

**Strategic Plan 2005-2010**

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## **Introduction**

Georgia State University's Strategic Plan sets forth many of the features that help define the character, strength, complexity, interdependencies and distinctiveness of the University, and it defines Georgia State's goals and priorities. This document has resulted from conversations among the broad campus community about strengths, aspirations, concerns, and values for Georgia State University. The University is committed to pursuing initiatives that will propel it towards our vision for 2013, our Centennial Vision. A focus on quality is imperative – to improve our national reputation by retaining our designation as a Carnegie Research-Extensive university, by earning a position in the top 100 American Research Universities in *The Center* [<http://thecenter.ufl.edu>], and to be recognized as a Tier 2 university in *US News & World Report*. While our vision should not be solely defined by national reputation, nevertheless *US News* and *The Center* are influential annual publications. *The Center* report advocates that the primary focus in a research university should be on internal quality to support success of academic guilds. This focus should lead to assisting the state and the nation through quality graduates, economic development, and serving the public interest.

## **I. INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY**

### **Mission**

The overarching aspiration of Georgia State University is to become one of the nation's premiere research universities in focused areas that maximize our unique strengths. We recognize that perhaps our greatest comparative advantage is our location in Atlanta, a cosmopolitan city with a diverse population, and with close proximity to corporations and centers of state and city government as well as easy access to an international airport. The University will achieve this goal through the continual pursuit of excellence in its instructional and strategic research programs. Georgia State will strive to fulfill the expectations of the citizens of Georgia by providing undergraduate and graduate programs of the highest quality in the arts and sciences, business, education, health and human sciences, law, and policy studies for traditional and non-traditional students.

Georgia State's mission as a research university in an urban setting is multi-faceted:

- The University, which has one of the most diverse undergraduate student populations nationally and the most diverse in the University System of Georgia, is dedicated to undergraduate programs based on a core curriculum that promotes interdisciplinary, intercultural, and international perspectives and that provide options that emphasize an urban focus.

- The University, which has one of the most diverse graduate and professional student populations nationally and the most diverse in the University System of Georgia, is dedicated to provide premier graduate and professional programs in a significant number of areas.
- The University is committed to graduate students who are proficient in their discipline as trained and talented professionals and have interpersonal skills and competence to lead in a global society.
- The University is committed to the enhancement of scholarship of its disciplinary and interdisciplinary research programs, centers and institutes that have achieved, or demonstrated promise to achieve, national and international recognition.
- The University is committed to have its undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs contribute to the economic, educational, social, professional, and cultural vitality of the city, the state, and the region.
- The University recognizes, nevertheless, that it must select some programs on which to focus special resources in order to achieve the national and international distinction it must achieve to serve Georgia best.

### **The strategic planning process**

The provost convened three groups during fall 2004 to discuss a series of questions that probe the current and projected environmental scan and test the current high priority areas in light of probable conditions to see if we should add or delete from our current priorities. The three groups were 1) academic group of 22 faculty; 2) collegial group of 22 chairs and associate deans; and 3) administrative group of 20 members – the Deans Group supplemented with representatives from the vice-presidential areas. Each draft version of the plan was circulated so that the community could comment as the plan was being developed. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Senate Planning & Development (P&D) Committee subsequently discussed the plan in winter 2005. The subcommittee had representation from various other senate committees and the colleges so that the community had significant opportunity for input and comment. A draft document was approved by P&D and sent to the University Senate for approval.

The approved strategic plan for 2005-2010 outlines a program for fulfilling Georgia State's mission. It will be used to guide a series of annual action plans, which will be drafted by the Strategic Planning Committee, adopted by the Planning and Development Committee, and used to inform budget decisions for upcoming fiscal years. Significant progress has been made on the 2000 Strategic Plan with updates on progress posted in the [Annual Action Plans](#). A summary of progress over five years follows.

**Progress since fall 1999**

Significant progress towards the goals of the 2000 Strategic Plan has been made in most areas of the University in spite of the difficult fiscal climate that characterized the five-year period. In the following paragraphs, comparisons are made between fall 1999 and fall 2004, or FY 2000 and FY 2005, as appropriate.

