and a thirst for learning are more likely to become leaders in their communities and workplaces, helping to foster improved quality of life. Such students are better equipped to embrace innovation, identify solutions to persistent challenges, and lead their communities in the face of difficult circumstances. To produce these outcomes, the strategic plan heralds the promise of curricular and co-curricular experiences and urges students to embrace these opportunities as a foundational element of their time at UGA—one that can unlock the true potential of their education and prepare them for success in an ever-changing world.

Goals

1. Expand high-impact practices to improve student success and career readiness

KPIs:

- a. Number of students in courses tagged with a High Impact Practice Banner attribute
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- b. Number of students enrolled in a master's degree through the DoubleDawgs program
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- c. Number of undergraduate students participating in study abroad and study away experiences
Data Source: Office of Global Engagement, Office of Instruction
- d. Number of students completing approved service-learning courses each year
Data Source: Office of Instruction, Office of Public Service & Outreach
- e. Number of courses, co-curricular activities, or experiences tagged with institutional competencies
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- f. Post-graduation employment rate
Data Source: Career Center (DAR)

2. Promote the adoption of innovative, evidence-based, and technology-enhanced instructional practices

KPIs:

- a. Number of faculty participating in UGA-sponsored or approved teaching development opportunities related to innovative or evidence-based instruction, or learning technologies and emerging technology, including AI
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- b. Number of graduate students participating in centrally offered teaching development opportunities related to innovative or evidence-based instruction, learning technologies, and emerging technologies
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- c. Number of students enrolled in classes supported by Peer Learning Assistants
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- d. Total student enrollment in active learning-redesigned courses
Data Source: Office of Instruction

3. Integrate well-being and holistic development across the student experience

KPIs:

- a. Percentage of student respondents reporting that the university supports their mental/emotional health
Data Source: Division of Student Affairs
- b. Percentage of students reporting they belong at the institution
Data Source: Division of Student Affairs
- c. Number and total dollar value of need-based scholarships awarded
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- d. Number of students accessing and utilizing basic needs resources
Data Source: Division of Student Affairs
- e. Number of participants in institutional well-being trainings or instructional support programs
Data Source: Division of Student Affairs
- f. Percent of student respondents who report that their university experience significantly increased their confidence in succeeding after graduation
Data Source: Career Center

4. Foster lifelong learning through educational experiences inside and outside the classroom

KPIs:

- a. Number of students participating in University-level career development activities
Data Source: Career Center
- b. Number of courses, co-curricular activities, or experiences tagged with institutional competencies
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- c. Number of students engaged in co-curricular learning experiences
Data Source: Division of Student Affairs, Office of Public Service & Outreach
- d. Evidence of students seeking learning opportunities outside formal requirements
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- e. Percentage of students who report that educational experiences (courses and co-curricular) have helped them develop institutional competencies
Data Source: Office of Instruction

Strategic Imperative 2: Accelerate and expand research and innovation that improves society

In recent years, the University of Georgia's research enterprise has been characterized by dynamic transformation and extraordinary impact. Total research and development expenditures have reached record highs for seven consecutive years, while the number of sponsored research awards earned by faculty has risen over 46% during that time. UGA scholars continue to be recognized at the highest levels for their scholarship—garnering Guggenheim Fellowships, a MacArthur Fellowship, and election into the National Academies, among other accolades. For three consecutive years, the University has ranked No. 1 nationally for the number of commercial products brought to market based on faculty research, and UGA researchers have now launched more than 200 startups—generating over 1,300 jobs—across a multitude of vital fields. Thanks to UGA faculty, treatments for crippling diseases, new varieties of insect-resistant crops, and novel methods to stem human trafficking, among countless other discoveries, have been introduced to the world.

Since 2020, the tremendous growth of the University of Georgia's research enterprise has been accelerated by robust philanthropic investments, ambitious faculty hiring initiatives, and significant capital investments designed to enable and expand research. The University recently eclipsed 400 endowed chairs and professorships, a 77% increase since 2013, while Presidential Hiring Initiatives have recruited 97 additional scholars since 2020 in fields of strategic emphasis such as integrative precision agriculture, brain and behavioral health, and data science and artificial intelligence—with 60 additional positions authorized for the 2026-2027 academic year. Major capital projects have been launched as well, offering significant benefits for research and innovation activity throughout the institution. The multi-year, 245,000 square-foot Science and Ag Hill Modernization Initiative is now in its third phase, while the 197,000 square-foot I-STEM Research Complex was completed in 2022 and the 70,000 square-foot Poultry Science Building—supporting Georgia's largest agriculture sector—was introduced in 2023. This fall, UGA will proudly open the \$100 million, 93,000 square-foot medical education and research building, further expanding UGA's capacity for inquiry, discovery, and innovation.

