

The University System of Georgia

The University System of Georgia includes all state operated institutions of higher education in Georgia — four research universities, two regional universities, thirteen state universities, seven state colleges, nine two-year colleges, and an independent research unit. These thirty-six public institutions are located throughout the state.

An eighteen-member constitutional Board of Regents governs the University System, which has been in operation since 1931. Appointments of Board members — five from the state-at-large and one from each of the state's thirteen Congressional Districts — are made by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the State Senate. The regular term of Board members is seven years.

The Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, and other officers of the Board are elected by the members of the Board. The Chancellor, who is not a member of the Board, is the chief executive officer of the Board and the chief administrative officer of the University System.

The overall programs and services of the University System are offered through the three major components: Instruction, Public Service/Continuing Education, and Research.

Instruction consists of programs of study leading toward degrees, ranging from certificates to the associate (two-year) level to the doctoral level. Requirements for admission of students to instructional programs at each institution are determined, pursuant to policies of the Board of Regents, by the institution. The Board establishes minimum academic standards and leaves to each institution the prerogative to establish higher standards. Applications for admission should be addressed in all cases to the institutions. A core curriculum, consisting of freshman and sophomore years of study for students whose educational goal is a degree beyond the associate level, is in effect at all the universities and two-year colleges. The Core Curriculum requires sixty semester credit hours, including forty-two in general education and eighteen in the student's chosen major area of study. The Core Curriculum facilitates the transfer of freshman and sophomore degree credits within the University System.

The policies of the Board of Regents for the government, management, and control of the University System and the administrative actions of the Chancellor provide autonomy for each institution. The executive head of each institution is the President, whose election is recommended by the Chancellor and approved by the Board.

Public Service/Continuing Education consists primarily of non-degree activities and special types of college-degree credit courses. The non-degree activities cover a large number of areas of interest and are of several types, including short courses, seminars, conferences, lectures, and consultative and advisory services. Non-degree Public Service/Continuing Education is conducted by all institutions. Typical college-degree credit Public Service/Continuing Education courses are those offered through extension center programs and teacher education consortiums.

Research encompasses investigations conducted primarily for discovery and application of knowledge. These investigations include clearly defined projects in some cases, non-programmatic activities in other cases. They are conducted on campus and at many off-campus locations. Investigations cover a large number and a large variety of matters related to the educational objectives of the institutions and to general societal needs. Most of the research is conducted through the universities; however, some is conducted through several of the state universities.

The University System Advisory Council, with 41 committees, engenders continual System-wide dialogue on major academic and administrative matters of all types. It also makes recommendations to the Chancellor, for transmittal to the Board of Regents as appropriate, about academic and administrative aspects of operation of the System. The Advisory Council consists of the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor, and all Presidents as voting members, and it includes other officials and staff members of the institutions as non-voting members. The Advisory Council's 23 academic committees and 18 administrative committees are made up of representatives from the institutions. The committees dealing with matters of University System-wide application typically include at least one member from each institution.