

General Information

eCore Mission

The mission of eCore is to enable University System of Georgia students the opportunity to successfully and affordably complete their first two years of their collegiate careers in an online environment.

eCore Administrative Services provides effective and efficient overall program management, including support for student success; faculty recruitment, support and training; course development; evaluation, and marketing.

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 2014, 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, many are unable (due to lack of resources or faculty interest) to offer all areas of the core courses online each semester. 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.

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 limited capacity.

Efficient Funding and Model Operations

eCore is one of only a few collaborative programs across the United States that are self-sustaining.

Institutions offering eCore courses receive \$42 per credit hour 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 student intervention, student success initiatives, student orientations, non-technical call center, tutoring services, data analysis, bookstore, and marketing.

Ongoing Affiliate Support

As eCore continues to add affiliate institutions, there is greater need to streamline processes while successfully offering diligent and constant support. Beginning with the initial stakeholder meetings, eCore Administration desires to create open and ongoing communication channels. Each institution is part of the planning and scheduling to secure necessary collaborative systems and platforms such as INGRESS and GoView. eCore staff help to identify the responsible campus staff, set task lists for onboarding, and schedule specific trainings for each of the functional areas.

Face-to-face visits for affiliate training assist in securing a sound knowledge base and allow for professional associations to develop. Relationships with key campus staff and stakeholders are essential to successful eCore implementation on each institution's campus.

eCore Administration personnel work daily with all affiliates, securing quality service for students via the following necessary functional areas: Registrar, ITS, Banner, Testing, Bookstore, Budget/ Financials, Advising, Drop / Add, campus Marketing, and general Student Support.

Professional Faculty Development

eCore Administrative Services provides eCore instructors with a certification process before they teach online. Certification includes participation as a student in an online course, 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 or Quality Matters.
- 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 students for intervention.

KEY BENEFITS

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

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 in early years (poor course completion) has all but disappeared with the more formalized system that was put in place with eCore affiliates in 2010. eCore course completion rate has progressively increased from 68 percent in 2005 to 82 percent in 2010, with a reported 87 percent for FY 2014.

There are several influences impacting the student course completion which include:

1. A gated registration system which requires demonstrated understanding of the nature of the courses
2. Streamlined, pre-emptive calling cycles
3. Identification of students reported for intervention with faculty and eCore administration utilizing the SEADS (Student Engagement and Advancement Data System) platform
4. Faculty training regarding the role of instructor with student success
5. Highly intensive follow up with eCore advisors/administrators
6. Student-friendly navigation within courses
7. Embedded tutors in math, science, and foreign discipline areas
8. Ongoing evaluation of student withdrawal request and course evaluation data

Growth and Scalability

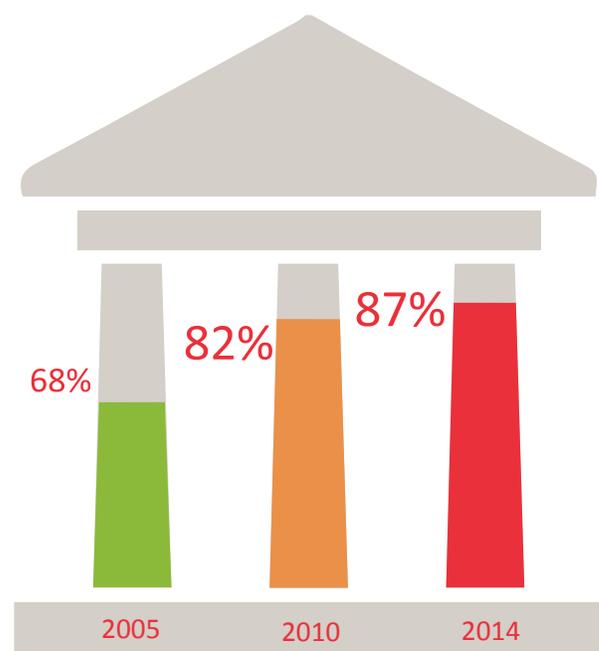
Double-digit growth in students served and demand for services results in more quality choices for non-traditional students. A growing number of students taking eCore courses are transfers from proprietary institutions.

The improved financial model provides incentives for institutions to become affiliates or to provide faculty.

