

March 2021

For more info, contact ses@ggc.edu or 678-407-5879

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Message from the Vice President

Collaboration: Working Together for a Shared Purpose

As we facilitate conversations relating to improving retention and completion with our campus partners, it is apparent that we must identify ways to actively engage students during these challenging times.

Student success is a campuswide effort and we thank the faculty and staff who have been involved in meetings, sharing and gathering expert advice and knowledge believed to help with persistence and retention. Student Engagement and Success (SES), along with campus partners, have created ways to move the needle towards promoting student success. This includes:

1. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management – Registered 1,675 students between Jan 4-21, 2021
2. Information Technology – Loaner laptops/Updates to WIFI
3. Student Engagement and Success – Student Success Stories

As SES learns from our students how to persist, may the faculty, staff, and campus partners embody perseverance, and steadfastness!

Vietnamese Radio and Television Station Highlights Student Engagement and Success



Dr. Justin Jernigan, associate professor of linguistics and senior associate vice president/dean of Student Success, recently appeared as a guest on the local Vietnamese radio and television station WPBS/VSAM 1040. Jernigan, who is multilingual, greeted the Vietnamese audience in their heritage language. He shared information about the variety of programs offered at Georgia Gwinnett College, including the English Language Institute (ELI), highlighting how Student Engagement and Success staff support students throughout their college journey. Access the recorded show via these links: [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#).

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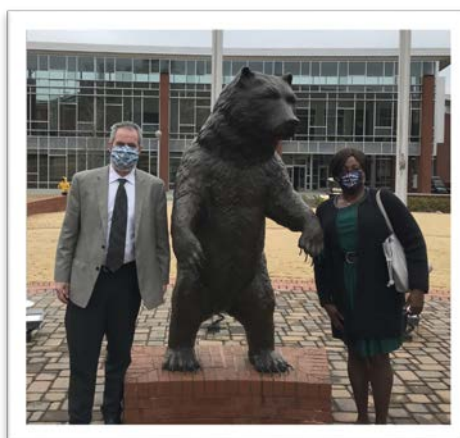
Learning Community Day

Student Engagement and Success recently hosted a Learning Community Day recognition for faculty. The guest speaker was Jonathan Watts Hull, director for Student Success in the University System of Georgia's (USG) Office of Academic Affairs and Policy. Hull discussed the ways learning communities support the USG's Momentum Year strategies. Attendees heard from faculty and student participants in learning communities from across the academic focus areas of business, education, health professions, humanities and arts, social sciences and STEM. Access a recording of the virtual broadcast at [LC Day Spring 2021](#).

Faculty members are crucial to making Learning Communities successful and we thank them for their diligent work.



Student speaker Stephanie Taylor, '21, criminal justice major with Dr. Michelle Rosemond, vice president of SES



Guest speaker, Jonathan Hull, with Dr. Rosemond, vice president of SES



Dr. Jernigan and Dean Mann

Grizzly Student Success Stories

We are excited to share our commitment to student engagement by creating a Grizzly Student Success Stories speaker series. The first student speaker series was held Feb. 9. Join us at future sessions to hear from students about how they've pursued and achieved success here at GGC and what success means to them. The remaining virtual sessions will be held from 2-3 p.m., March 23 and April 13. We hope to see you there! For links to the sessions and other SES events visit [Student Engagement and Success](#) or email us at ses@ggc.edu.



Katherine Camayo, '23, biochemistry



Luis Montanez, '22, CMAP

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CircleIn – Educational App

CircleIn is an easy to use web and mobile studying app that's been backed by a National Science Foundation grant. The app is designed to facilitate study groups among students and also allow them to post questions.

Specifically, they can ask questions, share resources like class notes, prepare for exams, launch text or video chat group sessions, and use an integrated planner to stay on top of their coursework. When a student answers a question, their peers have the option of "liking" their response, which can help that student improve, as well.

To ensure academic integrity, students need to use their GGC email addresses to access the app. Do note that this system is not anonymous. Faculty have access to a dashboard that allows them to monitor activity in their classes.

One feature of the app that many students enjoy is the gamification of study time. Students who help each other and provide good answers to questions, create useful study tools like virtual flashcards, or who facilitate study groups can earn points each semester. Additionally, students earn points and rewards by creating tasks and completing them. Points may then be redeemed for gift cards to popular stores and restaurants. Rewards include academic scholarships. Interactions on the app are entirely student-driven, and so no additional work is required of faculty.

Faculty who would like to be more involved can easily do so. All interested faculty are given access to an online dashboard allowing them to see not only how many students are active on the app, but what they have posted and their level of involvement. Faculty have the option of awarding students additional points based on their level of engagement.

At a time when colleges and universities are increasingly seeking to improve retention and assist students with matriculation, CircleIn has proven itself to be an effective intervention for struggling students. Not only does it allow students to discuss course material on their own time and terms, it also fosters an academic mindset and teaches them effective behaviors for tackling later courses.

The Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) will facilitate virtual information sessions and provide access materials to the GGC community throughout the spring 2021 semester.

For more information, please contact Donna Ly, AEC math coordinator, at dly1@ggc.edu.



Winner of a \$2,000 CircleIn scholarship, Helen Tieu, '22, biology



Winner of a \$500 CircleIn scholarship, Sabrina Sieber, '21, exercise science

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Institutional Research and Analytics

The Institutional Research and Analytics (IRA) staff members have begun the initial stages of developing the GGC Silver Anniversary Strategic Bridge Plan. Stay tuned for more information to come as we reach out to our campus partners to gather information for the strategic bridge plan.

