

**3.2.8** The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution. **(Qualified administrative/academic officers)**

**Compliance Status:** Compliance

The College of Coastal Georgia has qualified administrative and academic officers who have the proven experience, credentials, and ability to lead the institution.

The College has a systematic process for recruiting and appointing administrators and academic officers that involves developing a pool of qualified candidates that meet the requirements of the position description. Requirements for the recruitment and hiring process are addressed in USG's [Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual: Employment](#). This policy provides requirements for posting and advertising positions, conducting searches, formation of search committees, screening procedures, and conducting background and reference checks. The College also follows the USG's policy on Affirmative Action, which is:

*No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia or any of its several institutions now in existence or hereafter established.*

The institution's current President, Dr. Valerie Hepburn, is leading the College in transitioning to a four-year, degree-granting institution. Having served as a senior academic and executive branch leader for more than 25 years, Dr. Hepburn was instrumental in obtaining the College's necessary accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to offer four-year degrees, as well as spearheading two years of record-breaking fundraising. Dr. Hepburn has recruited advanced faculty, established several educational scholarships, introduced technology for students and staff, and paved a path for the present construction of multiple new facilities on the College's main campus.

With 28 years of experience in higher education, including 18 as an academic administrator, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Phillip Mason, was appointed in June 2009 to lead the College's faculty, while Dr. Gerald Kiel, with 28 years of experience in higher education, including 19 years in senior administrative positions, was appointed in June 2009 as the Vice President for Student Affairs to oversee student services operations that have expanded and been restructured to better serve a growing student body that includes upper-level students for the first time. With over 20 years of experience in the management of fiscal affairs, the last 19 at the College, Mr. Tom Saunders is a key member of the executive team and leads the College in all business affairs, as well as, facility, grounds, campus security, and auxiliary enterprises. Dr. Jim Hughes Lynch was appointed Director of Institutional Research & Planning in May 2009; however, after reorganization during academic year 2009-2010, his title became Director of Institutional Effectiveness. With over 15 years of upper administrative experiences, Dr. Lynch has re-engineered assessment and performance improvement activities, while managing annual tactical and long-term strategic planning processes and overseeing the College's reaffirmation of accreditation.

Finally, Ms. Geri Culbreath serves as the Chief Information Officer and is responsible for all technology and communications programs at the College; she has been at the College for 31 years.

To oversee the College's growing physical infrastructure, the College hired Mr. Gregory Carver in February 2010 as the Assistant Vice President for Design and Construction. A professional engineer with over 30 years experience, Mr. Carver has substantial experience with the design, construction and renovation of facilities in both Federal and State government. Mr. Bryan Lemons, a loaned senior executive from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), serves as the Assistant Vice President for Organizational Development and Legal Affairs and provides legal support and guidance for the College.

In addition to expanding the Offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness, the College elevated the position of Division Chair to that of School Dean in Fall Semester 2010. Historically, Division Chairs had exercised little real administrative responsibility at the College. As School Deans, however, these positions play an active role in faculty recruitment, assessment, and professional development, as well as curriculum and policy development. The current School Deans are: Dr. Keith Belcher, Mathematics and Natural Sciences; Dr. Karen Hambright, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Dr. Patricia Kraft, Nursing and Health Sciences; Dr. Craig Fleisher, Business and Public Affairs; and Dr. Kent Layton, Education and Teacher Preparation.

All the School Deans have earned doctorates from regionally-accredited universities and teach as well as administer/manage their respective programs. As evidence of the College's administrators' academic experience, the administrators and academic officers, including the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Business Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, and all Deans, currently hold faculty appointments. The majority of the administrators and academic officers have teaching experience and continue to teach when their expertise is required in particular courses. Table 1 provides an experiential snapshot of the College's administrators and academic officers.

**Table 1: Institution Administrators and Academic Officers – Academic Year 2010-2011**

Name	Position <i>(click for job description)</i>	Credentials <i>(click for vitae/resume)</i>	Highest Degree	Experience
Valerie Hepburn	<a href="#">President</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	Dr. Hepburn provides overall leadership to all educational and service initiatives. She has served as a senior academic and executive branch leader for more than 25 years, and has designed and directed numerous state and local programs and initiatives.
Phillip Mason	<a href="#">Vice President for Academic Affairs</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	With 28 years of administrative, managerial, and teaching experience in higher education, Dr. Mason leads the College's academic affairs unit and provides expertise in curriculum development and assessment, faculty development, general education, and new academic program development.

