

General Information

eCore: History

In 1999, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG), in collaboration with its institutions, began developing a fully online set of courses that would allow a student to complete core curriculum courses in Areas A-E for science and non-science majors. eCore became an award-winning, high quality, accessible set of interactive online courses that meet defined learning outcomes. eCore courses may be offered by any USG institution, taken by any USG student, and taught by any USG faculty member. *(From 2000-2006 Factbook)*

Why Collaboration?

eCore serves as a successful example for collaboratively delivering education in the online environment. It has evolved from being a small, early start-up collaboration (the first in the USG), to a growing model studied carefully by other systems. In FY 2010, it became a fully scalable, self-sustaining program marked by high student retention and satisfaction, proven course quality and outcomes, and renewed interest. In FY 2013, eCore continued on this trajectory.

The hallmarks of its present and future operation are:

Providing increased institutional capacities for full online programs.

While most USG institutions offer online courses, the vast majority of these are unable (due to lack of resources or faculty interest) to offer all areas

Key Benefits

- Provides *full* online core curriculum, whereas most institutions are able to provide only some courses.
- Course seats always available.
- Efficient, scalable and consistent student services, course design, and teaching.

of the core courses online. Without the full core online, institutions cannot offer full undergraduate degree programs online, and thus lose students to more expensive, proprietary institutions. Also, institutions that do offer online

core courses often require at least one face-to-face meeting in these courses, whereas eCore courses do not.

Efficient Funding and Model Operations

- eCore is one of only a few collaborative programs across the United States that is self-sustaining.
- Institutions offering eCore courses receive 20-40 percent (varies based on withdrawals) of eCore tuition dollars, but have no faculty or course development costs; thus these collaborative enrollments are beneficial for affiliate institutions.
- eCore relies on centralized administrative services (unduplicated at institutions). These include course development and revisions, faculty development and support, identification and follow-up of at-risk students, student success initiatives, student orientations, non-technical call center, tutoring services, data analysis, bookstore, and marketing.

Enrollment Management

- eCore course sections are analyzed on a daily basis during the registration periods to provide for the optimum number of course sections. Almost all sections of eCore are managed so that enrollments are sufficient to cover instructional costs. At the same time, less than a dozen students are unable to register for an eCore course due to a course being full in an academic year.
- Institutions delivering courses via eCore are able to successfully utilize eCore for students who need core courses but have no courses available due to excess capacity.

Professional Faculty Development

eCore Administrative Services provides eCore instructors with a certification course before they teach online. Certification includes participation in an online course as a student, as well as comprehensive learning experiences relating to technology, online teaching, faculty expectations, community building, and the role of the instructor in student support. Ongoing support includes mentoring programs, an online community, an annual meeting, and webinars.

- Many instructors who teach through eCore take their skills back to their institutions, where they develop and teach higher-level online courses and mentor other faculty.

Consistent Quality Courses

- All eCore courses meet and exceed the rigorous requirements for a 5-Star Online Course (developed by UWG and based on principles of good practice).
- All eCore courses are evaluated and substantially revised by teams of eCore faculty every three years. Smaller revisions take place on an ongoing basis.
- All eCore faculty agree to engage in specific practices that enhance student learning and success, including: high visibility in courses, quick responsiveness and grading, quality feedback, and identification of at-risk students.

High Student Course Completion

- eCore Administrative Services is staffed with individuals who are highly trained and have experience with the needs of online students, which are usually markedly different than those of on-campus students.
- One of the major criticisms of eCore five years ago (poor retention) has all but disappeared with the formal system that has been put in place, first at the University of West Georgia (in 2007), and across eCore in 2010. eCore retention (course completion) has increased from 68 percent in 2005 to 82 percent in 2010, and continues to climb, with Summer 2010 having an 89 percent retention rate. For FY 2013, the average retention for the three semesters is 85%.

