

**Approved by Planning & Development Committee December 11,
1996
1997 ACTION PLAN NARRATIVE
FOR STRATEGIC PLAN**

This narrative is intended to accompany the spreadsheet which provides a status report on the 1996 Action Plan. The spreadsheet indicates the strategic allocation of resources in 1996, what has been accomplished in each area of focus, data that are available or needed for appropriate monitoring of achievements, and further actions required in ongoing pursuit of strategic objectives. This narrative focuses on the column on the spreadsheet identified as "Follow-up Needed" to indicate those areas which will receive priority attention in 1997.

Context of the 1997 Action Plan:

Progress on Goals and Objectives amidst Necessary Diversions of Efforts

The broad context within which the 1997 Action Plan is offered has three key features. The first is that considerable progress has been made in the development of systematic planning and evaluation mechanisms and processes within the institution and in the accomplishment of other selected objectives. Mandated redirection by the Governor and the Board of Regents (BOR) for the second year of three is the second key feature. The third one is that considerable institutional energies are currently engaged in conversion from a quarter system to a semester system and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaccreditation/ National Association of Collegiate Athletics (NCAA) certification self-studies. For these reasons this action plan does not identify many entirely new initiatives for 1997. Rather, it primarily reflects (1) the continuation of current necessarily incremental improvements in areas already identified as priorities, and (2) the initiation of planning activities in areas where such have not yet been put in place. Redirection will aid in the realization of the Action Plan provided redirection and the Action Plan are developed in concert with each other.

Progress on the 1996 Action Plan occurred in all four thematic areas. With regard to "Strengthening Academic Programs," considerable new and redirected monies were targeted for highly competitive research and professional programs, enhanced graduate student support, program review action plans, library collections, and selected initiatives (e.g., Writing-across-the-Curriculum, P-16, international initiatives). From the general operating budget, 59.0% of all monies were allocated to academic programs in FY97 as compared to 57.7% in FY96. A newly appointed Associate Vice President for Research has created mentoring and research team grants as a means of enhancing faculty support from the Research Office. External funding increased by 16 % during 1996, thereby moving GSU to within \$3 million of the target for attaining the strategic goal of Research II status. A School of Policy Studies was created to provide an organizational structure to house and coordinate institutional policy-focused efforts, and a preliminary proposal for a joint Ph.D. in Public Policy with Georgia Tech is under discussion. The new School, together with the move to university-

level of the Gerontology Center and the Center for Sports Medicine, Science, and Technology, represent GSU's latest major initiatives to foster interdisciplinary collaboration. The new core curriculum for semesters has been strengthened by the inclusion of a broader range of courses and materials about diverse peoples and perspectives than the quarter-based core offers.

In reference to the theme of "Promoting Standards for Excellence," new monies have been allocated to faculty efforts for semester conversion, CBA work on assessment, the improvement of student services, and staff development within Human Resources.

Progress in the area of "Improving the University Infrastructure" includes the reorganization of IS&T and the erection of external signage. New monies have been invested in Administrative Information Systems, computer networking, campus safety, and the development office.

The final theme of "Developing Systematic Approaches to Institutional Decision-Making" was addressed in 1996 by the second successful iteration of a collegial pre- and post-tenure review process, the availability of raise monies for continued attention to reducing salary inequities, and the ongoing utilization of the academic program review process for the strategic and systematic allocation of resources and the opportunity for continuous improvement of academic units' performance and productivity.

Efforts Expected to Come to Fruition in 1997

With the implementation of administrative and support unit review during 1997, a mechanism similar to academic program review will be in place for the strategic allocation of resources by these units. Furthermore, these units will be able to avail themselves of the self-study and constituent review that informs continual improvement of performance. The creation of a faculty workload policy (to be considered by the Senate and Administrative Council) and criteria for graduate faculty responsibilities (under discussion in Graduate Council) will promote university-wide equity in these areas.

Results in general, and learning effects in particular, provide the best gauge for matching what the university promises and the revenues it receives and allocates to those efforts. Assessment of student learning will be continued. Benchmarking and the collection of systematic data for planning will improve the institution's decision-making capabilities. The spreadsheet identifies specific data needs for tracking indicators and the relevant activities underway.

With conversion from a quarter system to a semester system due to occur in Fall 1998, training on conversion issues for faculty and staff will be undertaken.

Students who will earn credits under both systems must be accommodated expeditiously and with minimal anxiety.

An IS&T advisory committee, working with the Associate Provost for IS&T, is developing a strategic plan for this area. A major study of networking on campus is to be completed by April 1997, and will result in a complete set of specifications necessary to bring all buildings up to industry standards for network connections. This will provide the foundation for improved communications and for improved academic and administrative computing. Also, a Data Warehouse is being built which will initially provide support for academic

program review and for enrollment management. Continued investment is being made in a migration plan (Project SUMMIT) for existing administrative systems. With regard to external relations, the silent phase of a major comprehensive campaign for Georgia State University will get underway in 1997. Also, continued efforts will be made to improve the visual identity of the university through further strategic use of signage.

Priority for allocating redirected funds will go to academic programs and essential advances in information systems infrastructure. With respect to improved physical facilities, Georgia State University will continue to advocate to the Regents that its top priority for capital acquisition from General Obligations Bonds is a new classroom building.

Further Planning Activities

In 1997 the development of strategic plans and action plans for the following areas will serve as the framework for future efforts:

- Research Office
- Center for Teaching and Learning (including plans for junior faculty mentoring)
- Writing Across the Curriculum
- Campus Security/Safety
- International Education
- Library Collection Development
- Faculty Diversification: Recruitment and Retention
- Student Advisement
- Customer Service Surveys

The key strategic focus of the SACS review will address several interrelated questions of educational access at GSU:

- creation of an updated enrollment management plan;
- monitoring of the effects of changing admissions requirements;
- development of a master plan for GSU's downtown campus and development of a mission statement and strategic plan for its suburban campuses;

--P-16 goals in relation to the above.

It is expected that the report produced for SACS will provide the University with critical guidance in the above areas for the immediate future.

Expected Benefits

Given the foregoing new planning efforts, coupled with those already ongoing, by the end of 1997 Georgia State University should have planning infrastructures that position the institution better than in the past for systematic, reasoned, and integrated decisions in pursuit of its identified mission and stated objectives. The past several years have seen priority attention given to the development of such infrastructures, which have guided the strategic utilization of energies and resources and significantly informed the process of new resource allocation.

Acknowledgment

The many institutional improvements that have followed upon the adoption of GSU's Strategic Plan reflect a considerable effort on the part of dedicated faculty,

staff, and administrators. The conscientious work of everyone who has contributed to the collective effort is sincerely appreciated.