Georgia Gwinnett
COLLEGE

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November 29, 2023

Dear Selection Committee:

On behalf of Georgia Gwinnett College and the division of Academic & Student Affairs, it is my pleasure to nominate our Student Success Advising Center for the University System of Georgia Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

Over the past four years, and in the last two years especially, significant investments in strategic staff positions and an intentional, relentless, collaborative focus on student success at Georgia Gwinnett College have been maintained through our Student Success Advising Center. A number of innovative initiatives have been launched or enhanced, including:

- **Hispanic Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results (HACER)**
- GGC 1000 first-year seminar course
- Learning communities
- Peer mentoring: Grizzly Peers for Success (GPS)
- Grizzly Orientation
- Grizzly Renewal Opportunity Workshop (GROW)
- Summer Preparatory Academic Resource Camps (SPARC)
- First-generation student support

These combined efforts have contributed to a significant increase in our GGC student retention, among other key performance metrics. First-year full-time student retention within the university system has increased from 64.7% to 72.8%, comparing the Fall 2020 to Fall 2022 cohorts. Of particular note is the Fall 2022 fall-to-fall retention among our Hispanic students of 77.7%, an increase of over 2% over that rate for the Fall 2021 Hispanic cohort. In light of this success and GGC's status as the USG's largest Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), the nomination portfolio highlights the HACER learning community, coordinated by the Student Success Advising team, as a key advising strategy that interfaces with a number of the other strategies and initiatives and has contributed to student success in remarkable ways.

I enthusiastically support the nomination of our Student Success Advising Center for the University System of Georgia Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

Sincerely,

George S. Low
Senior Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs and Provost

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Narrative of Goals and Strategies for Student Success

Background: Institutional Profile

Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC) is one of two access institutions in the Atlanta metropolitan region. The **GGC mission** states that the College "provides access to targeted baccalaureate and associate level degrees that meet the economic development needs of the growing and diverse population of the northeast Atlanta metropolitan region." Founded in 2005, Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC) operates according to a clear strategic plan derived from its mission.

GGC's Student Success unit, of which the Student Success Advising Center (SSAC) is a core program, is dedicated to the academic and holistic success of every student enrolled at GGC. Student Success programs include advising and peer mentoring delivered through the SSAC; tutoring and peer supplemental instruction provided by the Academic Enhancement Center (AEC); student success (corequisite learning support) courses, first-year seminar course GGC 1000, and learning communities overseen by our First- and Second-Year Experience team.

Student Success Advising Center Goals and Strategies

The Student Success Advising Center (SSAC) is the primary source for academic advising and transition-to-college support for GGC's first-year students and increasingly provides support for students beyond the first year who benefit from the SSAC's innovative success interventions, such as first-generation student support, adult learner programs, and the Grizzly Renewal Opportunity Workshops (GROW) program. Student Success advisors also teach sections of the GGC 1000 first-year seminar course, support Grizzly Orientation and recruitment activities, participate in high school advising visits, and develop and deliver student success workshops.

Since 2020, the Student Success Advising Center has supported all first-year students and expanded targeted support for specific student populations. One notable initiative overseen by the SSAC has been the HACER (Hispanic Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results) learning community, established in 2020 as a foundational strategy for supporting our growing Hispanic/Latino student population and promoting cultural understanding among all students.

HACER Learning Community Goals and Strategies

The HACER (Hispanic Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results) Learning Community is a key initiative of the Student Success Advising Center (SSAC). With a Hispanic/Latino student population of 27% at the time, GGC was designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution in Fall 2022. Recognizing the need to provide targeted support for this growing segment of our student population, the college began providing targeted support for Hispanic or Latino students in Spring 2021 through collaborative events and activities open to all students on campus. The HACER Learning Community at GGC is a thematic learning community focused on supporting Hispanic/Latino students' academic and personal growth. HACER welcomes all members of the GGC community to learn about and experience Hispanic and Latino cultures.

HACER offers a range of activities, including Spanish language classes, Latin American study opportunities, cultural workshops, and participating with other organizations like the Hispanic Organization for Growth, Advancement, and Retention (HOGAR). It provides a platform for students to explore their heritage, take on leadership roles, and develop professionally through various events and mentorship opportunities. HACER has become a significant part of GGC, enriching the college experience for all students while celebrating Hispanic/Latino cultures. HACER participants have access to bilingual peer mentors, student success advisors, and bilingual tutoring in the Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) to support their student success.