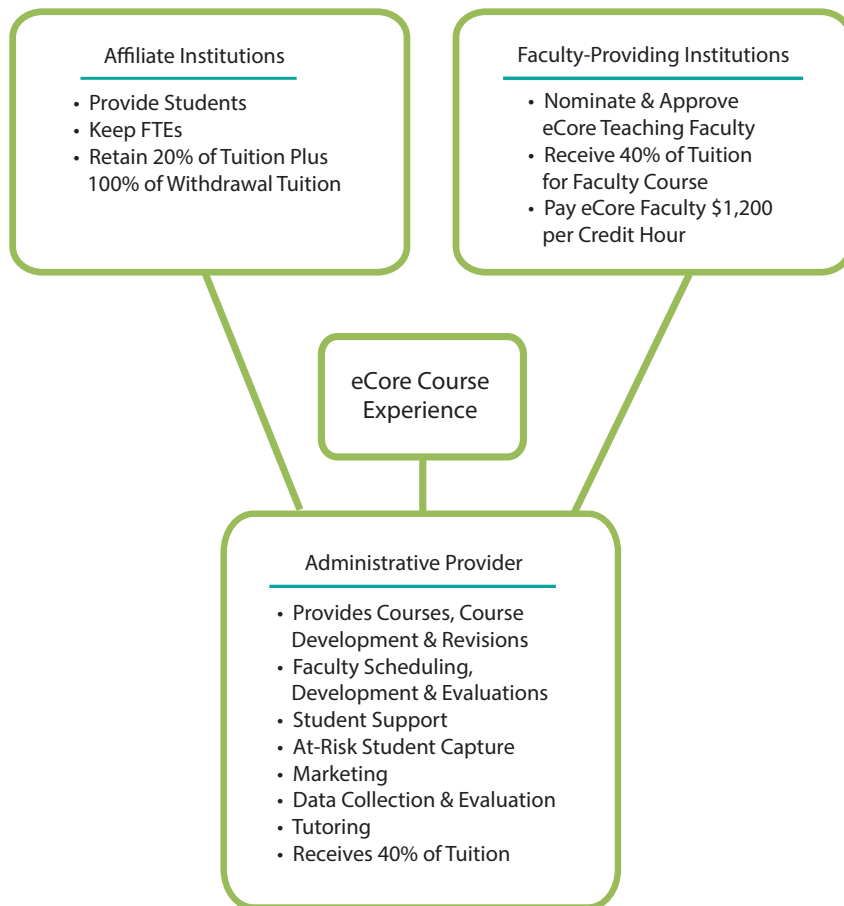
- The increases in retention are due to: a gated registration system for eCore students which requires demonstrated understanding of the nature of the courses; identification of at-risk students (by eCore faculty and administrators) and highly intensive follow-up of these students (by eCore advisors/administrators); faculty training as to the role of the instructor in student success; more student-friendly navigation within courses; and ongoing evaluation of student withdrawal surveys and other data.

Growth and Scalability

- Double-digit growth in students served and demand for services results in more quality choices for non-traditional students. A growing number of students taking eCore courses are transfers from proprietary institutions.
- The improved financial model provides incentives for institutions to become affiliates or to provide faculty.
- Through ongoing data collection and analysis, eCore Administrative Services aggressively identifies the changing needs of both member institutions and student populations, and evolves accordingly.

Administrative support for the program has been provided by the University of West Georgia since June 2009.

Collaborative Model



Accreditation

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on College (SACS-COC)

In 2001, the initial five eCore affiliate institutions (Georgia Highlands College, University of West Georgia, Valdosta State University, Columbus State University, Clayton State University) participated in a distance education substantive change visit by SACS. As a result of the visit, those institutions were considered compliant with SACS regulations for the delivery of online courses for the eCore program.

eCore: The Courses

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Semester
CHEM	1211K	Principles of Chemistry I	4
CHEM	1212K	Principles of Chemistry II	4
COMM	1100	Human Communications	3
ENGL	1101	English Composition I	3
ENGL	1102	English Composition II	3
ENGL	2111	World Literature I	3
ENGL	2132	American Literature II	3
ENVS	2202	Environmental Science	3
ETEC	1101	Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment	2
GEOL	1011K	Introductory Geosciences I	4
HIST	1111	World History I	3
HIST	2111	U.S. History I	3
MATH	1101	Intro to Mathematical Modeling	3
MATH	1111	College Algebra	3
MATH	1113	Precalculus	3
MATH	1401	Intro to Statistics	3
MATH	1501	Calculus I	4
PHIL	2010	Intro to Philosophy	3
PHYS	1211K	Principles of Physics I	4
POLS	1101	American Government	3
PSYC	1101	Introduction to General Psychology	3
SOCI	1101	Introduction to Sociology	3
SPAN	2001	Intermediate Spanish I	3
SPAN	2002	Intermediate Spanish II	3

