

General Information

eCore Mission

The mission of eCore is to enable University System of Georgia students the opportunity to successfully and affordably complete the 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).

Accreditation

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (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. To date, several affiliate partners have successfully undergone reaffirmation visits from SACS-COC.

University System of Georgia Resolution

On September 9, 2014, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents issued a resolution supporting an expansion that would make eCore's online general education offerings available to students at all USG comprehensive universities, state universities, and state colleges. The eCore administrative team took immediate action to plan for scalability while maintaining the quality of course delivery and student support. eCore, as a catalyst for increased statewide access to affordable and flexible education, will help the college and university partners retain and graduate existing students as well as appeal to new and underserved populations.

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 2015, eCore continued on this trajectory.

The hallmarks of its present and future operation are:

Providing increased institutional capacities for fully online programs.

While most USG institutions provide quality online courses, many are limited or unable (due to finite resources or institutional focus) 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.

Efficient Funding and Model Operations

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

While rising tuition is a reality at most institutions, effective Fall 2014, eCore lowered the per credit-hour tuition rate from \$189 to \$169 – a more than 10% decrease resulting in a tuition cost savings of \$745,340 based on 37,267 credit hours taken in Fall and Spring. Additionally, since Spring 2013, implementation of open educational resources has resulted in a textbook cost savings of \$1,074,693 as of Spring 2015.

Institutions offering eCore courses receive \$42 per credit hour of eCore tuition dollars and have no faculty or course development and revision costs.

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.

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. Institutions delivering eCore courses ensure just-in-time capacity for students' unrestricted progression through the core curriculum.

Ongoing Affiliate Support

As eCore continues to add affiliate institutions, there is greater need to streamline processes while successfully offering diligent and consistent support. Beginning with the initial stakeholder meetings, eCore Administration strives 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 partners 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 home 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, timely responsiveness and grading, quality feedback, and identification of students for intervention.

KEY BENEFITS

- Efficient, scalable and consistent student services, course design, and teaching
- Increased institutional capacity and student opportunity: accessible, affordable, and flexible

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.

eCore course completion rate has progressively increased, with a reported 88 percent for FY 2015.

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, preemptive 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 and a "connections" tutorial course available prior to semester start
7. Embedded tutors in math, science, and foreign language discipline areas
8. Ongoing evaluation of student withdrawal request and course evaluation data

Growth and Scalability

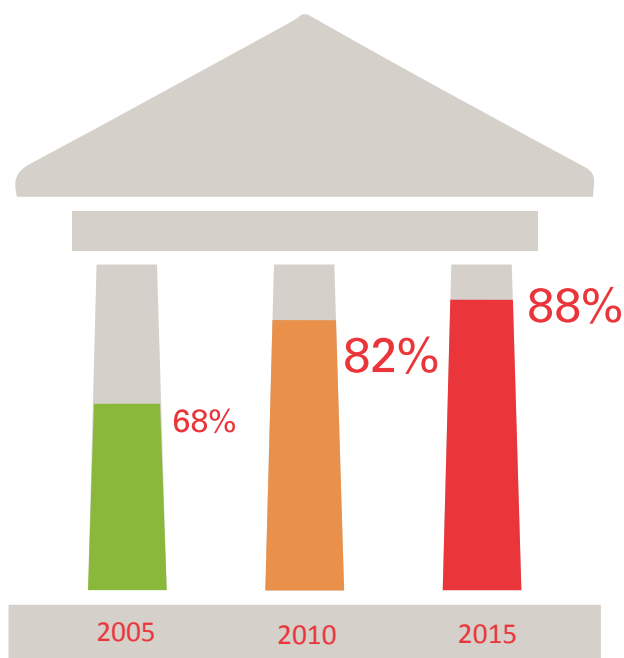
The improved financial model provides incentives for institutions to become affiliates and provide faculty.

Standardized and streamlined processes support the increasing student enrollment each term. There is continued focus on personalized effective student engagement and quality support.