Leveraging this tremendous success and seeking to catalyze further advancements in scholarship and research, the strategic plan highlights five goals to strengthen UGA's research enterprise and amplify its growing impact. Goal 2.1 focuses on the vast influence that UGA scholars have on the world. Whether it is novel medical treatments, pioneering insights into early childhood education, or genomic techniques to elevate crop yields, UGA researchers continue to seek answers to society's most pressing questions. Goal 2.1 challenges the UGA community—administrators, faculty, staff, and students alike—to strengthen existing partnerships and to form new collaborations to elevate cutting-edge inquiry. Building on the University's reputation as a top public research university, the strategic plan recognizes the critical importance of growing graduate and professional education and postdoctoral research opportunities across campus. Meanwhile, to advance UGA's land-grant and sea-grant mission, the plan also envisions continued growth of technology transfer activity to ensure that our state, nation, and world can benefit from the multitude of life-changing discoveries emanating from the University.

With Goal 2.2, the strategic plan acknowledges the tremendous growth of the University's research enterprise in recent years and the need to align personnel levels and processes with the size and scope of current research activity. Since 2015, for instance, annual research and development expenditures have risen more than 75%, and the number of sponsored research awards secured by faculty has climbed more than 78%. Commercialization activity has skyrocketed, too, with UGA's startup pipeline growing more than 400% and total licensing income more than tripling. As the University community contemplates the next five years, the strategic plan calls for a routine and systematic assessment of the human resources, business processes, and technology needed to further stimulate research and scholarship at the institution. Separately, the plan also requests a comprehensive assessment of the physical spaces where research and innovation occur, helping the University carefully identify acute needs and conceptualize critical future spaces.

Moving to the next goal, the strategic plan appreciates that the grand challenges confronting society are multidimensional, inherently complex, and deeply rooted at the intersection of multiple disciplines. The plan also appreciates that, as external funding partners pursue solutions to such challenges, they must increasingly prioritize research that lies beyond the confines of individual academic units. Goal 2.3 encourages interdisciplinary, multi-investigator research that transcends traditional academic silos, understanding that such research holds the potential to push the boundaries of knowledge and unlock new discoveries. As convergent, team-based inquiry will be essential to achieving this goal, the strategic plan calls for expanded integrative team initiatives, as well as strengthened pre-seed and seed-grant resources, to help faculty prepare, develop, and execute large-scale team research proposals. This enhanced focus will also foster the significant integration such proposals require between research and graduate education. The University's capacity to recruit and retain elite faculty and graduate students will be paramount in this effort, therefore Goal 2.3 prioritizes graduate and professional scholarships and fellowships, as well as endowed professorships and chairs throughout the institution.

As the established funding model for research faces ongoing uncertainty, the strategic plan recognizes that universities must cultivate new funding streams and business models related to academic inquiry. While affirming that the fundamental mission of academic research—forging new knowledge, fueling innovation, and training the next generation of scholars—is of supreme importance, the strategic plan asserts that institutions that proactively diversify their funding streams will flourish in this evolving era of research funding. Embracing this belief, Goal 2.4 challenges UGA to continue forging multi-faceted, long-term partnerships with industry partners and foundations, building on UGA's extraordinary success in this critical area since 2020. The institution is, in fact, well positioned to fulfill this goal. For over a decade, the University has ranked in the top 10 nationally for licensing partnerships with industry, while the establishment of the Innovation District in 2018 and the Office of Business Engagement in 2021 have helped to connect more industry partners with UGA's exceptional combination of talent and resources.