Current eCore Options for Science Majors

Area A: Essential Skills Specific courses in English composition and mathematics	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ENGL 1101: English Composition I ENGL 1102: English Composition II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MATH 1101: Introduction to Mathematical Modeling MATH 1111: College Algebra MATH 1113: Pre-calculus MATH 1501: Calculus I
Area B: Institutional Options Courses that address institution-wide general education outcomes of the institution's choosing	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMM 1100: Human Communication ETEC 1101: Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment 	
Area C: Humanities/Fine Arts Courses that address humanities/fine arts learning outcomes	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ENGL 2111: World Literature I ENGL 2132: American Literature II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHIL 1001/2010: Introduction to Philosophy SPAN 2001: Intermediate • Spanish I SPAN 2002: Intermediate • Spanish II
Area D: Science, Mathematics, and Technology Courses that address learning outcomes in the sciences, mathematics, and technology	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MATH 1501: Calculus I If Calculus is used in Area A, choose one course from the list at right.	One sequence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEM 1211K: Principles of Chemistry I CHEM 1212K: Principles of Chemistry II GEOL 1011K: Introductory Geosciences I PHYS 1211K: Principles of Physics I
Area E: Social Sciences Courses that address learning outcomes in the social sciences	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POLS 1101: American Government HIST 1111: World History I HIST 2111: United States History I 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSYC 1101: Introduction to General Psychology SOCI 1101: Introduction to Sociology

* PHIL 1001 Introduction to Philosophy has been upgraded to PHIL 2010, as of Fall 2011

Current eCore Options for Non-Science Majors

Area A: Essential Skills Specific courses in English composition and mathematics	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ENGL 1101: English Composition I ENGL 1102: English Composition II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MATH 1101: Introduction to Mathematical Modeling MATH 1111: College Algebra MATH 1113: Pre-calculus MATH 1501: Calculus I
Area B: Institutional Options Courses that address institution-wide general education outcomes of the institution's choosing	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMM 1100: Human Communication ETEC 1101: Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment 	
Area C: Humanities/Fine Arts Courses that address humanities/ fine arts learning outcomes	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ENGL 2111: World Literature I ENGL 2132: American Literature II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHIL 1001/2010: Introduction to Philosophy SPAN 2001: Intermediate • Spanish I SPAN 2002: Intermediate • Spanish II
Area D: Science, Mathematics, and Technology Courses that address learning outcomes in the sciences, mathematics, and technology	Two from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISCI 1121/ENVS 2202: Environmental Science Any science course listed for Math/Science Majors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional math course from Area A, except that Mathematical Modeling and College Algebra cannot be used to meet Area A and D requirements Either an additional science course from those listed for Math/Science Majors OR choose from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEM 1211K: Principles of Chemistry I CHEM 1212K: Principles of Chemistry II GEOL 1011K: Introductory Geosciences I PHYS 1211K: Principles of Physics I MATH 1401: Introduction to Statistics (3 semester-hours credit)
Area E: Social Sciences Courses that address learning outcomes in the social sciences	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POLS 1101: American Government HIST 1111: World History I HIST 2111: United States History I 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSYC 1101: Introduction to General Psychology SOCI 1101: Introduction to Sociology

* PHIL 1001 Introduction to Philosophy has been upgraded to PHIL 2010, as of Fall 2011