We exceeded our enrollment target with an increase of 3,775 students to 27,267 [fall 2004], with less than 200 of the increase being graduate students. A significant accomplishment was a continuing increase in the fall freshman class by 500 students while significantly raising entrance requirements. Our goal to increase the quality of the freshman class was met with an increase in the average SAT score from 1047 to 1094, with the percentage of freshmen with Freshman Index above 2600 increasing from 43 to 75 percent. For the first time, we attracted National Merit Scholars with four students being currently enrolled. Diversity of undergraduate students remained stable with approximately one-half white and 32 percent African-American. Asian student enrollment increased by 36% to over 2,100 and Hispanic student enrollment increased by 47% to over 650. Part-time undergraduate enrollment decreased from 41 to 31 percent, from 6,770 to 6,230.

Six-year graduation rates for full-time freshman cohort increased from 27 [for class of fall 1993] to 40 percent [for class of fall 1998], with African-American rates increasing from 24 to 47 percent and white students from 27 to 36 percent. Nationally, Georgia State graduates more African-American students with bachelor degrees than any other non-HBCU [Historically Black Colleges & Universities], and was third nationally in FY 2004 among all colleges and universities. In line with our goal for increased retention, first-year retention rates improved from 76 to 83 percent, with increases occurring for all ethnicities.

Contributing to the increase in first-year retention rates was the Freshman Learning Community (FLC) program that was piloted in fall 1999 with about 300 students in 11 FLCs. By fall 2004, this program has expanded to 950 students in 39 FLCs. A goal to provide an urban experience for FLC students was met through the Campus Atlanta program. In addition, we met our goal of all freshman students attending Incept (Freshman Orientation), although not all transfer students attend Incept. A Freshman Convocation, designed to serve as an official welcome and formal induction for new students into the University community, was inaugurated in fall 2002. We met our goal of increased student involvement in organizations and recreational services activities as well as increased participation in service activities. Our goal to move to an athletics conference that includes some of the university's peers will be met in fall 2005 with a move to the Colonial Athletic Association.

While the number of graduate students only increased slightly, the percentage of full-time increased from 47 to 56 percent. Diversity of the graduate student body shifted somewhat with African-American and Asian student percentages increasing from 13 to 17 percent and 9 to 12 percent, respectively. There was a modest increase of 120 in the number of master's degrees awarded, but doctoral degree recipients declined from 150 to 113, a number that is expected to increase throughout the next five years. Nationally, Georgia State is among the top 20 institutions in terms of the number of master's and doctoral degrees awarded to African-American students.

We exceeded our goal of an increase by 50 international students per year with a growth of 500 students to 1,660 in spite of the more difficult visa situation post-9/11. However, there was a decline by 100 students last year, primarily at the graduate level. Similarly, growth in the number of students participating in study abroad programs slowed with a modest five-year increase of 40 students to 420, whereas our goal was 480 students. The introduction of a mandatory international education fee (IEF) in fall 2003 will help to mitigate the effects of 9/11. The IEF supports international students and scholars and study abroad. Resources generated from the fee are used to help defray costs related to instituting SEVIS and complying with its mandatory and other reporting requirements. IEF resources also are used for study abroad scholarships and program development and administration. Particularly notable is the IEF's support and endorsement by the Georgia State student body and the mandatory fee committee at a time when the state was enduring a severe budget crisis. Approval of the IEF demonstrates the importance students, faculty, and administrative staff attach to gaining international perspectives as a part of the academic experience.

Most noteworthy are significant contributions of faculty to the continual pursuit of excellence in our instructional and strategic research programs. The value of external research grants received increased from \$25 to \$42 million even as the average number of credit hours generated by tenure-track (TT) faculty increased by five percent. Federal research expenditures increased from \$15 to \$25 million. Overall, total grants and contracts received, including instruction and service, increased by \$20 million to \$59 million. The number of tenure-track faculty was steady until fall 2004 when there was an increase of over 30 to 741.

We continue to meet our goal of increasing faculty diversity. In 1999, task forces on Advancement for Women and on Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented Faculty made a number of recommendations to aid the University in its diversity efforts. These recommendations continue to be

systematically implemented with the aid of two faculty members who are working part-time as Senior Faculty Associates in the Provost's office. For TT faculty, the number of African-Americans increased from 44 to 65 and the number of Asians increased from 42 to 65; the percentage of female faculty increased from 36.3 to 40.5 percent. The percentage of minority and female senior administrators increased from 9.3% to 11.6% for minorities and from 33% to 46% for females. Senior administrators include assistant and associate deans, provosts, and vice presidents.