Advising Strategies that Enhance Purposeful Choice

Supporting a Successful Transition into the GGC Community

Student Success advisors provide essential student guidance and support at **Grizzly Orientation (GO)**, which has among its aims to integrate students into the GGC community and to equip them with practical knowledge to successfully start the school year. Beginning in 2019, a collaboration among the SSAC, New Student Connections, and the academic schools has helped students to discern and affirm their academic meta-majors (or focus areas) and major choices.

Initiated in Summer 2021, the **Summer Preparatory Academic Resource Camps (SPARC)** sessions aim to support growth mindset among incoming first-year students and targeted populations of returning students, with emphasis on the mindset element of purpose and value. Student Success advisors play an integral part in SPARC sessions by hosting strategy sessions that help students understand their academic meta-major (or focus area). The SPARC sessions have consistently received positive student feedback. Beginning in Summer 2023, we have begun to reimagine SPARC collaboratively with GGC's Student Affairs team.

Advising Strategies that Contribute to Clear Pathways

Learning Communities and Academic Maps

As noted above, HACER is considered a thematic learning community, although it does have a course-based component (i.e., a designated section of GGC 1000 and often a section of intermediate Spanish). The majority of learning communities (LCs) offered at GGC, on the other hand, are pairs or triads of linked courses that provide a built-in cohort and facilitate faculty and advisor communication in support of the students enrolled in each LC. Advising new first-year students in selecting their first-semester courses based on learning community pedagogy supports GGC's goal to connect new students to their chosen academic meta-major early in their college journey. First-Year Learning Community (FYLC) triads are organized around the seven academic meta-majors: Business, Education, Health Professions, Humanities and Arts, Information Technology, Social Sciences, and Science Technology and Math, with each LC including an average of nine (9) credit hours. During Grizzly Orientation (GO) registration, students select a triad based on their meta-major choice and are guided by faculty mentors and advisors to add two additional courses, totaling 15 credit hours for the semester.

Academic maps (see **Appendix**) are used by both Student Success advisors and peer mentors to help students select the two additional courses to round out the 15-credit hour also creates a sense of agency for the students. Triads provide common experiences and help students affirm their academic interests while fostering a sense of belonging to a cohort.

GGC 1000 First-Year Seminar Course

GGC 1000, the First-Year Seminar course, is an anchor class in many of the GGC learning communities. Beginning in Fall 2021, we began offering a section of GGC 1000 linked with the HACER thematic learning community. In the last three Fall semesters, 50 students have enrolled in these sections. New students in the HACER GGC 1000 learning community are assigned to be advised by the course instructor, who is a Senior Student Success Advisor and leads HACER planning. Besides focusing on guiding students to be successful in the college experience, the class celebrates the diverse Hispanic and Latino cultures by teaching enrolled students about Latin American cultures and guiding their participation in cultural events on campus.

Advising Strategies that Create a Sense of Belonging

Elevating Student Voice and Connection

After conducting surveys and facilitating focus groups in 2021, 2022, and 2023, student success advisors identified areas of support that Hispanic and Latino students told us were important to their academic and personal success. These areas include financial support, academic and career development, and mental health. To support students in these areas, bilingual student success advisors and HACER peer mentors collaborate with diverse campus units, faculty and staff for workshops on scholarships and preparing scholarship applications, completing the FAFSA, growth mindset, academic success skills, and understanding academic policies and campus resources. Interactive activities to support mental health and well-being have included meditation workshops and an outdoor adventures field trip. For the past two years, student success advisors have led a community networking event, "Noche de Liderazgo" ("Night of Leadership"), which introduces students to Hispanic community leaders.

Advising Strategies that Heighten Academic Engagement

Peer Mentoring in HACER

In the HACER Learning Community at Georgia Gwinnett College, the peer mentors play an integral role in enhancing the student experience through various interactive initiatives. They regularly held meetings with their mentees, providing a platform for guidance, support, and sharing valuable insights. These meetings were pivotal in establishing strong mentor-mentee relationships, facilitating a supportive and engaging learning environment. The HACER peer mentors help to increase students' sense of belonging by helping their mentees build community and create a support network that includes other students and GGC faculty and staff. The peer mentors work to keep students actively engaged in not only HACER events, but also model participation in campus-wide activities.

Data and Evidence of Innovative Advising Impact

Student Body Distinctives

To understand the impact of GGC's Student Success Advising Center (SSAC), it is important first to outline the distinctives among GGC's student population served by the SSAC.

