

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. **(Student support services)**

Compliance Status: Compliance

The College of Coastal Georgia's mission places a premium on having first-rate student support services, programs and activities for the diverse student body served by the College.

It is the mission¹ of the College to:

- *foster academic excellence and individual development in a supportive environment that expands access to higher education and career preparation and enriches student lives;*
- *investigate, capture and disseminate 21st century knowledge and skills, blending student-centered classroom education and innovative service learning to provide students with a solid foundation to support lifelong learning and leadership and appreciation for social responsibility, global awareness, diversity, and engaged entrepreneurship;*
- *provide accessible and affordable higher education to a wide spectrum of learners, from recent high school graduates to returning adults; and*
- *engage actively with the community and region through many avenues, including professional development programs, economic development partnerships, service learning, public service activities, early college programs, applied scholarship, and cultural enrichment experiences.*

Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs play leading roles in ensuring that students have access to services, programs, and activities that promote holistic learning in and outside the classroom. The Student Affairs mission statement notes that it "... provides programs, experiences and services which aid and enrich students' educational and cultural experiences, and which contribute to their intellectual, social, physical and emotional development. ..."

Student Affairs is committed to four comprehensive goals which reflect its basic ideological posture:

- To assist students in making a smooth transition to the College;
- To provide accurate, thorough information about the College, its programs, and its services before, during and after matriculation;

¹ Underlined text represents student support services emphasis

- To assist and support students in their educational, career, and personal development while they are affiliated with College; and
- To help students establish meaningful relationships between their educational and co-curricular experiences and their individual worlds

Personnel in both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs work diligently to assist students in accessing campus resources and services that will increase their likelihood of making a smooth transition to college and achieving academic and personal success. Ultimately, the goal is to produce graduates who have maximized their growth and potential while in school and are fully prepared to be valuable contributing members of society.

To enhance overall communications within and beyond the College, a [Student Communications Touch Point Map](#) was created in Spring Semester 2010 to streamline communication processes both within the College and with external parties to include current and future students. The implementation of the Communications Map has served to create awareness and increased understanding between offices of respective roles, particularly Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, when providing customer service.

Primary areas of student services at the College include enrollment services, financial assistance, student development, and student life.

Enrollment Services

Admissions and Orientation

The Office of Admissions and Orientation spearheads the College's efforts to attract and enroll first-year and transfer students by providing accurate and thorough information about the College and its programs prior to enrollment. Staffed by a newly-appointed Director of Admissions & Orientation, three recruitment counselors and three clerical support staff, the office is responsible for attracting prospective students; processing applications and making admission decisions; and organizing orientation programs for the College.

Field recruitment is conducted in Southeast and Coastal Georgia, as well as the major markets of Atlanta and Jacksonville. The College participates in state-wide recruiting fairs, collectively known as PROBE, which unites representatives from non-profit educational institutions with more than 45,000 Georgia high school students and their families each year. The Office also plans and coordinates campus visit days in the Fall and Spring Semesters for prospective students and their families. The inaugural event hosted last Spring Semester had 67 students plus their families and the Fall Semester 2010 event hosted 45 prospective students and their families.

The Office of Admissions and Orientation is responsible for the development of forms and processes to serve individuals who apply for all associate and baccalaureate degree programs at the College. Individuals may apply for admission in person, via U.S. Mail, or the Internet. Nearly 60 percent of applicants applied online in academic year 2009-2010. The Office also collects student information to verify residency status, processes international student admissions, verifies high school graduation or GED completion and evaluates testing

information to determine an applicant's eligibility for admission to the College. The Office is responsible for developing and insuring accuracy of the Prospective Student web information, as well as numerous [brochures and documents](#) used throughout the recruitment cycle. Clerical staff is responsible for day to day contact with applicants and their families regarding the status of their applications and to field questions regarding enrollment.

Admissions staff is also the primary contact with high schools, civic agencies and other community groups to educate the public about the College, its services, and its programs of study. The Director is responsible for the organization of new student orientation programs to ensure the transition from applicant to matriculated student. Orientation programs for new students are held in advance of the start of each semester.