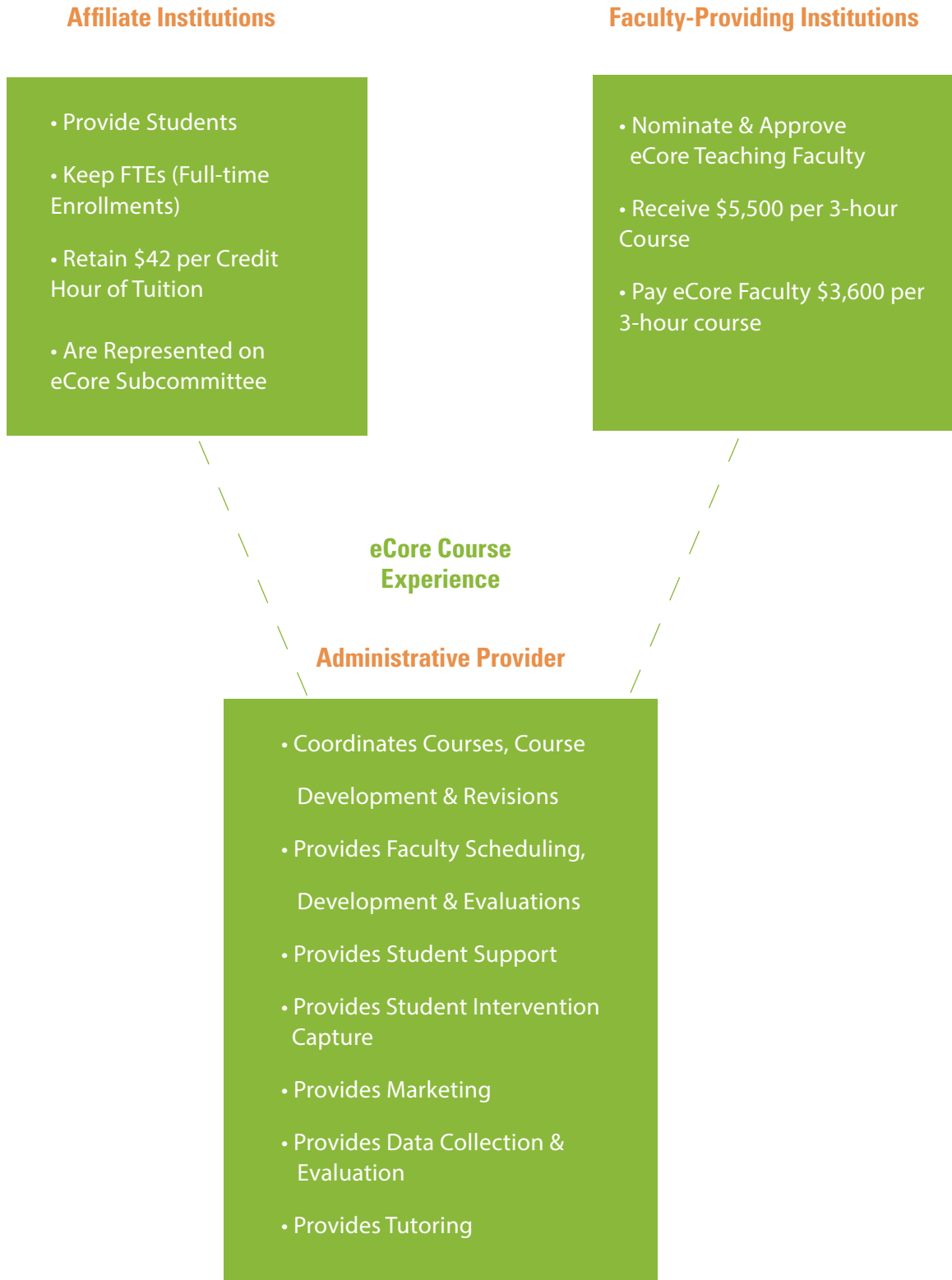
Through ongoing data collection and analysis, eCore Administrative Services aggressively identifies the changing needs of both member institutions and student populations, and evolves accordingly.