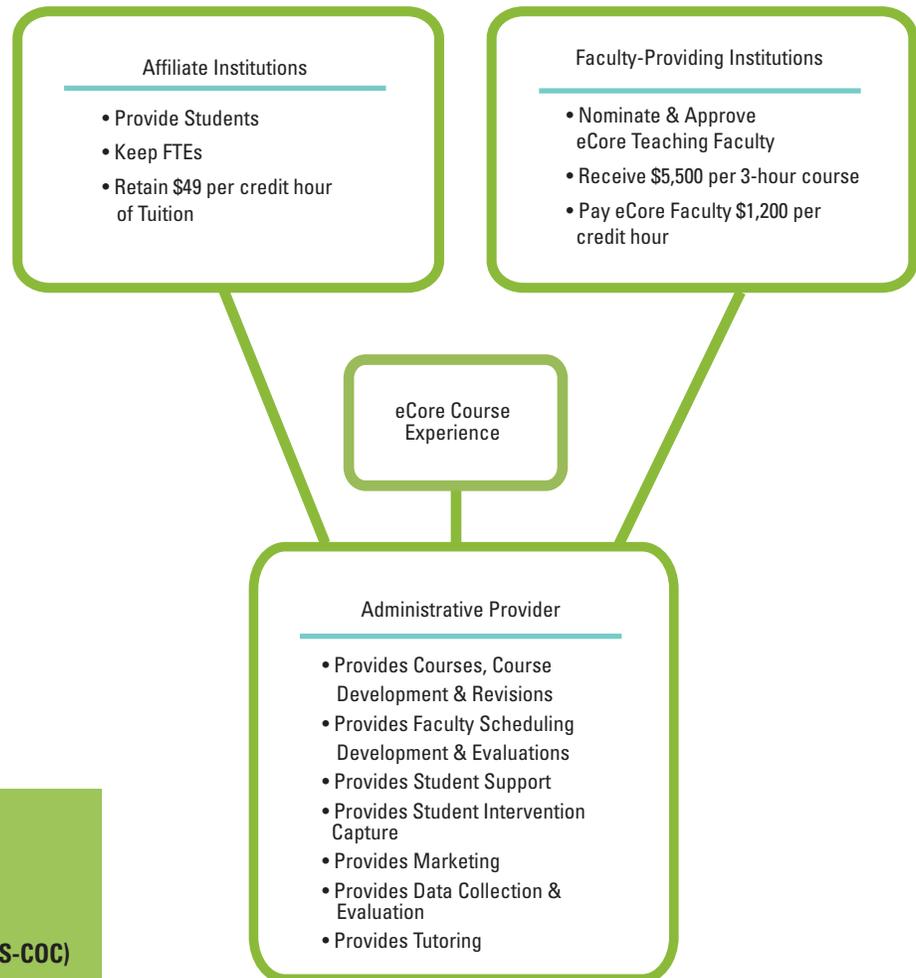
Through ongoing data collection and analysis, eCore Administrative Services aggressively identifies the changing needs of both member institutions and student populations, and evolves accordingly.

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

Course Completion Rate



Collaborative Model for 2014-2015



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 Credit Hours
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