Registrar

The purpose of the Office of the Registrar is to create and permanently maintain academic records for the use of each student and act as a campus resource on policy and procedure for students, faculty, staff and the community. The Office is responsible for applying technological advances to ensure that students and former students have access to their records in a timely fashion in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. Daily tasks include: processing transcript requests; verifying graduation requirements; processing course and total withdrawals; maintaining the integrity of student records; supporting the class registration process; assessing transfer credit; maintaining all individual student records; and maintaining records and storing student grades. The Office is responsible for maintaining all forms pertaining to registration and graduation and website information regarding enrollment and graduation.

Financial Assistance

Office of Financial Aid

The Office promotes access to the College's degree programs by providing the financial services and [resources](#) students need in order to meet their educational goals and objectives. The Office administers federal, state and institutional financial aid awards. Students may receive grants, merit- and need-based scholarships, on-campus employment, and loans.

The Office staff assists students with all aspects of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process and maintains electronic and paper records of financial aid awards and applications. Students can apply for federal financial aid online via a link from the College's website. Applications for campus-based scholarships are also listed on the website. The Office also holds special orientation programs for students so they may have a clear understanding of the various forms of financial assistance available to them throughout their tenure at the College.

Scholarships are available through the College's Foundation for academically-talented students and/or for those showing financial need. In order to be more competitive in attracting high-ability students, the College's scholarship process requires freshman applicants to apply by November 30 and to provide either SAT I or ACT scores that meet specified standards based on particular scholarships. Scholarships are also available to continuing and transfer students; applications are available in the Spring Semester for awards the following Fall Semester.

Workshops are conducted in area schools and on campus to encourage participation in scholarships programs. Targeted scholarships have also been made available for baccalaureate business, teacher education and nursing programs.

The Office of Financial Aid also works in partnership with the Georgia Department of Labor to acquaint students in the baccalaureate degree programs with the provisions of the [Workforce Investment Act \(WIA\)](#), a potential source of funding for the last two years of a student's four-year degree program. Each of the College's baccalaureate degree programs meets WIA's requirement of producing graduates in degree programs that lead directly to employment in high-demand industries or occupations. In Fall Semester 2010, 73 students enrolled through WIA, while in Spring Semester 2010, 57 students enrolled.

Rapid Process Improvement

The College began an Administrative Services Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) project in August 2010. The observational data was combined with the data learned through informal discussions and interviews with College leadership and staff. The purpose of the data gathering step was to gain greater understanding and insight into the issues and problems that face the organization, particularly the Financial Aid Office. This insight provided the basis for developing the overall focus of the project. The proposed changes, which are currently being implemented in time for Fall Semester 2011, are expected to have a significant impact on the College's operations. These anticipated results include, but are not limited to: (a) financial aid applications being submitted sooner to the College; and (b) financial aid awards being determined faster and notification to the student occurring sooner.

Student Development

CCGA 1101

A two-hour credit course designed to present the incoming student with strategies for developing personal, academic, and career-directed goals. The course helps students understand the purpose of higher education and introduces them to the available resources and programs of the college and encourages them to participate in such programs. CCGA 1101 emphasizes the management and improvement of reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. In addition, the course aids students in making career decisions and developing good interpersonal relationships with students and college faculty and staff.

Although the primary intention is to equip students to succeed in college, CCGA 1101 encourages students to examine their personal goals and to develop skills that are necessary for success in college and beyond. CCGA 1101 is a requirement for all first-time, full-time, degree seeking students, but is suggested for all CCGA students. Those students must enroll in CCGA 1101 during their first semester at the College. Credit for this course is institutional credit only and does not apply toward graduation.

Center for Academic Advising

The Center provides assistance to students in the development and completion of their academic and career goals at the College. The Center staff advises students through admissions, enrollment and registration processes and provides appropriate ongoing advising support in academic programs. Additionally, the Center staff advises students who have not declared a program of study in course options that may be applicable to multiple majors.