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



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	2112	World Literature II	3
ENGL	2131	American 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	Introduction to Mathematical Modeling	3
MATH	1111	College Algebra	3
MATH	1113	Precalculus	3
MATH	1401	Introduction to Statistics	3
MATH	1501	Calculus I	4
PHIL	2010	Introduction 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 2112: World Literature II • ENGL 2131: American 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"> • 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 2112: World Literature II • ENGL 2131: American 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>Two from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENV5 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)
<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

eCore: The Assessments and Data Collected

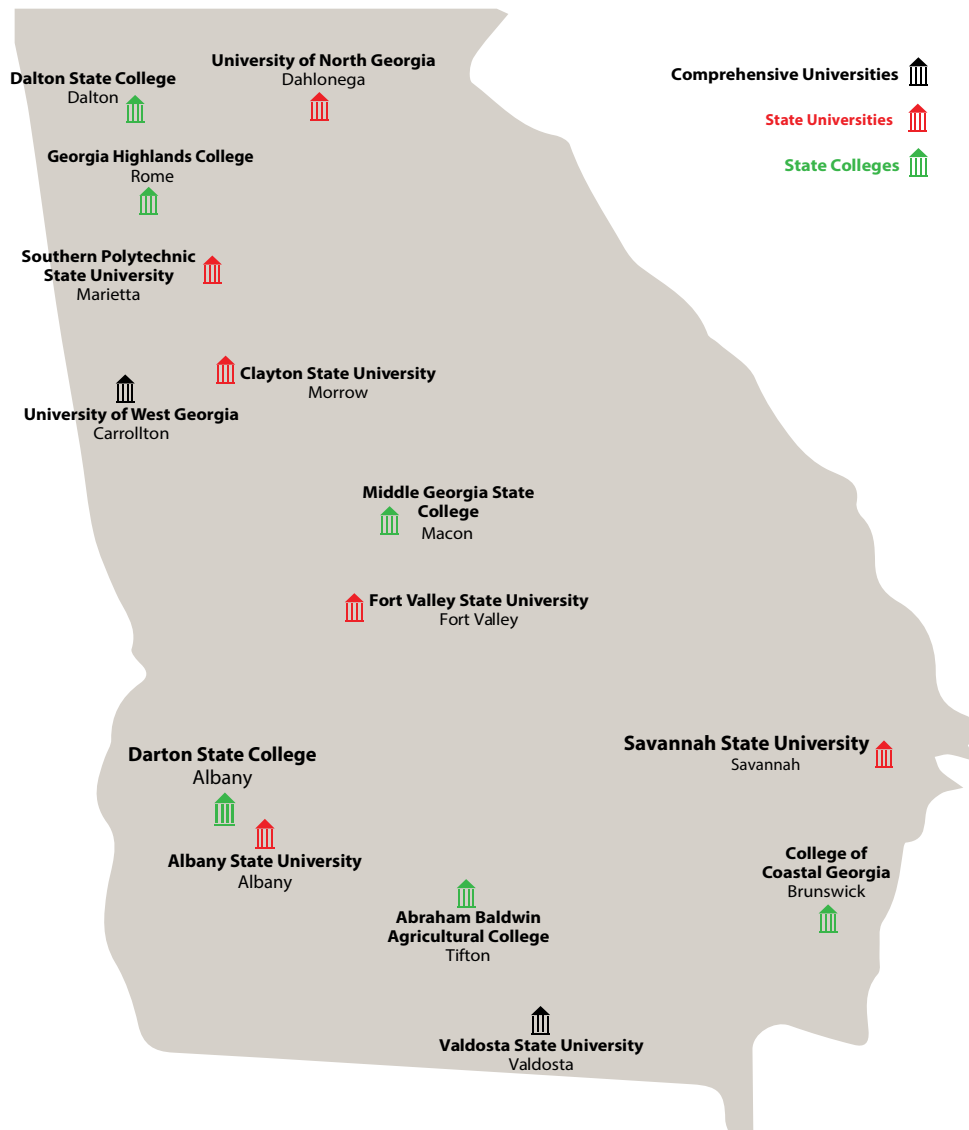
As part of eCore's internal evaluation, several assessments have been initiated to allow a clear and thorough analysis of the processes, procedures, and outcomes of eCore operations and curriculum. The following chart lists eCore assessments conducted annually and each term.