GGC's student headcount in Fall 2023 is 11,910, an increase of almost 8% over the prior year (up 7.97% from our Fall 2022 enrollment of 11,030). The Fall 2023 enrollment represents a continuing trend approaching GGC's pre-COVID highest ever historical enrollment of 12,831 in Fall 2019. Of the total Fall 2023 student enrollment, 7,017 (59%) are women, and 3,392 (28%) are Hispanic (based on data reported to IPEDS).

Almost 98% of the students enrolled at GGC in Fall 2023 are from Georgia, being classified as in-state students, with the remainder coming from 30 other states. Among those students from Georgia, 75.24% of students are from Gwinnett County, down from about 77% last year. Aside from Gwinnett County and the state of Georgia, GGC students represent 31 states and 110 countries – a truly diverse campus in terms of culture and geography.

Over 25% of GGC students enrolled in Fall 2023 identified as First Generation from their families in college. About 65.5% of GGC students are traditional age, 18-22 years of age. Of the total student headcount in Fall 2023, 65.4% are enrolled full-time, taking at least 12 credit hours, with the remaining 34.6% enrolled part-time. Other key demographic characteristics of the Fall 2023 GGC student population indicate a preponderance of those who are traditionally underserved and likely to benefit from essential support structures such as those provided by the Student Success Advising Center. The mean high school GPA of GGC's cohort of first-time entering students has had a consistent academic profile, with a mean high school GPA of between 2.99 and 3.03 over the past three years. For the most recent Fall semester for which full data are available, almost 35% of first-year students required corequisite learning support in at least one core subject: Math or English (source: GGC Common Data Set for 2022-2023).

GGC has also consistently enrolled a high proportion of Pell grant-eligible college students, defined as students who are awarded financial aid from federal government Pell grants at any time during academic year, as compiled from students who complete and file a FAFSA. The data from the past five fall terms shows that more than half of GGC's student population receives Pell. Additionally, GGC has consistently enrolled a high proportion of first-generation college students, defined as students who report their parent(s)' highest education level as Middle School or High School on the FAFSA. Of students who completed and filed a FAFSA, the data from the past four available fall terms show that GGC's student population is at least one-third first generation. In recognition of this meaningful population size, we have been investing in new data visualizations (student success dashboards) to help us understand their obstacles and identify pathways to success for each student.

For Fall 2021, Fall 2022, and Fall 2023, GGC has remained among the most culturally and ethnically diverse institutions in its region. For the ninth straight year, Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC) has been ranked as the most ethnically diverse Southern regional college, according to the 2023 U.S. News & World Report (USN&WR) college and university rankings, released in September 2022. The same report indicated that GGC ranks #1 in ethnic diversity among public regional colleges in the nation. In Fall 2023, 31.8% of GGC students are Black/African American, with 28% Hispanic/Latino, and 11.6% Asian. Further illustrating the diversity of the College's student body, among the most common countries of origin for GGC students after the United States are Vietnam, Mexico, Nigeria, and India.

SSAC's College-Level Engagement
The Student Success Advising Center staff are integral participants in GGC's participation as part of the current cohort of institutions in AASCU's Student Success Equity Intensive (SSEI). In addition, advisors are represented on GGC's college-wide Student Success Committee and are active participants in the college's and the Student Success unit's strategic planning process.

Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Status
Georgia Gwinnett College is one of two University System of Georgia institutions to earn the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation by the U.S. Department of Education and is the largest HSI by total enrollment in the USG. To achieve the HSI designation, eligible schools must be accredited two- or four-year degree-granting institutions, enroll a significant number of students requiring needs-based federal assistance and maintain at least a 25% full-time Hispanic student enrollment.

As noted above, GGC's current (Fall 2023) Hispanic student population is 3,393, representing 28.5% of our student body. In the following pages, we detail a range of student success initiatives coordinated through our Student Success Advising Center that are designed specifically to support this growing student population, with a particular focus in this narrative on GGC's HACER (Hispanic Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results) learning community initiative.

Overall Data: Key Indicators of Success

A few key data indicators serve to illustrate the ways in which Student Success advising has contributed to the success of GGC students over the last 3 years.

- The **overall one-year retention rate** within the system (USG) for the most recent full-time freshman cohort with available data (Fall 2022) indicates a continuing upward trend. While the Fall 2020 cohort had a 64.7% retention rate, the rate increased to 71.4% for the Fall 2021 group, and rose again for the Fall 2022 cohort, who were retained to Fall 2023 at a 72.8% rate, exceeding the average for this measure within our state college sector by more than 3% (See the Table below, based on data from https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers). Because our SSAC advisors advise

the vast majority of these first-year students, it is clear that the SSAC has contributed significantly to these encouraging trends.