Learning Center

The Center enhances the opportunities for students to achieve academic excellence and personal growth by providing a supportive environment that encourages students to reach their maximum potential. The programs and services of the Center support the academic integration of students into the College community and promote independent learning. Among the services offered are individual and small group tutoring facilitated by peer tutors, and Supplemental Instruction is offered for designated courses. Center tutors also conduct basic computer skills workshops.

All Center tutors are trained and certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) that has certified the tutoring program through 2011. In addition, students have access to online tutoring through Tutor.com, which is available 24/7. Tutor.com provides live, real-time tutors in a range of subjects, including mathematics, English, science, and social science. There are also modules available for baccalaureate nursing students to help prepare them for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

Learning Support

The College offers Learning Support courses in English grammar and composition, reading, mathematics and study skills through its Learning Support Program. These Learning Support courses provide developmental training in the basic skills areas. The courses are designed for students who wish to enter degree programs. Students wishing to improve their academic background in these areas may elect to take these courses and should discuss the restrictions with their advisors. Students whose placement scores and high school records indicate academic weakness will be required to complete Learning Support courses.

To exempt placement testing for Learning Support, a student must score an SAT I minimum of 430 Verbal/Critical Reading and 400 Mathematics or an ACT composite minimum of 17 English and 17 Mathematics.

Center for Service-Learning

The College is actively working to develop a service-learning component in both core curriculum and baccalaureate degree programs that will be coordinated through a new Center for Service-Learning. This effort, a partnership between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, focuses on creating opportunities for students to move from exploration as a first or second year student into meaningful internships as a junior or senior level student. Through service-learning participation, students will be engaging early in structured off-campus experiences in all sectors

of the community that are connected to their potential major area of study or general education course. These experiences will provide the foundation for upper level, for-credit internships at various community venues and help the College's students understand the value of giving back.

Start-up grant funds from the Saint Marys United Methodist Church Foundation are being utilized to seed the new Center of Service-Learning. Specifically, the funds are being used to support the Director and program development for the first 18 months of the program. The Center is charged with initiating and supporting curricular and co-curricular activities that enhance student learning and respond to the critical needs of our community through collaborative campus and community partnerships.

The College adopted "service-learning" as its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for purposes of continued accreditation by SACSCOC. By anchoring service-learning in the QEP, the College is committed long-term to this method of teaching, learning and community engagement. In doing so, the institution has further affirmed its desire to become "Georgia's College for Service-Learning."

TRiO – Student Support Services

The Student Support Services program is a federally funded educational opportunity TRiO program, which provides academic support for students (1) who come from low-income families (defined by Federal government guidelines); (2) who are defined as first-generation (neither of the students' parents or guardians has received a four-year degree); or (3) who have documented disabilities that can adversely affect student class performance or attendance as well as learning disabilities.

Support is provided through activities that encourage academic development, assist with College requirements, and motivate students. The goal of the TRiO program is to increase student retention and graduation rates, as well as to facilitate two-year college student transition to four-year institutions. Services include basic skills instruction and tutoring; academic, financial, career and personal counseling; assistance with admission and transfer to four year programs and institutions; assistance with financial aid; mentoring; cultural activities; and accommodations for students with disabilities.

Testing and Diversity

The Testing Office is responsible for administering a variety of state, institutional, and discipline-specific tests. The office conducts academic assessment of prospective students in writing, reading, and mathematics using the Computer Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support Services (COMPASS.) This assessment gives prospective students information about the optimal level of coursework they should attempt in the foundational areas of writing, reading, and mathematics. The testing program also administers COMPASS exit examinations for the Learning Support program. Additionally, the testing program offers a wide variety of tests to assist students in acquiring college credits, including College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, Independent Studies examinations for local students attending other institutions, Intuition Based Scholastic Aptitude Testing (ISAT), and the Georgia Board of Regents' Examination in composition and reading comprehension.