Significant increases in credit hours accompanied the large increase in numbers of students and the shift of more students to full-time status. Undergraduate credit hours for fall semester increased by 54,500 to 236,500 and graduate credit hours increased by 10,750 to 67,250. Part of the increased teaching load was absorbed by an increase in the numbers of full-time non-tenure track (NTT) faculty by 48 to 286. For undergraduate credit hours, there was also a shift to more instruction by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs). The percentage of undergraduate credit hours taught by GTAs increased from 13 to 19 percent. Concomitantly, there was a significant increase in training and mentoring provided to GTAs before they were allowed responsibility for courses.

After careful analysis of available models of faculty performance, University standards, clarified by unit guidelines, have been established for promotion and tenure, graduate faculty status, and faculty workload. Pre-tenure review and post-tenure review processes, established in 1995, have met a goal in the last five years of helping to optimize the ways in which faculty contribute to the aligned missions of their department, college and the university. Pre-tenure review helps to nurture faculty early in their career. The post-tenure review process is being employed as a means of identifying the optimal utilization of faculty skills and achievement of equitable faculty workloads. Colleges have also developed promotion policies for non-tenure track faculty.

Support of faculty from the Office of Research is in three broad categories: grants and contracts management and sponsored programs (pre- and post-award processes); support for research and creative activities of faculty; and research integrity and compliance activities. Significant progress has been made in the category of research integrity and compliance activities that is overseen by a newly created position of Associate Vice President for Research Integrity. Recommendations from a Blue Ribbon Committee on protection of human subjects are being implemented to ensure that Georgia State has a strong research integrity infrastructure. Additional personnel were hired to support Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) as well as Institutional Review Board (IRB) activities.

We met the goal of continuing to strengthen and focus departmental programs through academic program review. This critical academic process is continually refined and strengthened and has achieved robustness in the past several years. Learning outcomes and their assessment for General Education and disciplinary majors are now required for all programs. A parallel review process for administrative & support units continues to mature from its inception in 1998.

The goal of continuing to develop new academic programs based on strategic strengths of the university was met through initiation of doctoral programs in applied linguistics, communication, and computer science, a master of public health (MPH), MA in gerontology and in religious studies, and a BA in women's studies. The school of social work received accreditation for its MSW program, the first class of which was admitted in fall 1998. The college of law developed a joint degree program with the college of architecture at the Georgia Institute of Technology that leads to the awarding of both a Master of City and Regional Planning degree and a JD degree in Law. We established a collaborative Biotechnology master's degree program with Cairo University.

As a partial consequence of successful competition in the [Georgia Research Alliance](#) and in the Georgia Cancer Coalition, a broad area of academic excellence has emerged and was strengthened in the past five years in the areas of biotechnology and drug design and brain research through the neuroscience initiative. The Center for Behavioral Neuroscience, an NSF-funded consortium with Emory University and other Atlanta partners, was established and successfully obtained its second five-year funding. Five faculty have been designated as Cancer scholars by the Georgia Cancer Coalition. Drug design successes include promising clinical trials of drugs for African sleeping sickness. An economic development dimension to the biotechnology initiatives is being strengthened through the CollabTech and VentureLab programs, and through the infusion of students studying entrepreneurship helping with business plans for fledgling biotechnology start-up companies in our incubator facilities. A related dimension of excellence in graduate training is ongoing commitment to the "Pipeline Program", which has been supported by funds from the University System and the National Institute of Health (NIH), and which has proved successful in increasing the numbers of women and minorities seeking careers in the sciences.

Significant progress was made in sustained collaborative efforts in the policy arena. A broad area of academic excellence exists in public finance – national, state, and local government finance, both U.S. and worldwide, including all of the policy design, evaluation and financial and management dimensions. Georgia State has emerged not only as a community, state, and regional resource for consultation and

training in policy issues, but also as a significant contributor in the international arena especially in tax, dispute resolution, and disability initiatives. Substantial contributions have also been made in the past five years in policy arenas ranging from child policy and health policy to education policy and water policy. The significant scholarly and teaching contributions in this area have moved the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies (AYSPS) to a high national ranking in *U.S. News and World Report*. In the 1998 Ranking of America's Best Graduate Schools, AYSPS was ranked 36<sup>th</sup> out of 125 Public Affairs Program. In the most recent 2005 edition, based on a survey of deans, directors, and department chairs representing 253 master's programs, AYSPS was ranked 26<sup>th</sup> for Public Affairs Programs. The School also was ranked in the following subspecialties: Public Management and Administration (16th), City Management/Urban Policy (12th), Public Finance and Budgeting (5th), and Public Policy Analysis (21st).