- The increased retention rate for the Fall 2022 cohort over the previous year's rate not only represents a continued bouncing back from the effects of the pandemic, but also illustrates the impact of innovative advising strategies designed to address students' holistic academic needs.
- The increased retention rate was particularly marked among GGC's Hispanic students, who rose from 66.2% fall-to-fall retention with the system for the Fall 2020 cohort to 75.1% for the Fall 2021 cohort and showed a further rise up to 77.7% for the Fall 2022 cohort, which is almost 5% above the retention rate for all first-year full-time students at GGC and 2.5% higher than the comparable rate for full-time Hispanic freshmen across the state college sector.
- Data for the Fall 2021 cohort indicated a benefit (about 6.5%) in one-year retention for GGC students in learning communities. We are still awaiting finalized data for the Fall 2022 cohort enrolled in LCs to determine if that positive trend continues to Fall 2023.

First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Cohort	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**
1-Year Retention Rates for First-Time Full-Time Freshmen in the system	71.9%	67.8%	64.7%	71.4%	72.8%
1-Year Retention Rates First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Hispanic students in the system	75.1%	72.9%	66.2%	75.1%	77.7%
1-Year Retention Rates First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Hispanic Female students in the system	75.1%	77.4%	69.3%	76.7%	81.9%
1-Year Retention Rates First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Hispanic Male students in the system	75.2%	66.3%	61.5%	72.9%	70.7%

Source: USG by the Numbers (https://www.usg.edu/research/usgbythenumbers)

HACER: Key Indicators of Success

A few key data indicators serve to illustrate the impact of the HACER program on the success of GGC's Hispanic students and overall student body over the last few years:

- The HACER initiative, since its inception in Spring 2021, has seen a substantial increase in engagement and participation. The HACER team has hosted over 60 events in two years, with a total attendance of 1,667 participants, forming a learning community of 686 actively participating students.
- HACER's emphasis on cultural enrichment, mentorship, and inclusive education has contributed to these encouraging outcomes.

- The HACER program has also significantly impacted the academic engagement of its participants. For example, students actively enrolled in the GGC 1000 First-year Seminar class, which includes a section on Latin American culture as part of the HACER learning community, have retention rates for students enrolled in the GGC 1000 course over the past two Fall semesters averaging 73.6%. In Fall 2022, Hispanic students passed the GGC 1000 course at a rate of 80.8%, a rate higher than that of other student groups.
- Furthermore, the Peer Mentorship program within HACER has proved remarkably meaningful to the students participating in this strategic aspect of the LC. Mentees in the program reported enhanced academic motivation and a strong sense of community and belonging, which are factors that likely have contributed to their continued enrollment and success at GGC.
- For those students who have served as peer mentors, working as a HACER mentor also has connected them to the broader campus community. The peer mentors develop and facilitate workshops on finding purpose and academic and personal development. These workshops are not only a testament to their leadership and expertise but also an avenue for them to share their knowledge and experiences directly with the students.
- HACER peer mentors have also participated in national conferences such as HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities), which expands their social and professional networks, and have traveled internationally for study abroad opportunities in Latin America and Southeast Asia, sponsored by the HACER learning community.
- The HACER learning community's diverse and inclusive events also played a significant role. For instance, the Hispanic Heritage Month Art Exhibition (HACER Colores) and cultural and professional development workshops attracted large attendance, further indicating the program's positive impact on student engagement and retention.

Category	Fall 2021 Attendance	Spring 2022 Attendance	Fall 2022 Attendance	Spring 2023 Attendance
Cultural Workshops & Events	52	71	215	201
Spanish Conversation Tables	28	62	144	160
Personal Development & Networking	34	14	98	266
Academic Workshops	7	14	36	104

Evidence of Enhanced Purposeful Choice

One measure of enhanced Purposeful Choice is credit intensity, whereby we measure our students' progress in choosing and then committing to those academic choices by taking a greater number of credit hours in a given semester. Our Student Success advisors, including

those advisors working closely with our HACER learning community participants, place particular emphasis on credit intensity for students who are able to take closer to 15 credit hours, with the goal of enhancing their sense of purpose in their academic direction. Among GGC's full-time freshmen and sophomores, there has been a steady trend toward increasing credit intensity when compared with pre-pandemic credit intensity levels. For example, full-time freshmen over the Fall 2020-Fall 2022 semesters had average credit intensity of about 13.74 credit hours. This compares favorably to Fall 2018 credit intensity metric of 13.19 for full-time freshmen group. In Fall 2022, full-time freshmen at GGC had an average credit hour intensity of 13.68, and our full-time sophomores had average credit hour intensity of 13.78, marking the first time in recent semesters that sophomore credit intensity has been higher than that of freshmen. We will continue to watch the credit intensity metric over time, understanding that the work of our Student Success advisors has a great deal to do with reaching success in this area. (Source of credit intensity data: USG METRICS dashboard at https://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_and_policy/academic_strategy_and_analytics/)