Diversity programs at the College include Torchbearers (specifically targeting African-American males), and Minority Academic Social Development Association (MASDA), which is open to all minority students. These diversity programs share the mission of helping students from underrepresented backgrounds fulfill their educational goals. Student Affairs staff members work in concert with other members of the faculty and staff to offer diversity programs on the campus. The programs all feature regular meetings with staff members in group and individual settings. Activities that promote success in the diversity programs include academic success forums, community service projects, and presentations to K-12 students by college students who provide excellent role modeling opportunities, college transfer tours, and faculty academic monitoring.

Career Services

The mission of Career Services is to provide student-centered, comprehensive career development programs and services that empower both students and alumni to achieve their lifelong career goals. The Coordinator of Career Services is responsible for providing career counseling. Career seminars are offered each semester and a computer lab is available with a full array of diagnostic and informational programs including the FOCUS 2, to assist students with career decisions. Job fairs are held each academic year to assist students in seeking employment while they are enrolled at the College. As the institution prepares to graduate its first baccalaureate students in Spring Semester 2011, prospective employers were invited to participate in campus job fairs during academic year 2010-2011. Workshops are held on job interviewing skills and résumé writing.

A formal Career Action Plan process has been developed to identify the specific steps students need to complete as they work toward their long term educational and career goals. The Coordinator is responsible for organizing and coordinating with College staff and faculty to create a customized career development model, organized by year of study, for students. Career Services has partnered with program faculty to deliver the program.

Counseling and Disability Services

The Office of Counseling and Disability Services fills a dual role on the campus, providing mental and behavioral health counseling services to the entire student body and focused support services to students who present physical and/or learning disabilities. In accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) \(amended\) of 2009](#), Disability Services is committed to documenting and arranging reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities, including academic advising and registration assistance. The College's [policy manual for disability services](#) is available on the College's website and in the student handbook. Short-term personal counseling is also available to all students. The two staff members in this area both hold licensure in the state of Georgia as professional counselors.

Student Life

Student Life and Activities

The Office promotes student engagement in the life of the campus. Student Life offers students opportunities to participate in co-curricular activities, community service, intramural athletics, and campus governance. The goal is to develop leadership skills, gain exposure to diverse

cultures, ideas, arts and styles of life, and learn constructive uses of leisure time, all within the framework of institutionally sponsored or co-sponsored programs. The Office oversees the Student Government Association, Programming Board, other campus clubs and organizations, and the student publications program.

The Student Government Association (SGA) represents the interests of the student body to the campus administration and all members are elected to their SGA positions. Under the guidance of the Office of Student Life, the SGA program won two national awards in the past seven years for excellence in programming. The recently established Programming Board composed of student leaders, directs the event and cultural programming for the College to provide fun, creative and diverse experiences for the student body.

Leadership training and development is offered to all students who are in leadership positions in recognized campus clubs and organizations. Every year, typically in the Fall Semester, student leaders participate in a development program known as “Big Leadership Weekend,” which positions student leaders of campus organizations to engage their groups in meaningful activities during the course of the academic year.

Student organizations are activated based on student interest and only with the approval of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Student Affairs Council. Faculty and staff serve as sponsors to these organizations. Organizations are either academic or social in nature and offer rich opportunities for student engagement within the College community. During academic year 2009-2010, several new student organizations linked to the institution’s baccalaureate degree programs were launched, allowing students in those programs to have co-curricular activities that are closely linked to their disciplines.

In academic year 2009-2010, the College launched a Business Student Society (BSS). With a burgeoning population of business administration students a creation of such a club was imminent. In Fall Semester 2009 the proposed student organization submitted a request for organizational status along with a preliminary constitution. Official club status was granted thereafter. Initial organizational meetings began as introductory activities for students majoring in business fields. The mission of the BSS is to support and encourage those students pursuing BBA degrees by offering them a social network of similar students, assist first- and second-year business students in the transition to junior and senior level programs, and strive to connect students transferring into the institution as juniors and seniors with other business students already on campus.