The final goal under this strategic imperative highlights a critical fact pertaining to postsecondary research: effective, high-quality communications can enhance the visibility and reach of groundbreaking research, foster new collaborations that fuel additional discoveries, inform and shape key public policy decisions, and advance the University's mission while increasing the likelihood of future support for our scholars. For these reasons, Goal 2.5

encourages the UGA community to carefully consider how, where, and when to communicate UGA's exceptional research output in ways that strengthen and advance the University's mission. In doing so, this goal seeks to widely promote the University's impact by generating more earned media, as well as impactful stories regarding the institution's research enterprise and world-class investigators. Goal 2.5 also envisions an initiative to help support faculty to effectively convey the importance of their research, target communications to specific audiences, more broadly disseminate their research findings, and communicate the importance of their discoveries.

Goals

1. Accelerate research and scholarship and foster innovation and entrepreneurship

KPIs:

- a. Externally sponsored research expenditures by category
Data Source: Office of Research
- b. Number of externally sponsored research awards by category
Data Source: Office of Research
- c. Number of postdoctoral associates
Data Source: Office of Research
- d. Number of graduate and professional students
Data Source: Office of Institutional Research
- e. Number of graduate and professional scholarships and fellowships
Data Source: Graduate School
- f. Number of invention disclosures
Data Source: Office of Research
- g. Projects in the faculty startup pipeline
Data Source: Office of Research
- h. Number of new products based on UGA research reaching the market
Data Source: Office of Research

2. Strengthen the research ecosystem by optimizing operational efficiency

KPIs:

- a. Develop and launch a comprehensive effort to routinely assess and optimize evolving research ecosystem needs, including personnel levels, process enhancements, and stakeholder satisfaction

- b. Develop and launch a solution to assess the quality of physical spaces where research and innovation occur

3. Cultivate a collaborative culture that catalyzes interdisciplinary research and recognizes the full breadth of scholarship

KPIs:

- a. Number of multi-unit grant proposals
Data Source: Office of Research
- b. Number of multi-unit grant awards
Data Source: Office of Research
- c. Amount of research and development expenditures stemming from multi-unit grant proposals
Data Source: Office of Research
- d. Number of articles with faculty authors from multiple UGA departments
Data Source: Office of Faculty Affairs
- e. Number of large-scale, interdisciplinary research projects
Data Source: Office of Research
- f. Number and dollar value of University-wide seed-grants awarded
Data Source: Office of Research
- g. Percentage of return on investment of University-wide seed-grants awarded
Data Source: Office of Research

4. Diversify research funding and streamline private sector engagement

KPIs:

- a. Number of IP license and option agreements executed within industry
Data Source: Office of Research
- b. Number of industry/private sector partners engaging with UGA
Data Source: Office of Business Engagement
- c. Number of sponsored research agreements with industry partners
Data Source: Office of Research
- d. Amount of research and development expenditures tied to industry grants
Data Source: Office of Research

- e. Amount of philanthropic funding to support research and innovation
Data Source: Office of Development & Alumni Relations
- f. Number of projects funded by federal mission agencies
Data Source: Office of Research
- g. Number of privately endowed faculty positions
Data Source: Office of Development & Alumni Relations

5. Raise awareness of the impact of UGA research and innovation through consistent and coordinated communication

KPIs:

- a. Develop and launch a research communications program to provide institution-wide training and development for researchers
- b. Earned media about UGA research, innovation, and entrepreneurship
Data Source: Division of Marketing and Communications
- c. Number of page views of stories produced about research, innovation, and entrepreneurship at UGA
Data Source: Division of Marketing and Communications

Strategic Imperative 3: Deepen UGA’s commitment to serving communities across Georgia and beyond

At the University of Georgia, our land-grant and sea-grant mission is a cornerstone of our identity, a guiding principle that shapes our priorities and drives our faculty, staff, and students to passionately serve our state. This mission compels us to translate teaching and research into practical solutions, cultivate leaders for the public good, and nurture strong and resilient communities. It also obligates us to foster economic development and expand access to knowledge that creates opportunity and prosperity for all Georgians. Indeed, at UGA, we hold an unshakable belief: that our vital mission inextricably links our institution with the well-being and trajectory of our state. As such, faculty, staff, and students are engaged in countless partnerships across every corner of Georgia aimed at uplifting individuals, families, and communities and improving the quality of life. These partnerships span a wide continuum of faculty expertise and are focused on delivering community-informed services.