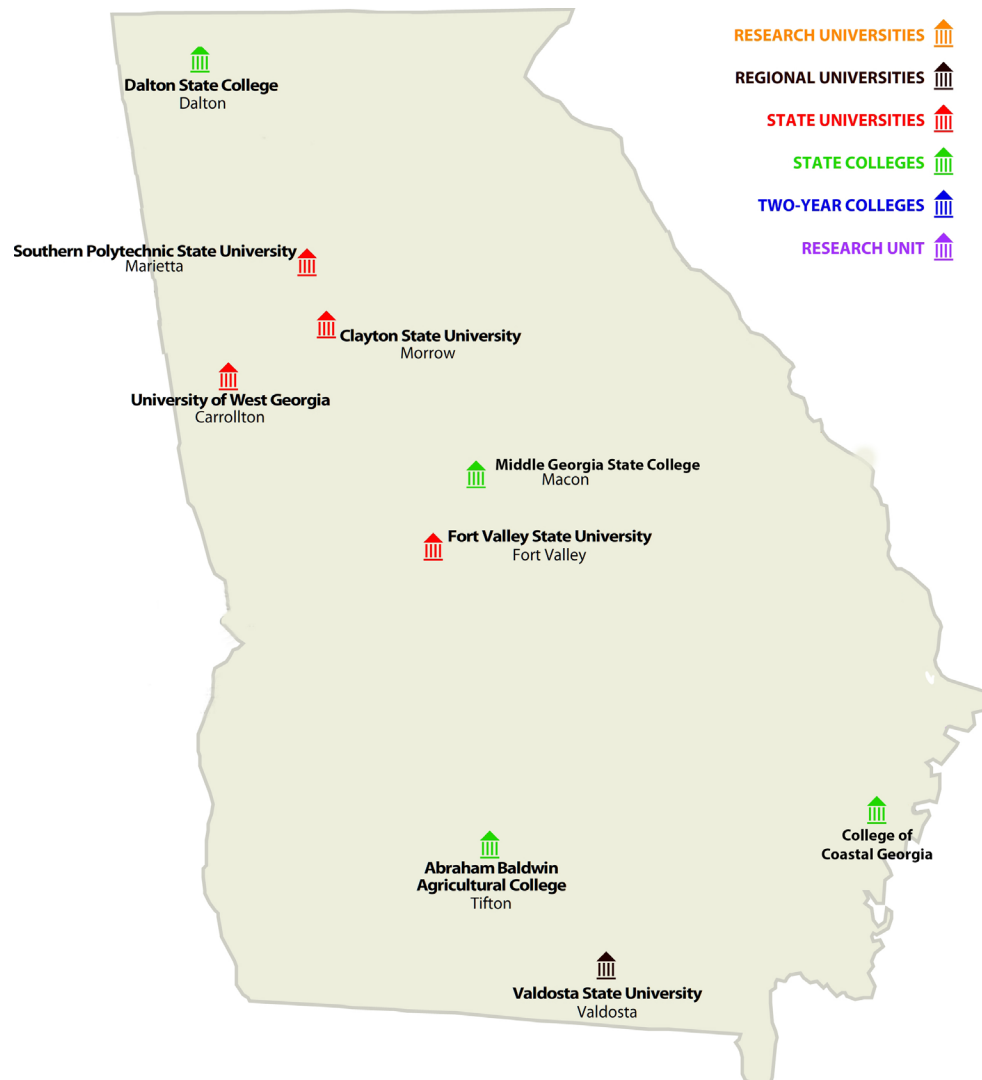
* ISCI 1121 Integrated Science I has been upgraded to ENVS 2202 Environmental Science, as of Spring 2012

eCore: The Assessments and Data Collected

As part of eCore’s internal evaluation, several assessments have been initiated to allow a clear and thorough analysis of the processes, procedures, and outcomes of eCore operations and curriculum. The following chart lists eCore assessments conducted annually each term.

Assessment	Description	Responsibility
Demographics		
Student Demographics	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Student Profile	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Platform Utilization	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Services Survey	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Course Management System Usage	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Academic		
Enrollment – Duplicated and Unduplicated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Semester Credit Hours Generated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Completion	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Grade Studies	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Grade Comparisons to F2F	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Utilization of Tutoring	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Withdrawal Survey	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Saving our Students/At-Risk Findings	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Testing		
Testing Metrics	Within each term	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Faculty		
Faculty Training & Mentoring	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Support Survey	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Evaluations	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Review of Evaluations	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Chart	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Course Revisions	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Financial		
Tuition Dollars Generated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Course Development Costs	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Research Outcomes		
Enrollment & Success by Core Area	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
** (Exempted All Affiliates in FY 2012) Regents Exam Pass Rate	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Course Preparation Comparison – CHEM 1211K/1212K, ENGL 1101/1102, SPAN 2001/2002	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Learning Outcomes		
General Education Assessment	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Course Level Outcomes	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Outcome Assessment Matrix	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Course Adjustments by Core Area	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office

eCore: The 2013 Affiliate Partnerships



By Spring 2013, eCore courses were offered for credit by nine USG institutions (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Clayton State University, College of Coastal Georgia, Dalton State College, Fort Valley State University, the new Middle Georgia State College, Southern Polytechnic State University, University of West Georgia, and Valdosta State University) referred to as eCore affiliates.