The South Georgia Association of Educators – College of Coastal Georgia Chapter, has existed on the campus as a student organization that provided support to students who were completing the associate degree and planning to transfer into junior and senior level coursework as teacher education majors at other institutions. Throughout academic year 2009-2010, the Chapter implemented addition components and became a student organization that mentors freshmen and sophomore students into the junior and senior level program for teacher education at the College. With its new mission, the organization has also changed its name to the Association of Coastal Educators (ACE). The transfer emphasis has been replaced with an emphasis on assisting College students as they matriculate into the upper level courses for the teacher preparation program.

In academic year 2010-2011, other new clubs began on campus and applied for official club status. The Coastal Georgia Club Soccer team was started in late 2009 due to interest in the popular international game and also to build awareness for the impending women's and men's varsity soccer teams, which, according to the Athletics Department, will begin in Fall Semester 2012. The soccer club was awarded funding to buy goals and other equipment for practice on the College's Brunswick campus and even competed in two tournaments during the summer.

Other clubs that have begun initial meetings are academically-oriented. In Fall Semester 2010 the Biology, Psychology and Foreign Language clubs gained sufficient interest on campus and started the process of becoming official clubs. Once they have a faculty or staff sponsor, submit a constitution and go before the Student Affairs Council, the aforementioned clubs can submit budgets for fiscal year 2011. A [listing of all student clubs](#) is provided.

Residence Life and Housing

The College's first residence hall with 350 beds will open in July 2011 and will provide the first ever on-campus housing on the campus. The facility will include 142 units in the two-single-bedroom semi-suite layout, 156 units in the four-single-bedroom suite layout, and 52 units in the two-single-bedroom suite layout.

The most recent Strategic Master Plan targeted a 2010 baseline enrollment goal of 3,000 students. The Fall Semester 2009 enrollment exceeded that number and Fall Semester 2010 enrollment reached 3,438 students. To meet the next enrollment projection of 4,000 students by 2015, the construction of 600 on-campus housing units is desired.

With certain exceptions, traditional freshmen outside a determined radius from campus will be required to live on campus. Students who reside in residence halls tend to develop skills in a variety of areas including interpersonal leadership skills. On-campus housing will provide a residential living and learning environment that is positive, safe, and healthy and an environment that supports a very high degree of academic achievement. The programming model will be focused on co-curricular and service learning activities. On-campus student housing at the College will play an important role in the support of the institution's mission to deliver a quality education at a reasonable cost, as well as accommodate those students who would have to otherwise travel a significant distance to attend classes. Campus student housing is a critical component of the strategic plan which envisions the institutional transformation to a destination state college with robust student services and activities, especially for those students enrolling in baccalaureate degree programs. Campus housing will support campus initiatives to strengthen student recruitment, retention, and graduation efforts.

Assessment of Student Support Services

Student support service areas participate in the annual unit planning assessment process which includes the assessment of expected outcomes – see [Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1](#) for a detailed overview of the process. The measurement of expected outcomes is based on a combination of institutional and campus-based assessment instruments, including orientation and graduating student surveys.

Two sample unit assessment plans ([Learning Center](#) and [Career Services](#)) are provided.

Running parallel to student support services planning, personnel evaluations of staff and administrative employees of student service areas are conducted annually. The specific procedures for the evaluation are described in [Comprehensive Standard 3.2.10](#). The evaluation process allows student service employees to document professional plans of improvement and reinforces strengths and accomplishments.

Supporting Documentation

[College of Coastal Georgia Student Communications Touch Point Map](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia Undergraduate student recruitment materials](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia financial aid information and downloadable forms](#)

[Workforce Investment Act \(WIA\) website](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act of 2009, as amended](#)

[2010-2011 College of Coastal Georgia Office of Disability Services Student Handbook](#)

[College of Coastal Georgia student clubs listing](#)

[2009-2010 Learning Center unit assessment plan – sample](#)

[2010-2011 Career Services unit assessment plan – sample](#)