Assessment	Description	Responsibility
General Information		
Core Curriculum Course Offerings	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Number of Affiliates	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Affiliate Timeline	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Demographics		
Student Demographics including Age, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Major, Class, Location, Type	Annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
Develop Student Profile	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Platform Utilization & LMS Usage ** Currently not obtainable in Brightspace	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Services Survey	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Tutoring Usage by Survey	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Enrollment Patterns by affiliate and special populations	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
Outreach and social engagement	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Academic		
Enrollment including Fiscal Year, Fiscal Year Historical, Term, Historical Term, Duplicated, Unduplicated, Course, Session Type, Affiliate	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Completion by Term, Affiliate, Course, Fiscal Year, Fiscal Year Historical, Session Type	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Grade Studies by Term, Historical Term, Fiscal Year, Historical Fiscal Year, Session Type	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Grade Comparisons to Campus	Annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
Semester Credit Hours Generated by Course, Term, Historical Term	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Smarthinking Tutoring Usage	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Embedded Tutoring Usage	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Outreach Activities including Preemptive, Day 3, Day 5 Calling	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Outreach Intervention System Metrics from SEADS for Risks and Withdrawals compared to Full Enrollment	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Withdrawal Survey including Reasons, Factors and Experiences	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Testing		
Testing Centers	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Proctor Fees	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
Number of Exams	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Percentage of Exams at Affiliates and Non-Affiliates	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office

General Information

Faculty		
USG Institution Faculty Participation	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Training and Certification	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Course Revisions	End of each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
New Course Development	End of each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Evaluations and Effectiveness of Faculty Instruction	End of each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Review of Evaluations	End of each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Support Survey	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Mentorship	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
OERs and Textbook Cost Reduction	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Technology Usage	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Financial		
Affiliate Tuition Cost	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
eCore Tuition Dollars Generated by Affiliate, Fiscal Year and Course	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
eCore Course Development Costs	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
eCore Faculty Mentorship Costs	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
eCore Tuition Cost Reduction	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Research Outcomes		
Enrollment & Success by Affiliate and Core Area	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Regents Exam Pass Rate ** Exempted All Affiliates in FY 2012	Annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
Course Preparation and Subsequent Performance in ENGL 1101/1102, SPAN 2001/2002, CHEM 1211K/1212K, and MATH 1113/1501	Annually	eCore Administrative Office and Affiliates
How Many Students Have Taken How Many eCore Courses?	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
How Many Students Have Successfully Completed Courses in Each Core Curriculum Area (Core A-E)?	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Changes in Success Over Time	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Learning Outcomes		
General Education Assessment	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Course Level Outcomes	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Outcome Assessment Matrix	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Course Adjustments by Core Area	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Appendix		
Faculty Teaching in eCore	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office
Staff supporting eCore	Within each term and annually	eCore Administrative Office

eCore: The 2014-2015 Affiliate Partnerships



By Spring 2015, eCore courses were offered for credit by fourteen USG institutions (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Albany State University, Clayton State University, College of Coastal Georgia, Dalton State College, Darton State College, Fort Valley State University, Georgia Highlands College, Middle Georgia State College, Savannah State University, 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 VPAs sign letters of commitment documenting faculty 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.