The Robinson College of Business continued to be recognized for the excellence of a number of its programs. Computer Information Systems program ranked fifth among public institutions and eighth overall. The Real Estate program ranked eighth among public institutions and tenth overall. The FLEX (part-time) MBA program ranked third among public universities and seventh overall – the ninth consecutive year for this program to be ranked in the top ten nationally.

Due in large part to generous funding from the [Georgia Research Alliance](#), Georgia State has developed into an emerging leader of digital content origination, particularly in the areas of film & video, art & design and computer science. Faculty and graduate students working in The Digital Arts and Entertainment Laboratory (a unique facility that allows for digital production and post production, audience response analysis, and multi-format image conversion) have produced alumni that have received Emmys for Atlanta's premiere telecommunication industries, and have been showcased at the premiere international film festivals (Cannes and Sundance). The doctoral program in Communication Studies was ranked 16th nationwide in rhetorical studies in the National Communication Association's Doctoral Reputation Survey. Faculty in the Communication Department won the top two national awards for books in the field of journalism.

Along with these new innovations in communication and creation, Georgia State's humanities faculty have continued to excel in well-established scholarly pursuits. The Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics, established in 1999, has regularly brought some of the world's most prominent ethicists to campus for professional conferences and symposia on such topics as homelessness, terrorism, gay marriage, and hate crimes, while also sponsoring many events that engage students and faculty in discussions of the

ethical implications of current events. In recognition of its accomplishments, the center won the 2003 Prize for Excellence and Innovation in Philosophy Programs from the American Philosophical Association and the Philosophy Documentation Center. In addition, the center's home department, Philosophy, has continued to rank in the top six for programs offering terminal master's degrees, and its joint M.A. /J.D. program with the College of Law was ranked as the second best of its kind in the country in 2004. The Department of English continued to be the hub of scholarly publishing for the university, regularly producing six scholarly and literary publications (*Five Points*, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, *South Atlantic Review*, *Eudora Welty Newsletter*, the online *Journal of Advanced Composition*, and the student-run *Georgia State Review*). *Five Points* has consistently attracted prominent contributors and has received national acclaim.

Faculty and students in the fine arts have made notable contributions to Georgia State's cultural development over the past five years. The School of Music produces well over a hundred concerts, recitals, and other musical events each year in the Kopleff Recital Hall and Rialto Center for the Performing Arts, most of which are open to the general public. The school has also fostered the artistic and social development of young people throughout the Atlanta community with its Neighborhood Music Schools, Center for Educational Partnerships in Music, and workshops and master classes. The School is also contributing to the region's growing music business with its degree programs in music industry and through the development of cutting-edge recording facilities in the Standard Building. The programs of the University's School of Art and Design were greatly enhanced as a result of a major gift from one of its most senior students, Ernest G. Welch of Atlanta, and the School was named in his honor in 2003. The Art Gallery, whether hosting nationally touring exhibits or developing shows for visiting artists, faculty, and students, continued to serve as a major point of connection between the university and the larger community.

The College of Law is the only provider of high quality ABA accredited part-time and full-time legal education in the state of Georgia and the only public provider of legal education in the Atlanta metropolitan area. Its national reputation continues to increase. In 2004, the college was the youngest law school listed in the top 100 national law schools. Progress has been made in the past five years in development of interdisciplinary programs, most notably in health and ethics and in metropolitan growth. Two new centers were established - The Center for Health, Law and Society and The Center for the Comparative Study of Metropolitan Growth.

An Areas of Focus initiative was established in 2003-04 to concentrate reallocated resources and new resources, as available, in partnership-driven programs of strategic importance to Georgia State and with leveraging potential by virtue of location in Atlanta. The call for pre-proposals produced 14 potential areas of focus: acquisition of language and literacy, brains and behavior, collaborative arts and research, entrepreneurship, global Atlanta/transnational processes-local context, global commerce, law and ethics in health, international excellence in public finance, metropolitan growth and the physical environment, molecular basis of disease, risk and its management, urban education research, urban health research, and the urban South. Funding was only available for three of the recommended areas of focus: urban health research, brains and behaviors, and molecular basis of disease. Beyond the funded areas, there were benefits derived from inter-disciplinary discussions among faculty in different departments and colleges, which could lead to productive collaborations with potential for significant funding from external sources.