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

Current eCore Options for Non-Science Majors

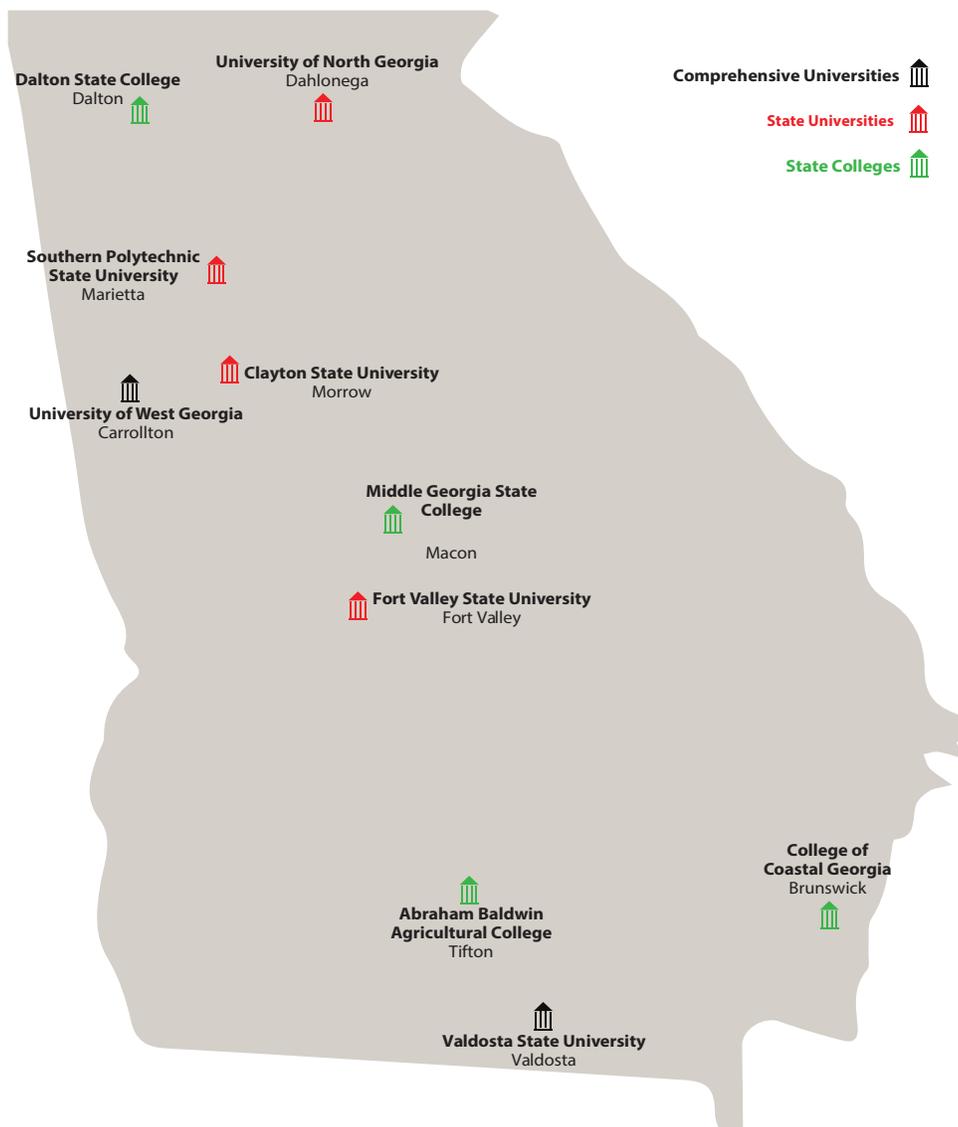
<p>Area A: Essential Skills Specific courses in English composition and mathematics</p>	<p>Must take:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ENGL 1101: English Composition I o ENGL 1102: English Composition II 	<p>One from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o MATH 1101: Introduction to Mathematical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

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/Intervention 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)	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Regents Exam Pass Rate		
Course Preparation Comparison –	Annually	
CHEM 1211K/1212K, ENGL 1101/1102, SPAN 2001/2002		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 2014 Affiliate Partnerships



By Spring 2014, eCore courses were offered for credit by ten USG institutions (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Clayton State University, College of Coastal Georgia, Dalton State College, Fort Valley State University, Middle Georgia State College, Southern Polytechnic State University, University of North Georgia, 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 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.

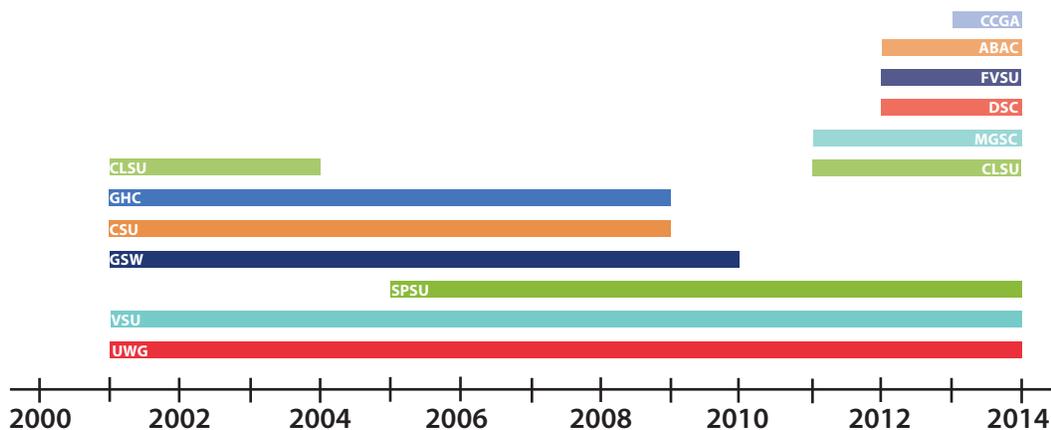
eCore: The Affiliate History

In its fourteen year history, eCore has had thirteen 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)
- University of North Georgia (UNG)
- Valdosta State University (VSU)
- Albany State University (Summer 2014)

- UWG and VSU have been with the eCore Program since inception.
- Clayton State University (CLSU) began at inception and returned in 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 began participation in Spring 2014.