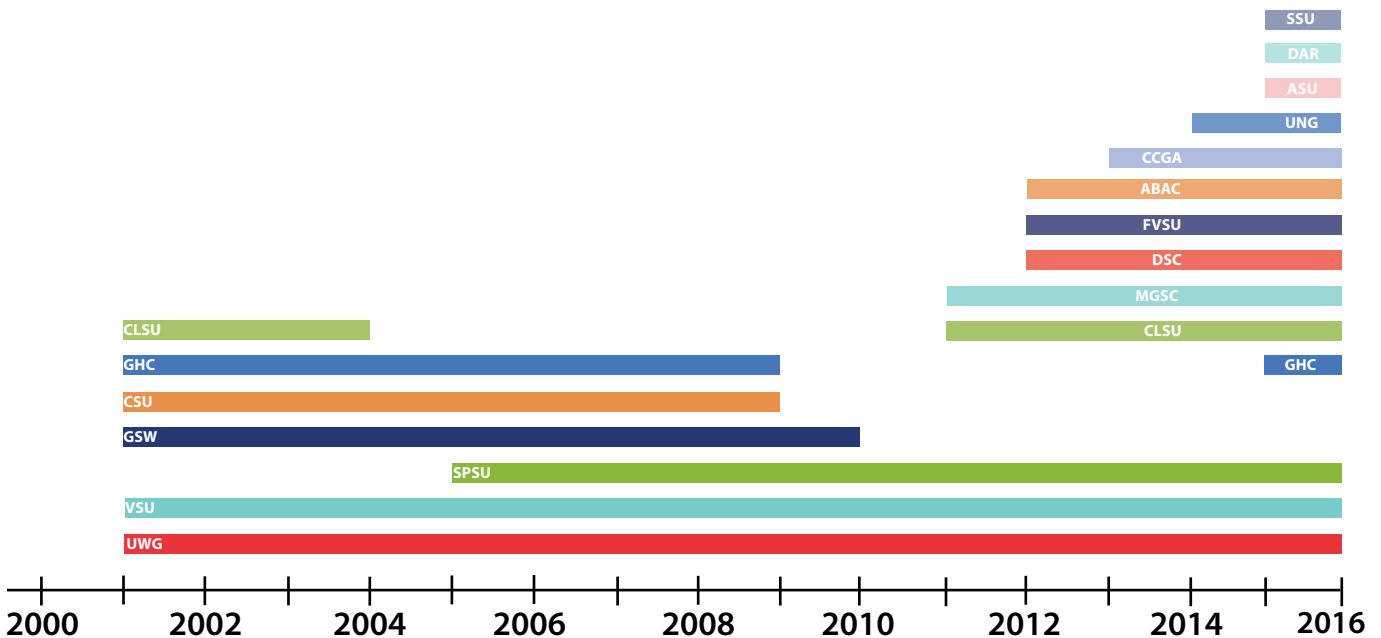
eCore: The Affiliate History

In its fifteen year history, eCore has had sixteen affiliating institutions:

- Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC)
- Albany State University (ASU) -- SUMMER 14
- Clayton State University (CLSU)
- College of Coastal Georgia (CCGA)
- Columbus State University (CSU)
- Dalton State College (DSC)
- Darton State College (DAR) -- SPRING 15
- Fort Valley State University (FVSU)
- Georgia Highlands College (GHC) -- SPRING 15
- Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW)
- Middle Georgia State College (MGSC)
- Savannah State University (SSU) -- SPRING 15
- Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU)*
- University of West Georgia (UWG)
- University of North Georgia (UNG)
- Valdosta State University (VSU)