While the following was not a goal envisioned when the previous strategic plan was written, it resulted from a general goal of encouraging interdisciplinary interaction that was stimulated by the Areas of Focus initiative. A new initiative in public health intervention combines more closely our health science interest with our urban focus. Health science, social science, humanities, education and law faculty are combining to tackle four priority urban health areas - chronic disease and aging, HIV/AIDS and infectious disease, injury and violence, and substance abuse and mental health. Faculty from Georgia State are partnering with the Georgia Cancer Coalition, the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), and many state and local agencies to begin to understand and ameliorate the impact of these critical health problems.

A Teaching and Learning with Technology Center within the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) was established in fall 1999 to coordinate on-campus services for faculty to provide training and support so that faculty may take advantage of the opportunities that information technology offers for improving student learning. Over the past five years, most classrooms have been equipped to provide instructor access to the Internet. A long-term goal of enhancing student access to information technology resources was improved through major expansions to the campus wireless network system. Faculty and students can look forward to nearly ubiquitous wireless access - the ability to roam on wireless connections across the entire downtown campus.

GSUNet2, a multi-year project to modernize the physical network structure for the entire downtown campus, concluded in 2003. This project installed over 1,200 miles of fiber optic cable to connect 60 buildings with the latest broadband networking capabilities. Upgrades to the core network switches has set the stage for increased bandwidth across the campus that will take advantage of the dedicated fiber

backbone ring and the potential for connection to the new national fiber network for research, the National Light Rail (NLR). These upgrades also provided the necessary architecture for a long-examined opportunity to move to IP-based telephone services.

The first year of the five-year plan opened with a successful implementation of the PeopleSoft financial information system. Next, we replaced our legacy student records system with the Banner Student Information System, including financial aid, registration, catalog, scheduling, location management, “Web for Student,” “Web for Faculty,” and student accounts in 2002. The Touchnet payment gateway was implemented to allow students to pay tuition and fees with credit cards through an Internet interface. The last major administrative system on the mainframe, Human Resources, will be replaced by a PeopleSoft product by the end of February 2005, after which the mainframe will be decommissioned. We will have met our goal of replacing all our legacy administrative systems with Oracle-based systems.

Our first comprehensive ‘Results’ campaign was successfully completed in November 2004, exceeding the goal of \$125 million with over \$127.1 million raised. Private support has become necessary to secure state funding for buildings to support the academic mission of the University - \$21.5 million was raised in the Results campaign for facilities and equipment. Private support is also crucial for scholarships and fellowships to attract and retain excellent undergraduate and graduate students - \$18.5 million was given for merit- and need-based scholarship programs for students. Similarly, to recruit and retain high quality faculty, it is increasingly important to have endowed professorships and chairs - \$18.9 million was secured to establish 27 professorships and endowed chairs. An additional \$43.2 million was raised to fund academic programs and centers. The Georgia State University Foundation assets grew by \$22 million to \$162 million while the endowment increased from \$44 to \$61 million.

During the past five years, humanities and social sciences departments and centers have made great contributions to Georgia State’s international efforts. A variety of international centers were created or have continued to grow since 2000, including the Asian Studies Center, the Hellenic Studies Center, the Center for International Media Education, the Latin American and Latino Studies Center, and the Middle East Center for Peace, Culture, and Development. Each of these centers has facilitated faculty and student efforts abroad and has initiated events, course offerings, and other resources on campus that have greatly expanded students’ global awareness. The Middle East Center, in partnership with Emory University, received Title VI National Resource Center grant by the United States Department of Education that is being used to expand Middle East language and teacher education programs. The Department of History has developed a world history program that has expanded curricular offerings, sponsored an annual

community lecture, and hosted the World History Association annual conference on campus in the summer of 2003. Modern and Classical Languages has more majors than any university in the state and many institutions in the southeast, and it has added Hebrew, Modern Greek, Persian, and Swahili to its curriculum during the past five years. In addition, increasing numbers of faculty from throughout the University have been awarded Fulbright Fellowships to teach and conduct research abroad.