Evidence of Contribution to Clear Pathways

Learning Communities

Following the pivot to online Grizzly Orientation delivery during the pandemic, advisors reached out to students prior to their scheduled online Grizzly orientation session to review academic maps, provide information on learning communities and to answer questions about registering for the learning community blocks. Now that most Grizzly Orientation sessions have returned to in-person delivery, Student Success Advisors continue to play a central role in advising new first-year students throughout this process. Among their key tasks are helping new incoming students to select their learning communities based on the students' selected meta-majors. At GGC, the seven meta-majors offered to all new incoming first-year students are:

- BUSI = Business
- EDUC = Education
- HEPR = Health Professions (including Nursing interest)
- HUAR = Humanities and Arts
- ITEC = Information Technology
- SOSC = Social Sciences
- STEM = Science, Technology, Mathematics

Other Learning Community indicators of success:

For the Fall 2023 LC students (n = 533 unique students in 21 distinct learning communities), some preliminary descriptives based on transactional data (as of November 2023) are illustrative of their reach and impact:

- Approx. 10% require corequisite learning support English
- Approx. 11% require corequisite learning support Math
- The LC students in Fall 23 again largely reflect the GGC student body demographically regarding Race and Ethnicity, but are more likely to identify as Hispanic and less likely to

identify as White than the overall student population: Approx. 35% identify as Black or African American, 37% are Hispanic, 9% Asian, and 18% White
- Approx. 32% self-identify as First Generation in College

As a broader measure of progress in learning community contributions to student success at GGC, in AY22, Georgia Gwinnett College submitted, and was awarded a $1.4 million grant from the Department of Education in support of two Living Learning Communities, with a curricular and co-curricular focus on Health Sciences and Information Technology. These additional funds assisted with the full implementation of this initiative in the Fall 2023 semester, with a Health Science living-learning community enrolling 23 students (course-based component is Anatomy & Physiology I – BIOL 2451) and for IT, a living-learning community enrolling 13 students, with the Discrete Math (MATH 2300) course connected to it. Outside-class activities for the two LLCs have included a group field trip to Washington, D.C. and several on-campus opportunities to demonstrate projects, meet with guest speakers, and more. All of these learning community efforts are supported end-to-end by our Student Success advising team, from pre-registration through second semester advising.

Evidence of Contribution to Clear Pathways: HACER

The HACER Learning Community, an initiative of the Student Success Advising Center, has been instrumental in establishing clear pathways for student success, focusing on the Hispanic student body. The HACER Learning Community has conducted over 60 events over two and a half years, engaging 686 students and achieving a substantial attendance of over 1,667 participants, demonstrating active community participation and interest.

The peer mentorship component of the HACER Learning Community has played a crucial role in guiding students in setting and achieving academic goals. This mentorship has led to an enriched sense of belonging and increased academic motivation, laying the foundation for sustained academic engagement.

Students engaged with the HACER Learning Community have benefited from:

- A rich array of culturally relevant programming, such as art exhibitions and film discussions, have bridged cultural understanding and academic curiosity.
- Academic workshops that have increased awareness of financial aid and scholarship opportunities, are key for students and their sustained academic pursuit.
- Personal development and arts-based workshops focusing on self-actualization and life purpose, contributing to the holistic development of students within the community.
- Working with peer mentors on degree planning, including using GGC's academic maps.

Advisors within the HACER learning community have been central to these efforts, offering personalized guidance and support, thereby fostering an environment conducive to networking and professional development.

In the broader context of GGC's commitment to enhancing student success, the HACER learning community stands out as a model for active engagement and community growth. Its success is also evident in its social media outreach, which has successfully engaged a significant number of new accounts. The HACER Learning Community's achievements and its integrated approach to academic and cultural enrichment align with GGC's strategic goals, underscoring the potential for similar initiatives to thrive and contribute to the success of the institution's student body.