Name	Position <i>(click for job description)</i>	Credentials <i>(click for vitae/resume)</i>	Highest Degree	Experience
Gerald Kiel	<a href="#">Vice President for Student Affairs</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	With 28 years of administrative, managerial, and teaching experience in higher education, Dr. Kiel leads the College's student affairs unit and provides expertise in student affairs, student activities, judicial affairs, health services, disabled student services, student government and student retention.
C. Tom Saunders	<a href="#">Vice President for Business Affairs</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	MBA	With over 20 years of experience in the management of fiscal affairs, Mr. Saunders is a key member of the executive team and leads the College in all business affairs, as well as, facility, grounds, campus security, and auxiliary enterprises. He maintains custody and control of all funds, prepares and interprets the business plan and budget to support the academic programs and manages the Foundation's fiscal affairs.
Jeff Preston	<a href="#">Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	BA	With over 20 years of experience in budget and finance, Mr. Preston previously served as the College's Comptroller and as a principal auditor for the State of Georgia. He possesses a strong background in financial management.
Kay Hampton	<a href="#">Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	MSN	With over 25 years of experience in nursing service management/administration and 20 years of experience in higher education teaching and administration, Ms. Hampton provides support in planning, implementation and supervision of academic programs, faculty governance, course scheduling, curriculum development, advising, and assessment.
Gregory Carver	<a href="#">Assistant Vice President for Design and Construction</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	MS	With over 30 years of experience as a professional engineer, Mr. Carver coordinates and provides guidance on all design, renovation and construction projects.
Ann Crowther	<a href="#">Assistant Vice President for Academic Services</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	Dr. Crowther has over 30 years of service in higher education, having most recently been the Associate Vice President for Instruction at the University of Georgia for ten years. She provides direct administrative leadership to the Center for Academic Advising, the Learning Center, the TRiO program, Learning Support, and all first-year student success programs.

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Bryan Lemons	<a href="#">Assistant Vice President for Organizational Development and Legal Affairs</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	JD	Currently detailed to the College from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) under an executive exchange program, Mr. Lemons is responsible for providing leadership to the campus' business process improvement activities, directing risk analyses, and facilitating various employee development and support programs. As a lawyer with over 18 years of experience, Mr. Lemons serves as the College's legal affairs liaison, responsible for coordinating all legal issues with the University System's Office of Legal Affairs.
Keith Belcher	<a href="#">Dean, School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	With over 20 years in higher education as a professor and 12 years of experience as a research director, department chair, and division chair, Dr. Belcher provides leadership and oversight for the School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, including faculty recruitment, budgets, course offerings, curriculum supervision, development of new programs, accreditation requirements, grant management, and advising.
Craig Fleisher	<a href="#">Dean, School of Business and Public Affairs</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	An internationally-focused management scholar with 20 years of university experience, Dr. Fleisher has held various positions, including endowed Research Chair, Dean, MBA Director, Area Chair, and/or Full Professor. A former President of the international Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP), Dr. Fleisher has particular expertise in strategic management, performance assessment and public affairs.
Karen Hambright	<a href="#">Dean, School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	With 16 years of experience teaching in the USG and eight years administrative experience, Dr. Hambright is responsible for oversight of curriculum, general education and assessment, advising, faculty development, and new academic program development in the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

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Patricia Kraft	<a href="#">Southeast Georgia Health System Distinguished Dean of School Nursing and Health Sciences</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	EdD	Dr. Kraft most recently served as the Associate Provost and Dean of the School of Nursing and Behavioral Health at Carson-Newman College in Tennessee. Prior to her eight years in the Dean's role, Dr. Kraft was Chair of the nursing program at Waynesburg College in Pennsylvania. She provides more than 20 years of teaching and research experience, as well as three decades of practice experience to this significant role.
Kent Layton	<a href="#">Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning and Dean, School of Education and Teacher Preparation</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	PhD	With 24 years of experience in teacher preparation, Dr. Layton leads the College's teacher preparation efforts and is responsible for coordinating professional development opportunities for faculty.
William Carlton	<a href="#">Director of Athletics</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	PhD	Dr. Carlton previously served as Director of Athletics at Presbyterian College, a position he held for six years. During his time at Presbyterian, Dr. Carlton led the College's athletics program, one of the nation's largest among small, elite undergraduate schools, through its successful move from NCAA Division II to Division I and into membership in the Big South Athletic Conference.
Holly Christensen	<a href="#">Director of the Camden Center</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	MEd	With over 28 years of higher education experience, Ms. Christensen supervises the full range of services to Camden Center students, including instruction, academic advisement, registration, testing, counseling, financial aid, and library services.
Jim Hughes Lynch	<a href="#">Director of Institutional Effectiveness</a>	<a href="#">vitae</a>	EdD	With over 15 years of administrative experience, Dr. Lynch provides analytical and decision support services; manages the annual tactical and long term strategic planning processes; and oversees the College's accreditation, assessment and performance improvement activities.
Geri Culbreath	<a href="#">Chief Information Officer</a>	<a href="#">resume</a>	BGS	Ms. Culbreath is responsible for all technology and communications programs. She is a member of the Coastal Georgia Minority Outreach Advisory Program, a program designed to enhance the reading and mathematics skills of young African- American males.

**Supporting Documentation**

[USG Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual: Employment](#)

College of Coastal Georgia senior administrator and administrative staff vitae/resumes

College of Coastal Georgia senior administrator and administrative staff job descriptions