The number of international cooperative agreements increased from 31 to 89. While most of the earlier ones were with European countries, more recently there has been a diversification of relationships to other parts of the world including Asia and Africa. While some agreements are more active than others, they cover a broad spectrum of cooperation in numerous disciplines. We have been successful in following strategies where emphasis is placed on initiatives that are either countrywide or thematic in focus. Thematic initiatives include tax and fiscal policy with proposals being funded for work in a number of countries, including Russia and some former Soviet states, Guatemala, India, Jamaica, and Uganda. Country initiatives include Egypt, Mexico, and South Africa, and have been broadened to other countries in Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and southern Africa.

Under the auspices of the Institute of International Business, the Robinson College joined an elite group of business schools that offer a Master's of International Business degree. In collaboration with the department of Modern and Classical Languages, MIB degrees are available with concentrations in Spanish, French, and German. The MIB is the first program of its kind in Georgia. It draws upon the historical strengths of the Georgia State learning environment: flexibility in program design, talented and experienced international faculty scholars, and direct access to the Atlanta-based global business community.

A goal to add varied types of student housing near campus to accommodate 2,000 students beyond the 2,000 beds available in the [Village](#) was partially met. An additional 450 beds, the Lofts, were opened in fall 2002 and ground will be broken in spring 2005 for 1,500-2,000 beds on the Piedmont-Ellis site. With the combination of the [Student Center](#), the [Student Recreational Center](#), and a renovated University Center, the campus is much more hospitable for students to socialize and relax. A goal to increase the quantity and quality of office, classroom, and teaching and research laboratory space to accommodate additional growth in student enrollment and faculty and student research was partially met. The opening of the Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center in fall 2002 was critical to meeting the need for medium and large size classrooms equipped with essential instructional technology and was one of the reasons Georgia State was able to accommodate the increase in students. The opening of the Andrew Young School of

Policy Studies building at Five Points in summer 2004 offered some relief as space on campus is vacated by the policy studies school, but even so there is need for additional faculty, staff and graduate student offices. Additional office space relief was obtained through renting space in 10 Park Place and 34 Peachtree Street buildings. Classrooms in the General Classroom Building and in the Arts & Humanities building were upgraded to provide internet access.

**Environmental changes: 2000-2010**

Georgia State University is continuing a major change in the composition of its undergraduate student body. A significant accomplishment since 1995 is the doubling of the fall freshman class from 1,200 to 2,400 students while raising significantly the entrance requirements. Only 500 of the fall 1995 class would be eligible for admission in fall 2004. Simultaneously, diversity of the entering class increased. The transformation of the undergraduate student body was driven by a University System of Georgia (USG) articulation of entrance requirements that are highest at the four research universities, a designation that Georgia State achieved in 1995. In addition, availability of residence halls for the first time in fall 1996 changed the university from a commuter-only one. Diversity of the new students continues to be a distinctive feature of the university. We have continued to recruit a highly ethnically diverse student body while significantly increasing our admission requirements. For fall 2004, we have enrolled 2,270 first-time freshmen, most of who are supported with the HOPE scholarship, half of whom live in residence halls, and whose average SAT is 1094. By 2010, we anticipate that the freshman class will be 3,200 students and an additional 1,500 – 2,000 beds will be available through the residence halls at Piedmont-Ellis that are due to open in August 2007.

Georgia State University continues to be a major transfer institution. With an undergraduate student body of 20,000, over half of these students have started college at other institutions. Approximately one half of transfer students come from other USG institutions, with Georgia Perimeter College being the largest provider – approximately 20 percent of total transfer students. The remaining transfer students come from in-state private institutions or from out-of-state.

There continues to be increased competition for Master's level students, especially in business and education, as more providers enter the Atlanta market both physically and through the electronic media. One of the great challenges of the next five years will be the appropriateness of and extent to which we are willing and able to provide any-time, any-place quality education with an increasingly greater emphasis on reliable support services for students and faculty.

Attracting quality doctoral students will require competitive packages that include health care coverage, reasonable stipends, and realistic teaching loads. In a survey in summer 2004, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) found that 74 percent of institutions offered health care insurance for at least the graduate student. Many potential graduate students are international, especially in the sciences and business and economics. Additional restrictions and delays on visas after 9/11 have decreased the number of international student applications and registrants. For the first time in many years, there were fewer international students studying in the U.S. in 2003 than in previous years.