At UGA, Cooperative Extension and Public Service and Outreach serve as front-line leaders in meeting the state’s evolving needs. With a presence in all 159 counties in Georgia, Cooperative Extension provides research-based information to farmers, teachers, homeowners, and families, while its 4-H Youth Development Program provides leadership training to over 200,000 Georgia youth each year. Public Service and Outreach units, meanwhile, partner with communities across the state to address locally identified challenges while providing continuing education and training for elected officials, nonprofits, and other constituents. Among a host of impressive achievements, Public Service and Outreach units have helped entrepreneurs generate over 2,000 new businesses and 15,000 jobs across Georgia over the past five years while serving as a critical resource for local governments, coastal communities, and other key stakeholders. But UGA’s commitment to outreach doesn’t stop with these best-in-the-nation units—far from it. Whether it is the CARE Center serving Georgians living with dementia, or the Institute for Integrative Precision Agriculture helping Georgia farmers adopt next-generation technologies, faculty and staff from every campus unit extend critical expertise to support communities.

As a result of these expansive efforts, the University’s annual economic impact on Georgia has climbed to a record \$9.2 billion, while UGA continues to garner national recognition for service and outreach. In 2022, the APLU recognized UGA with its highest award for public service, while in 2026 the University was awarded the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in recognition of its commitment to forging partnerships addressing critical community needs. The strategic plan seeks to build on this tremendous legacy through four goals that both highlight and embrace a crucial fact: land-grant institutions are truly distinctive, offering unique value and impact relative to other colleges and universities. Among the most vital priorities for land-grant institutions are instilling in our students the values of civic leadership and public service while fostering a life-long commitment to collaborative, service-oriented problem-solving and engagement aimed at improving the world.

With these priorities in mind, Goal 3.1 intends to strengthen student awareness, understanding, and participation in community engagement activities that reflect UGA’s land-grant and sea-grant mission. Fortunately, a strong, well-established foundation for achieving this goal already exists. More than 40% of UGA students enroll in service-learning courses each year, providing

over 375,000 hours of community service. UGA's more than 800 student organizations offer countless avenues for service through partnerships, nonprofits, and community organizations across Georgia and beyond. Building upon these strengths, Goal 3.1 encourages more students to seek curricular and co-curricular pathways to service, including courses with service-learning and experiential learning designations, as well as embedded community-engaged activities. Furthermore, by imagining an enterprise-scale information campaign, as well as a university-wide award related to this work, Goal 3.1 seeks to foster among students a better understanding of the historical context and contemporary relevance of UGA's land-grant and sea-grant mission and how this mission can impact their academic, professional, and civic development.

Goal 3.2 seeks to engage more UGA faculty and staff in meaningful work related to the land-grant and sea-grant mission, reinforcing its deep importance to the state of Georgia and its residents. To realize this vision, Goal 3.2 calls for a targeted information campaign providing deeper integration of public service into orientation, onboarding processes, and training modules for faculty and staff, as well as a renewed emphasis on highlighting community-engaged research and teaching. Through this goal, the strategic plan encourages faculty and staff to leverage UGA's extensive community-engagement infrastructure to build sustained collaborations that advance research on critical issues facing Georgians. The Rural Engagement Workshop for Academic Faculty is an excellent example. This award-winning program leverages the community engagement experience of UGA's public service and extension faculty to support and promote vital academic research benefitting rural Georgia.

At its core, Goal 3.3 poses a simple question: Can someone quickly identify UGA's service offerings and easily connect with the right expert, program, or opportunity? With this question in mind, the strategic plan aims to make UGA's expansive resources easier to find, understand, and utilize—ensuring that the University's ability to serve communities is visible and compelling. To be sure, expanding access to UGA expertise and services will entail reducing barriers to information by creating defined entry points, improving navigation and discoverability, and communicating clearly. In addition, innovation in pursuit of Goal 3.3 will be defined by consistent, coordinated communication across multiple channels that clearly conveys the impact of UGA's land-grant and sea-grant mission. Progress will be measured by expanding subscriptions and engagement metrics for community engagement communications, reflecting a growing opt-in audience seeking narratives and information about UGA's vital impact.