Mentoring and Advising Center



We are now inviting our newest Grizzlies to take part in the Grizzly Mentor Collective, where they can receive a peer mentor who will help them navigate their first semester at GGC. Last semester, more than 1,300 students received support from experienced GGC peer mentors. Continuing sophomores, juniors and seniors are invited to participate as peer mentors. Students should visit [Grizzly Mentor Collective](#) to learn more about the program.

Currently, there are more than 800 students on academic warning or probation. We encourage students to work with Student Success advisors in the Mentoring and Advising Center to get back on track. Advisors will help students develop an academic success plan and connect them to relevant campus resources. Students should email sesadvising@ggc.edu to schedule an appointment.

English Language Institute is Offering a New Custom Training Class for Employers

This spring, the English Language Institute is offering a new custom training class in business English.

Course Description

Designed for businesses that may wish to offer English language training for employees who speak English as a second language, the class focuses on essential vocabulary and extensive writing and speaking. The class features an experienced instructor and guest speakers. Days and meeting times are to be determined.

Find out more or sign up at: <https://www.ggc.edu/eli/business>.

For additional information about the ELI or other English language training, contact ggceli@ggc.edu.



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SES Spring Data Sharing Tour Continues

The SES Data Sharing Tour will continue through the end of April. We are sharing highlights of past presentations from Dr. Kamal Kakish, associate professor of information technology, and Dr. Marni Brown, associate professor of sociology, for those who were not able to attend. Click [here](#) to view the Spring Data-Sharing Tour schedule.

Dr. Kakish's presentation, *Online Education: Synchronous, Asynchronous, and Student Fit* describes online strategies for teaching and student success. His practical online readiness tools and study strategies are practices to integrate into our tutoring and advising centers.

Online Education

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hours • The ability to work full time at home while attending classes • Cheaper due to transportation savings • Adaptability to learning styles and diverse needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties with technology and interface • Lack of computer skills and self-motivation/discipline • Lack of problem solving skills and perseverance • 10 to 20% higher drop-out rates

Clear understanding of gender, sex and sexuality

- **FACT:** Schools are unsafe and unwelcoming for most LGBTQ students, which can have negative impacts on health and well-being. (GLESN)
- **2. Why Gender and Sexuality matters at GGC.**
 - **FACT:** You can improve the health and well-being of LGBTQ students in your school. (GLESN)
 - Be a visible and supportive ally to LGBTQ students
 - Ensure access to comprehensive sexuality education
 - Support your school's Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)
 - Implement comprehensive and LGBTQ-inclusive policies
- <https://www.glsen.org/>
- **3. Why do pronouns matter? What happens when we mis-gender someone?**

Dr. Brown led an engaging session on gender and sexuality. She provided valuable insight on why pronouns matter and what happens when we mis-gender someone.

Retention, Completion and Equity Gaps

First-Year Seminar Supports Student Retention and Equity Efforts

GGC 1000 first-year seminar is a one-credit course designed to promote first-year students' success by providing the knowledge and practical skills necessary to reach their educational and personal objectives. By revealing the "hidden curriculum" of college, developing study skills, and empowering students to take advantage of GGC's resources, the course helps close preparation and achievement gaps, thereby promoting student retention.

GGC 1000 serves more than 300 students a year and actively supports the USG Momentum Year goals. This includes helping students cultivate a growth mindset, confirm their purpose/focus area or major, and foster a sense of belonging.

Gateways to Completion Opens Doors to Success

The Gateways to Completion initiative, a partnership between the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education and the University System of Georgia, is a course redesign project aimed at helping more students successfully pass key gateway courses for their focus areas and majors.

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GGC is in year three of this effort, and the course committees for ACCT 2101, BIOL 2451K, ENGL 1101, and MATH 1113 have been hard at work with their colleagues in creating and adapting different course interventions towards this goal. Equity-based approaches like Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TiLT) increase the transparency of assignment sheets and directional guidance so students know precisely what their goals are and what steps are needed for successful completion.

This pedagogical tool is particularly well-suited to hybrid and online modality courses that rely on students independently engaging with course material. Other interventions the GGC G2C course teams are assessing include 1-1 weekly check-in with students, embedded tutors, syllabus and textbook alignments across sections, redesigned exam preparation pathways, and study hour time cards.



Dr. Ametepe

SES Highlights Faculty

Dr. Joseph Ametepe, professor of physics and associate dean in the School of Science and Technology (SST), shared some success strategies and challenges from STEM faculty colleagues. Keeping track of student communications and determining students' levels of engagement in virtual formats were among the challenges noted. Key strategies that worked well in the pivot to online and hybrid delivery included focused mini-lectures, rewarding class participation, and use of features such as Blackboard Collaborate. Overall, the students who stuck with their classes were generally successful. Those who were not successful were largely those whose attendance declined.



Dr. Pibel

Dr. Charles Pibel, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry and associate dean in SST, related the experience of teaching introduction to chemistry under pandemic parameters. Labs can accommodate 14 students with safe social distancing, so with a section size of 24, a two-week cycle (A and B groups) was adopted. Students were provided with at-home lab kits. Pibel emphasized *empathy* as a key topic in sessions with students.

Drs. Ametepe and Pibel agreed on the advantages for many students studying on campus, even for those enrolled in predominantly online classes. Better connectivity, a quiet study environment, and ready access to resources are among the benefits.



In Loving Memory of Svetlana Olifer

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of our dear friend and GGC staff member Svetlana Olifer, who joined GGC in 2014 and was a dedicated full-time tutor in the Academic Enhancement Center. Her husband, Andrei Olifer, was a GGC math professor who passed away in October 2019.