With projected growth of the University System from 250,000 students in fall 2004 to 450,000 students by fall 2015, a major environmental condition is continuing pressure to provide access to quality programs for qualified students. Further, the 35th USG institution is planned to open in 2008 with the transition of the Gwinnett Center to Gwinnett State College. For Georgia State University to maintain its proportionate share of students, we would have to serve 50,000 to 55,000 students by 2015 or approximately 40,000 by 2010. At our downtown location, the next major complex of buildings that might be available by the end of this decade is the Science Park at Decatur and Piedmont. Plans are underway for a Science Teaching Laboratory building, a Science Research Laboratory building, and potentially a Southern Laboratory for Infectious Diseases to be built simultaneously. A request to the Regents for a humanities building to replace Sparks Hall will be made in June 2005. However, this building would not be ready for occupancy until the next five year plan. Space in current buildings will be examined for feasibility of converting offices to classrooms with the possibility of subsequently renting additional office space.

Given the facilities limitations downtown, expansion of offerings at the [Alpharetta Center](#) is being considered. Full degree programs in business and education might be offered at the Alpharetta Center. Potential expansion of degree programs to sites east and south of Atlanta will also be explored, perhaps in collaboration with a two-year college. This strategy is consistent with a recommended action step in the 2004 USG Strategic Plan to “Develop additional programs in which four-year universities offer four-year degree programs at two-year colleges”. Further, another potential mechanism is to use distance learning technologies to develop and deliver certificate and degree programs.

Funding trends have been very negative over the past five years, with a significant shift from state support to student tuition. Together, state appropriations and tuition represent about 95 percent of the Education & General (E&G) Operations revenue. The amount of E&G revenue per student has decreased by over 20 percent since fall 2001. While student tuition is relatively low compared with other state-assisted national and southern regional (SREB) institutions, students now provide approximately 37 percent of E&G

revenue in contrast to 25 percent prior to fall 2000. Competition for state appropriations to higher education from health care, K-12 education, and prisons will continue to be intense. Further, many of our sister institutions in USG are growing more rapidly than we are, so we will probably participate minimally in additional state workload appropriations. However, in spite of an adverse fiscal climate, Georgia State continues to grow in quality through self examination and redirection of resources in a continuous effort in institutional effectiveness.

Private giving is increasingly important for publicly-assisted universities. A new comprehensive campaign will be launched in the next five years to build on the recently successfully completed 'Results' campaign.

Shifts in the faculty composition will continue. With a rapid increase in the number of freshmen students in the latter half of the 1990s, the use of part-time instructors (PTIs) in core courses increased initially. This trend was reversed for core courses in FY 2000 when a large number of PTI positions were converted to full-time non-tenure track (NTT) positions - visiting instructors and lecturers. The University System has recently approved an NTT ladder for lecturers and senior lecturers. In some colleges, there are still an unacceptably high percentage of courses taught by PTIs. As we achieve stable enrollments and funding is available, we will reduce the number of PTIs and convert some NTT positions to tenure-track ones.

Higher education is facing a number of major trends including an emerging global economy that will give rise to a global community characterized by increased communications across national borders in education as well as in business, law, government, sciences, the arts, and entertainment. There has been an enormous increase in foreign investment in Georgia. One in seven jobs in the U.S. involve international trade and business. Another major trend is in research being conducted by teams from various related disciplines. Many important issues and advances occur at the borders between different disciplines. The National Academy of Sciences advised in November 2004 that institutions should develop new policies or strengthen existing ones that remove barriers to interdisciplinary research, and they should develop joint programs with outside organizations.

Technology will penetrate even deeper into our daily lives. Information increasingly is becoming the capital of economic activity. The ability to locate, receive, analyze, and transmit information in oral, written, visual, and numeric form will be crucial. The rate of change will accelerate. Those who have learned how to learn are best equipped to capitalize on such an environment. The Internet is unlike other

technology advances, and is even more important than the introduction of personal computers. The Net Generation, who takes the Internet for granted, is coming to campus. These students never have known a world without computers. This situation offers both a great competitive threat and a great potential asset. Higher education is undergoing change through using information technology to focus on learners and successful learning.