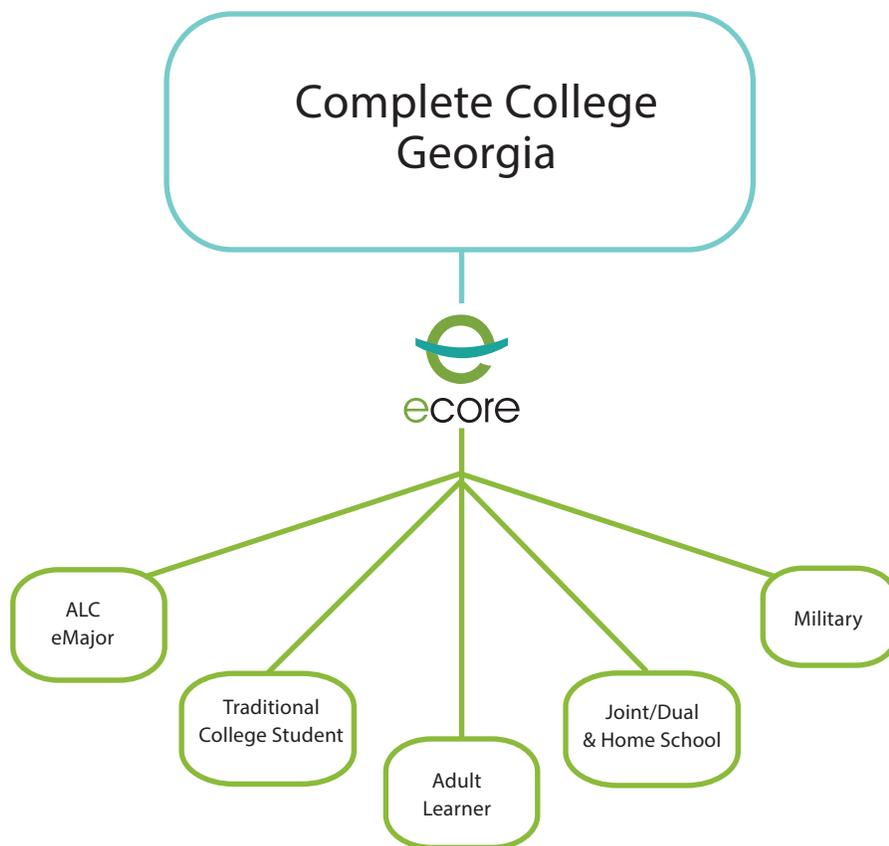
Affiliates Participation Timeline



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 offers three undergraduate degrees: BS in Office Administration Technology, BA in Legal Assistant Studies, and BS in Organizational Leadership. Valdosta State University was the founding institution. Dalton State College joined eMajor in Summer 2013 as the second affiliate adding another concentration to the Organizational Leadership Degree.

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. The initiative 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 which 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.

During FY 2014, eCore continued to provide flexible and convenient options for military students pursuing degrees from USG institutions. With a steady increase in military enrollment, eCore and other outreach programs will continue to offer additional alternatives to active duty military and veterans who are transitioning.

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. These students also 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 who 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 including: rigorous and challenging coursework, exposure to fully online learning environment, financial incentive, and faster postsecondary degree completion.

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

eCore: The Future

In 2014-2015, eCore will undergo expansion due to: tuition reduction to \$169 per credit hour, more OER (Open Educational Resources), additional USG institutions as eCore affiliates, and a method for USG non-affiliate students to register for eCore classes in their own Banner system.

Additionally, a new funding model will redistribute the eCore tuition, and eCore administration personnel will undergo Quality Matters certification.

For this Fact Book supporting FY 2014, the eCore affiliate institutions have provided demographic, campus comparative grade, and course preparation data.