Evidence of Creating a Sense of Belonging

Peer Mentoring

Within the HACER Learning Community at Georgia Gwinnett College, peer mentoring has been a cornerstone in nurturing a sense of belonging among students. Feedback from participants underscores the program's effectiveness. Students have shared their appreciation for the guidance received, with one noting, "I enjoyed the very helpful information especially during this time of rising costs on everything. Education began to look like a luxury, but after this session I am more motivated to look for scholarships and continue with my education." Another student highlighted the value of peer advice, stating, "Absolutely [my peer mentor] was excellent in explaining the topic and was very helpful."

The HACER peer mentors recognized during GGC's Spring 2023 Commencement ceremony have provided much-needed support and motivation, particularly for students navigating the transition to college and the associated challenges. Mentees have also shared positive experiences from various workshops, with comments like, "This workshop was very helpful. I learned a lot of new skills and got a better understanding of what leadership is," and the sentiment that field trips are "really educational and it helps us see into our past."

Evidence of Heightened Academic Engagement

The HACER Learning Community has facilitated meaningful connections, with students expressing the importance of interfacing with the community and getting involved. This is what a couple of freshmen students said about HACER:

- "When I first came to the school because I was a freshman, I had no friends, and HACER made me feel like I am part of a family, being part of an organization… makes me feel happy."
- "(…) I feel here in GGC and HACER in particular, being part of this made me feel more like real, more important than high school because in high school I was trying to be part

> of other groups and , yes, people recognized me and yes I contributed a lot, but for me in high school those activities were like… I just like exist there and that's it, but here in HACER I finally feel that I am truly part of something, I am a true member of something of huge significance (…) here it is different. Here for the first time, I am feeling (…) that I am truly part of something and that I truly contribute to something big, not just something to exist."

By actively participating in events and workshops, students have gained valuable insights and formed connections that contribute to their sense of belonging. Here is a statement from a student after attending one of the events led by a guest speaker, "Every time I get to see the HACER events, a lot of times I notice from my other classmates is that they are excited and they want to go and they say, it doesn't matter what the event is, they want to come to these things because they impacted so much and we have seen it happen for us, so we are really grateful for these events, so thank you."

Moreover, the program's proactive approach in addressing challenges through mentor alerts and timely support from professional advisors exemplifies a commitment to student well-being and academic success. The program's focus on including families, as seen in events like HACER Futuro, has broadened the community's sense of inclusion and support.

In short, the HACER learning community, a key strategic initiative of the Student Success Advising Center, has met or exceeded its goals in creating a supportive and welcoming environment. Certainly, there is still much work that remains to be done. Through peer mentorship, collaborative cultural events, and academic workshops, the community has enhanced the college experience for Hispanic students in particular and for all students on campus, contributing to the sense of belonging and academic success so important for all students at Georgia Gwinnett College to be successful.

Summary: Student Success Advising Strategies for Student Success

The Student Success Advising Center, through innovative initiatives such as HACER, the GROW program, Grizzly Orientation support, SPARC summer sessions, and others, has effectively implemented an innovative strengths-based advising approach to serving our diverse student body at GGC. The results of their efforts, highlighted in the evidence above, have contributed to a notable increase in GGC's first-year student retention (more than 8% increase over two years, for the Fall 2020-Fall 2022 cohorts) and have directly enhanced our students' purposeful choices, productive academic (growth) mindset, and academic engagement, as evidenced in increased credit intensity over time, improved progression indicators, and remarkable success among traditionally underserved students. We wholeheartedly commend the Student Success Advising Center for your review for the Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

BIO: Biochemistry Academic Map

Name:_____

ID: _____

This academic map is a suggested four-year schedule of courses based on degree requirements in the GGC catalog. This sample schedule serves as a general guideline to help build a full schedule each term. ***Missing milestones could delay your program.***