The final goal recognizes that the University of Georgia finds itself in a unique and auspicious moment in time. In 2024, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents authorized UGA to launch an independent School of Medicine to address Georgia's acute physician shortage and alleviate gaps in health care access across the state. Just two years later, the School of Medicine has received provisional accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education and will enroll its inaugural class in fall 2026. A new \$100 million medical education and research building is well underway and this fall will open its doors to UGA medical students. In 2025, the Board of Regents also authorized UGA to launch a new independent School of Nursing to further strengthen Georgia's health care workforce. Less than one year later, the UGA School of Nursing has hired a founding dean and advanced key documents for accreditation in preparation for educating future nursing leaders in fall 2027.

Together, these two historic milestones—the concurrent development of new Schools of Medicine and Nursing—represent an unrivaled opportunity to meet the rapidly growing health care needs of the state while bolstering Georgia’s future workforce in a sector critical to its long-term trajectory. As such, Goal 3.4 seeks to leverage this distinctive moment in the University’s 241-year history by calling on the UGA community to elevate community health and well-being via the myriad service and outreach activities occurring throughout the institution. Specifically, this goal promotes an increased number of projects, programs, and initiatives, as well as courses and co-curricular experiences, aimed at fostering improved health and wellness here in Athens and across the state. Importantly, while Goal 3.4 highlights the placement of UGA-trained physicians and nurses across Georgia, reflecting the state’s significant investments over the past two years, the strategic plan embraces a broad definition of community health and challenges faculty, staff, and students to foster improved outcomes in areas aligned with their own disciplines. Indeed, a broad array of social, economic, and physical determinants influence health and wellness, and UGA’s schools and colleges are strongly positioned to apply their vast expertise to improving attendant outcomes.

Goals

1. Grow awareness, understanding, and opportunities for students to engage with communities in Georgia, across the nation, and globally in alignment with the land-grant and sea-grant mission

KPIs:

- a. Percentage of undergraduate students who take a service-learning course before they graduate
Data Source: Office of Instruction, Office of Public Service and Outreach
- b. Number of UGA students participating in service opportunities through co-curricular activities
Data Source: Office of Instruction, Division of Student Affairs
- c. Number of courses with a service-learning suffix
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- d. Number of experiential learning opportunities, by category
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- e. Total number of courses that include community engagement as an element of the course
Data Source: No Current Source
- f. Develop and launch an information campaign for students introducing them to the land-grant and sea-grant mission of UGA and what it means for them as students
- g. Develop and launch an institution-wide award recognizing students who have fulfilled the land-grant and sea-grant mission in an exemplary way

2. Expand opportunities for faculty and staff to embrace and support the land-grant and sea-grant mission

KPIs:

- a. Develop and launch an information campaign for faculty/staff introducing them to the land-grant and sea-grant mission of UGA and what it means for them as faculty/staff
- b. Number of communities served through faculty and staff community engagement activities
Data Source: Office of Public Service & Outreach, Extension
- c. Sponsored award funding for projects involving public service and cooperative extension
Data Source: Office of Research
- d. Sponsored expenditures for projects involving public service and cooperative extension
Data Source: Office of Research
- e. Sponsored proposals submitted for projects involving public service and cooperative extension
Data Source: Office of Research
- f. Elevate the Engaged Scholar award that recognizes faculty who have fulfilled the land-grant and sea-grant mission in an exemplary way

3. Expand accessibility to UGA resources and promote UGA's impact through innovative communication with audiences in the state, nation, and world

KPIs:

- a. Number of subscribers to UGA's university-level community engagement newsletters, alerts, or text-based updates
Data Source: Office of Public Service & Outreach, Extension
- b. Number of pageviews of stories published that highlight UGA's community engagement
Data Source: Division of Marketing and Communications
- c. Impressions across central UGA communications social media channels for stories about community engagement
Data Source: Division of Marketing and Communications
- d. Explore UGA's ability to develop a tool to capture and catalog community engagement work across the institution

4. Leverage UGA's multidisciplinary strengths to promote community health and well-being

KPIs:

- a. Number of projects, programs, and initiatives that contribute to community health and well-being
Data Source: No Current Source
- b. Number of projects, programs, and initiatives that contribute to community health and well-being in rural counties
Data Source: No Current Source
- c. Number of student community engagement co-curricular experiences related to health and well-being
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- d. Total number of service-learning courses related to community health and well-being
Data Source: Office of Instruction
- e. Placement of UGA-trained physicians and nurses in the state of Georgia
Data Source: School of Medicine & School of Nursing