- Affiliates are identified through a self-nomination process.
- Each institution conducts a careful analysis of participation criteria, including institutional academic review of eCore courses.
- Affiliate presidents and chief academic officers sign letters of commitment documenting their faculty's endorsement of eCore, including their willingness to support students and accept eCore as a parallel core curriculum on their campus.
- Affiliate institutions admit and enroll students, maintain student records, provide financial aid, and provide services, such as advising, to eCore students, as appropriate, beyond those provided centrally.

eCore: The Affiliate History

In its thirteen year history, eCore has had twelve affiliating institutions:

- Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC)
 - Clayton State University (CLSU)
 - College of Coastal Georgia (CCGA)
 - Columbus State University (CSU)
 - Dalton State College (DSC)
 - Fort Valley State University (FVSU)
 - Georgia Highlands College (GHC)
 - Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW)
 - Middle Georgia State College (MGSC) (formerly Macon State College/Middle Georgia College)
 - Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU)
 - University of West Georgia (UWG)
 - Valdosta State University (VSU)
- UWG and VSU have been with the eCore Program since inception.
 - Clayton State University (CLSU) began at inception and returned beginning Spring 2011.
 - Middle Georgia State College (MGSC) began participation in Fall 2010.
 - Dalton State College began participation in Summer 2011.
 - Fort Valley State University began participation in Fall 2011.
 - Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College began participation in Spring 2012.
 - College of Coastal Georgia began participation in Spring 2013.
 - University of North Georgia will join eCore in Spring 2014.

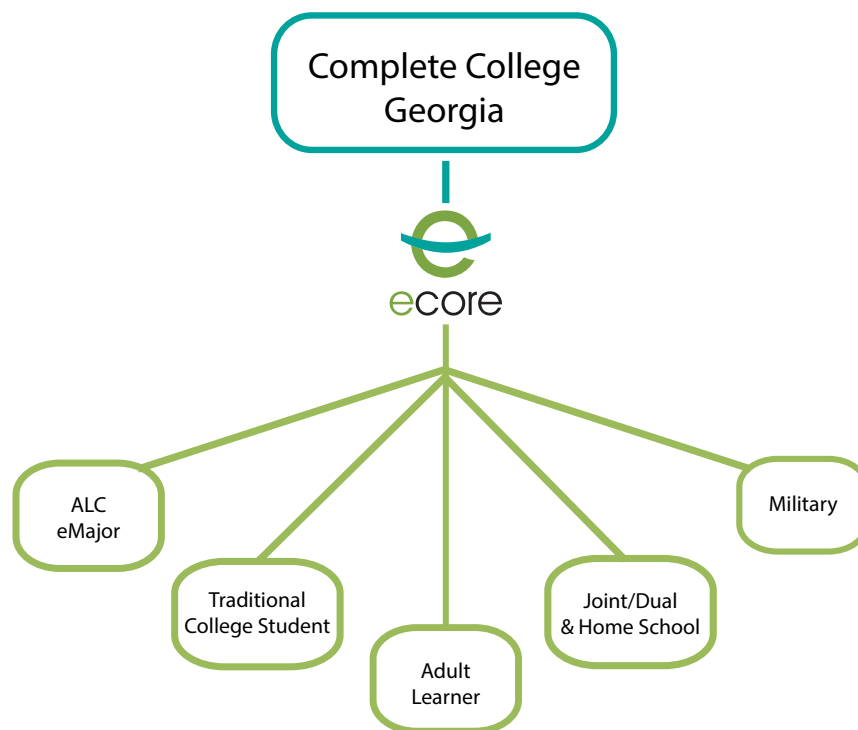
Affiliates Participation Timeline

YEAR	UWG	VSU	SPSU	GSW	CSU	GHC	CLSU	MGSC	DSC	FVSU	ABAC	CCGA
FY2013	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
FY2012	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	
FY2011	X	X	X				X	X				
FY2010	X	X	X	X								
FY2009	X	X	X	X	X	X						
FY2008	X	X	X	X	X	X						
FY2007	X	X	X	X	X	X						
FY2006	X	X	X	X	X	X						
FY2005	X	X	X	X	X	X						
FY2004	X	X		X	X	X	X					
FY2003	X	X		X	X	X	X					
FY2002	X	X		X	X	X	X					
FY2001	X	X		X	X	X	X					