Appendix: Sample Academic Map

FRESHMAN FALL		FRESHMAN SPRING		FRESHMAN SUMMER
Course	**Hours**	**Course**	**Hours**	**Course** **Hours**
☐ **ENGLISH COMPOSITION 1** ENGL 1101	3	☐ **ENGLISH COMPOSITION 2** ENGL 1102	3	Recommend taking classes in the summer to stay on track
☐ **PRE-CALCULUS** MATH 1113	4	☐ **CALCULUS** MATH 2200	4	*Potential Summer Activities:* • Research program requirements for graduate and/or professional schools • Shadow a professional in your career field • Study Abroad • Volunteer
☐ **PRINCIPLES OF CHEMISTRY 1** CHEM 12111K	4	☐ **PRINCIPLES OF CHEMISTRY 2** CHEM 12112K	4	
☐ **PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY 1** BIOL 1107K	4	☐ **PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY 2** BIOL 1108K	4	
TOTAL	15	**TOTAL**	15	
RUNNING TOTAL	15	**RUNNING TOTAL**	30	
SOPHOMORE FALL		**SOPHOMORE SPRING**		**SOPHOMORE SUMMER**
☐ **U.S. HISTORY** HIST 2111 OR 2112	3	☐ **INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTING** ITEC 1001	4	Recommend taking classes in the summer to stay on track
☐ **CHOICES FOR LIFE** PHED 1101	1	☐ **ORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2** CHEM 22111K	4	*Potential Summer Activities:* • Shadow a professional in your career field • Participate in a Summer R.E.U. (Research Experience for Undergraduate) • Study Abroad • Volunteer
☐ **ORGANIC CHEMISTRY 1** CHEM 22111K	4	☐ **GENETICS** BIOL 3200K	4	
☐ **CELL BIOLOGY** BIOL 3400K	4	☐ **HUMANITIES / FINE ARTS 1** MUSC 1100 / ARTS 1100 / ENGL 21XX / FILM 1005	3	
☐ **INTRO TO STATISTICS** MATH 2000	3			
TOTAL	15	**TOTAL**	15	
RUNNING TOTAL	45	**RUNNING TOTAL**	60	
JUNIOR FALL		**JUNIOR SPRING**		**JUNIOR SUMMER**
☐ **PHYSICAL EDUCATION** Any PHED except 1101	1	☐ **SOCIAL SCIENCE** PSYC 1102/SOCI 1101/ANTH 1102/ECON 2100	3	Recommend taking classes in the summer to stay on track
☐ **HUMANITIES / FINE ARTS 2** RELN 1100 / GEOG 1101 / 2000-LEVEL FOREIGN LANGUAGE	3	☐ **AMERICAN GOVERNMENT** POLS1101	3	*Potential Summer Activities:* • Shadow a professional in your career field • Participate in a Summer R.E.U. (Research Experience for Undergraduate) • Prepare for entrance exams for graduate and/or professional school • Biology Internship
☐ **ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY** CHEM 3000K	4	☐ **PHYSICS 2** PHYS 1112K OR PHYS 2212K	4	
☐ **ITEC 2XXX** ITEC 2110 or 2120	4	☐ **BIOCHEMISTRY** BCHM 3100K	4	
☐ **PHYSICS 1** PHYS 1111K OR PHYS 2211K	4	☐ **PHYSICAL EDUCATION** Any PHED except 1101	1	
TOTAL	16	**TOTAL**	15	
RUNNING TOTAL	76	**RUNNING TOTAL**	91	
SENIOR FALL		**SENIOR SPRING**		
☐ **BIOLOGY/BIOCHEMISTRY ELECTIVE** BIOL 3300K, BIOL 3900K, OR CHEM 4100K	4	☐ **INTERDISIPLINARY APPLICATIONS OF BIO** BIOL 4700	3	**Graduation in May!**
☐ **RESEARCH/INTERNSHIP** STEC 4500 OR BIOL 4800 OR BIOL 4560 OR BIOL 4570	3	☐ **ELECTIVE** BIOL OR BCHM PREFIX	3	
☐ **PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY** CHEM 4201K	4	☐ **ELECTIVE** 3000-4000 LEVEL	4	
☐ **ADVANCED BIOCHEMISTRY** BCHM 4100K	4	☐ **ELECTIVE** 3000-4000 LEVEL	4	
		☐ **HISTORY** HIST 1111, 1112, 1121, 1122, 2111, or 2112 (take one of these courses not already completed)	3	
TOTAL	15	**TOTAL**	17	
RUNNING TOTAL	106	**RUNNING TOTAL**	123	

This map is not a substitute for academic advisement—contact your advisor if you have any questions about scheduling or about your degree requirements. Also see the current undergraduate catalog for a complete list of requirements, electives, and pre-requisites. *Note: Requirements are continually under revision, and there is no guarantee they will not be changed or revoked; contact the department and/or program area for current information. Specific summer courses may not be offered as planned. Created based on the GGC Concentration requirements.*

Letter of Support from Alejandro Osorio, GGC student

Dear Regents' Momentum Award Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of the HACER (Hispanics Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results) program at Georgia Gwinnett College for the Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. As the first bilingual peer mentor in the program and a first-generation Hispanic student, I have a unique perspective on the profound impact this program has had on student success, retention, and progression, both through its measurable achievements and its transformative effect on my personal and academic life.