* Began consolidation activities with Kennesaw State University in Spring 2015

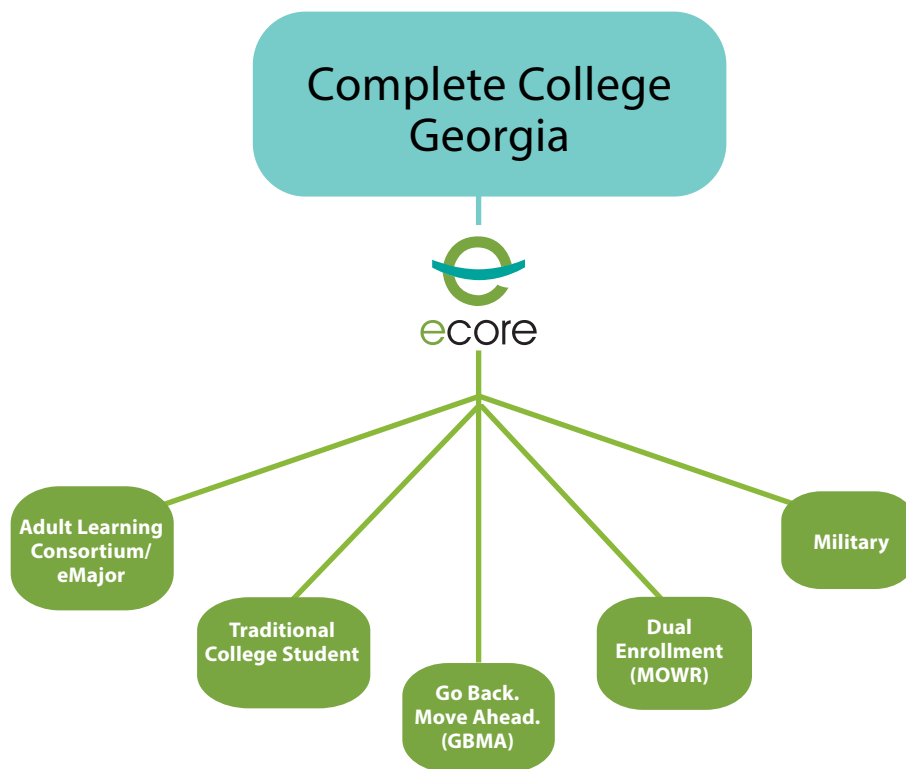
Affiliates Participation Timeline



eCore: State Initiative Alignment

Strategies and initiatives implemented by the 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 partners 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. (Complete College Georgia, Georgia's 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, adult learners, and dual credit enrolled students aligns with and supports Complete College Georgia goals.

“Go Back. Move Ahead.” is an integrated marketing campaign under Complete College Georgia that is aimed at assisting Georgia residents who did not finish college to return and earn a one-year certificate, associate degree or bachelor degree. The University System of Georgia’s eCore and eMajor collaborative programs are vital partners to the campaign’s success.

Pathways to Faster Degree Completion

The University System of Georgia partners with eCore to deliver complete online degree options.

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.

eCore began implementing short term courses in Summer 2012. The 8-week courses require the identical course learning outcomes and rigor as the full term courses. They are offered within the regular 16 week sessions and summer term.

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.

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 Credit for Prior Learning and Prior Learning Assessments (AP, CLEP, CBE) to ensure adult learners earn credit for the professional learning and experiences they have accumulated during their careers. 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 and enrollment team plays a vital role in promotion of the initiative with:

- Campus and regional employment venue visits
- Career readiness webinars
- Oversight of website, blog, social media venues
- Targeted 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. The majority of eCore affiliate institutions now support military students with campus facilities or centers.

In order to increase program awareness, eCore continues to build relationships with each of Georgia's major military bases and partner institutions' Veterans Resource Centers. eCore also reached out directly to service members and veterans through military and veteran sponsored education and career events.

The eCore enrollment team continues to develop relationships with affiliate offices that are located on military bases or with the base Education Service Officer for all eight of Georgia's major military bases and posts. This segment of Adult Learners is growing and is funded through the GI Bill. Veterans and Active Duty Military in Georgia represent about 9% of the state's population compared to approximately 1% for the United States as a whole.

Joint/Dual Enrollment Initiative

Qualifying high school students, 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 a fully online learning environment, financial incentive, and faster postsecondary degree completion.

The eCore enrollment team continues to execute a strategic communications campaign in support of dual enrollment. Specifically, eCore partners with affiliate dual enrollment representatives and engages every level of the state's high school leadership structure to include school boards, superintendents, principals and counselors.

Future

In 2015-2016, eCore expects rapid expansion due to an increase in the number of affiliate partners, partly influenced by the 9 September, 2014 Board of Regents eCore Resolution. Georgia's new non-needs based grant (MOWR, enacted 1 July 2015) significantly increases dual credit enrollment funding and is expected to increase online dual enrollment proportionally. Additionally, eCore expects to increase course offerings and availability of Open Educational Resources.

For this Fact Book supporting FY 2015, the eCore affiliate institutions have provided demographic, campus comparative grade, and course preparation data.