eCore: The Strategies

Strategies and tools implemented by University System of Georgia's statewide collaboratives can address a wide range of barriers to the potential student, demonstrating true effectiveness in targeted populations. eCore strives to be a part of the solution to help streamline a quality education. Efforts require continual communication between eCore administration, Board of Regents, Adult Learning Consortium, and other players within the state.

As a statewide initiative, eCore is instrumental in taking important steps toward identifying and serving these targeted populations and partnering with other collaboratives to create seamless pathways by increasing the array of online options. (Georgia Higher Education Completion Plan, 2012)



Complete College Georgia

The eCore program has an important role in the Complete College Georgia Plan to help produce an additional estimated 250,000 graduates in upcoming years. As a University System of Georgia collaborative, eCore is dedicated to acknowledging and addressing economic realities while focusing on creating a student culture of connection, completion, and quality.

Consistently serving special populations such as military personnel, non-traditional learners, and working professionals aligns with the goals of the Complete College Georgia initiative as well.

Links to Degree Completion

Because eCore is an established collaborative, dedicated to the core curriculum coursework only, USG institutions increasingly identify eCore as the core option for students seeking 4-year online degrees.

University System of Georgia partners with eCore to deliver complete online degree options for non-traditional students through our affiliate institutions. Such offerings include degrees in Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Criminology and Organizational Leadership.

eCore began implementing short term courses in Summer 2012. What began as a gradual addition to the traditional full term course plan, with three courses offered in Summer 2012, has now evolved into a consistent and substantial framework for offering the curriculum. The 8-week courses require the identical course learning outcomes and rigor as the full term courses.

eMajor

The University System of Georgia eMajor Initiative launched in Fall 2012. The eMajor initiative is in direct response to the Complete College Georgia plan and is designed to develop online, collaborative, undergraduate academic programs. eMajor currently includes three undergraduate degrees housed at the founding institution, Valdosta State University. Dalton State College will

be joining eMajor in Summer 2013 as the second affiliate. eMajor programs exist to provide online undergraduate degrees of the highest quality to Georgia's adult learners. The initiative offers majors and concentrations that focus on preparing adults to advance in their careers or pursue new career paths. It offers targeted student support to promote retention and graduation and has a demonstrated commitment to standardized Prior Learning Assessments (AP, CLEP, CBE) to ensure adult learners earn credit for the professional learning and experiences they have accumulated during their career. eMajor offers new opportunities for partnership and collaborative success across the USG.

eCore is a natural partner with the eMajor initiative. eCore's student support team helps ensure the success of all students with engagement activities to include:

- Preemptive phone calls to students
- Targeted communications throughout semester
- Reporting students as "At-Risk"

The eCore Marketing team plays a vital role in promotion of the initiative with:

- Campus and regional employment venue visits
- Oversight of website, blog, social media venues
- Target marketing brochures for institutions

Military Initiative

The University System of Georgia is expanding its military-centered programs and other state-wide initiatives to support military personnel and their families who wish to pursue educational opportunities in Georgia.

Military students have the opportunity to expand their educational experiences independent of time, location, and physical barriers. With an active online community, military students have opportunities to interact with professors and fellow students through classroom discussions, the eCore blog, and student Facebook groups. Also, they receive a high level of student support services to help ensure their success

in the program.

Joint/Dual Enrollment Initiative

Qualifying high school juniors and seniors, including those that are home schooled, can take advantage of eCore's online curriculum through Joint/Dual enrollment programs. Taking college level core courses while continuing with high school studies offers advantages to include rigorous and challenging coursework, exposure to fuller online learning environment, and swifter postsecondary degree completion.

Top eCore courses taken by dual enrolled students are: MATH 1111, ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102, PSYC 1101, GEOL 1011K, POLS 1101, and SOCI 1101.

For this Fact Book supporting FY 2013, the eCore affiliate institutions have provided demographic, campus comparative grade, and course preparation data.