The HACER program has been a cornerstone in supporting a learning community of 400 students. My role as a peer mentor allowed me to significantly impact students by providing them with support and guidance. Thanks to my growth within the program and my role as a leader on campus, I have helped other students grow and develop in various areas, enhancing their college experience and academic success.

The program's success is further evident in its engagement strategies, having developed and delivered over 60 activities ranging from mental health and scholarship workshops to leadership and art exhibitions. These initiatives have not only enriched the college experience for participants but have also played a crucial role in enhancing student engagement and academic success.

On a personal level, the HACER program has been instrumental in my development. Creating and conducting a personal development workshop, where I shared my journey and inspired others, was a testament to the program's focus on individual growth and empowerment. This experience has imbued me with a profound sense of purpose and belonging, contributing significantly to my academic and personal achievements.

Beyond the college boundaries, my involvement in the HACER program has led to numerous opportunities to represent Georgia Gwinnett College at various forums locally, nationally, and internationally. These include the Peru Study Abroad Program Summer 2021, Math and Science program in Thailand Summer 2023, and several conferences such as the HACU 2022 and Wolves Summit 2022. My interactions with influential figures like Georgia's Senator Warnock's and Senator Jon Ossoff's teams have further strengthened my commitment to promoting GGC as a Hispanic Service Institution. Additionally, I was honored as the 2023 35 under 35 most influential Gwinnett young professional, a recognition that underscores my service with the school and the HACER program.

The HACER program's impact extends beyond individual achievements. It has been a critical factor in improving undergraduate retention, progression, and persistence at Georgia Gwinnett College. The program's advising activities, which I have been deeply involved in, have directly contributed to the institutional success, aligning perfectly with the Momentum Results/Measures.

In conclusion, the HACER program is an exemplary nominee for the Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. Its quantifiable impact on student engagement, retention, and success, coupled with its transformative influence on students' lives, including my own, is a testament to its excellence in advising and student support.

Thank you for considering this nomination. I am confident that the HACER program will continue to positively impact the lives of students at Georgia Gwinnett College and beyond.

Alejandro Osorio Ocampo

First Bilingual Peer Mentor, HACER Program
Information Technology Major
Georgia Gwinnett College
Class of 2024

Georgia Gwinnett
COLLEGE

1000 University Center Lane
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
www.ggc.edu

November 29, 2023

Regents' Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success Award Committee

Dear Award Committee Members,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for Georgia Gwinnett College's one-of-a-kind support team, HACER (Hispanic Achievers Committed to Excellence in Results). During my twelve years as a tri-lingual (Korean Spanish English) full-time faculty at Georgia Gwinnett College, I am consistently striving to meet great organization and colleagues to promote, support and advising in our great area of Gwinnett County and all-around Georgia. Georgia Gwinnett College is uniquely gifted by having a great population of multi-cultural-diverse population, and our students, who are coming from different backgrounds are striving to succeed each day. Our great institution offers direct contact with students, training faculty to be excellent advisors, and developing programs and tools for students to support their goals personally and professionally.

HACER continually supports and encourage students to make purposeful choices regarding their education and mostly prepare them to succeed within the diverse society we all live in. HACER have also held encouraging events during critical times of the semester to help students cope with the stress associated with college. HACER and GGC are always creating a clear path to graduation from the first time a student steps on campus, engaging and assisting students to be successful during their time at GGC and on campus. HACER's main mission is not only to serve our Hispanic/Latino students but invite to GGC's campus a diverse member of the community to our events, workshops, information, and service. The team members work tirelessly to make not only a student life enjoyable but help students build their professional and life skills and knowledge in an embracing and knowledgeable citizen of the world. Along with HACER, I have organized events during the scope of several years, such as Spanish movie showings in collaboration with Cinema Media Arts Productions Department, and the Consulate of Mexico. The collaboration to create the events has been very successful. The main goal every semester is to strive successful achievement in each step and help students to thrive until they reach graduation as their final goal. Beyond this mission, the underlying message is to instill in them the curiosity to learn where they come from in order to know where they are headed while proudly intertwining their culture and language with their identity in order to serve better their community.

In conclusion, HACER is fully committed to student success and very deserving of this award. They provide inspiration and training to transform GGC into a Hispanic-Engaging Institution and along the way to open doors to the students to be a world citizen in the future.

Sincerely,

11/29/23

Myung Choi, Ph.D.
Full Professor of Spanish
Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice and International Studies.