Another major trend is increasing demand for accountability on higher education. This is manifested nationally, with many states moving to performance-based budgeting. Allocation of part of the state appropriation from USG is based on improvement in freshman retention rates, improvement in six-year graduation rates, and increases in extramural grants and contracts. Regional accreditation agencies and major disciplinary accreditation organizations such as AACSB and NCATE are placing significant emphasis on student learning outcomes and use of data gathered to improve processes and outcomes. There is increasing emphasis on understanding learners and ensuring successful learning.

## II. GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Some of the goals of the [2000 Strategic Plan](#) have been achieved; some remain as priorities of the institution. Our thinking has progressed with a recognition that we have to be a more focused institution that is continually evolving but not necessarily growing in numbers of programs offered. In the section that follows, unfinished work of the 2000 plan is incorporated into the goals and priorities for the next five years.

The vision is to provide an academic environment conducive to effective and inspired teaching, learning, and scholarship and to be recognized as one of the leading national state-assisted research universities. This entails having significant state, national, and international roles as well as serving the residents of the metropolitan Atlanta region. It requires capitalizing on the comparative advantage of Georgia State's location in Atlanta.

In the twenty-first century, Georgia State University's curricular and co-curricular activities must prepare students to be critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, and responsible citizens who make ethical choices. Students must be able to present their thoughts cogently both orally and in writing, develop leadership skills, and work well in teams. They should be literate in science, technology, culture, and information. Georgia State must also ensure that students are able to analyze and evaluate important trends in disciplines, comprehend their place in the world and how the world is changing, understand the interconnectedness of knowledge, recognize that there is a blurring of boundaries among disciplines and

among nations, and cope with the dynamics of change. A vision for students includes exposure to multiple viewpoints and the free exchange of ideas, an appreciation for diversity among peoples of the nation and around the globe, an understanding of their urban environment, preparation to utilize information technology, an ability to judge the quality of information, and experience with collaborative learning on campus and in the community. A diverse environment such as that encountered at Georgia State produces a balanced, better educated, responsible, contributing and productive global citizen.

In striving to reach goals in the area of instruction, progress must also be continued in establishing and maintaining outstanding research programs and activities. Selected undergraduate, graduate, and professional program research efforts - those that are already competitive nationally and internationally or that demonstrate promise of becoming so - will be targeted and supported so that they can maintain their success and reach even higher levels of excellence. Undergraduate education is enhanced when students have research experiences. The necessity of promoting research derives from the fact that a university becomes great only when it contributes significantly to the advancement of knowledge and when it becomes a recognized source of advanced knowledge that can be used widely for the betterment of life.

Georgia State University's impressive array of professional programs will continue to provide high quality education in the Atlanta area and the region. Furthermore, in appropriate instances, advanced educational programs will draw students from all parts of the nation and abroad. In all cases the programs will assemble faculty members that are capable of providing advanced expertise to outside constituencies, thereby directly promoting the advancement of society. We must strive to enhance our strong graduate programs while enhancing our undergraduate programs and services.

In order to accomplish the University's visions, goals and priorities, the faculty must remain mindful that being a responsible community member extends beyond disciplinary interests to the (unranked) interconnected aims of:

- Targeted programs of distinctiveness that are nationally and internationally recognized and that capture the unique strengths of the University
- Applied focus based upon a strong foundation of excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and quality professional programs
- Graduate and research programs with national and global recognition that benefit the interests of the state and region
- Interdisciplinary research and educational programs that address emerging needs for new knowledge and its dissemination

- Learning opportunities and a learning-centered environment that support individual styles and life circumstances of students
- Global cultural perspectives infused throughout programs
- Participation in partnerships that have a positive impact on community evidenced through teaching, research, and service activities
- Use of our location in an urban area, a center of international commerce, a media center and a center of governance, to offer a distinctive education to our students
- Dynamic, intellectual environment that stimulates scholarly activity for all faculty and students and fosters creativity, innovation, and humanity
- Service as a resource to local, state, and federal entities
- Fiscal accountability that connects performance and priorities to resources

Achievement of these interconnected aims will contribute significantly to student learning and an engaged university. A dynamic balance is sought among teaching and learning, research and scholarship, university and community service, and undergraduate and graduate and professional programs.

A great university requires great students, great faculty, great programs, great staff and facilities, and great financial support. Strong academic and co-curricular programs attract students. Supportive staff and administrative services with reliable physical and technological infrastructures help retain students and faculty. Strong external development efforts provide the margin of excellence to supplement core state appropriations and student tuition. Strong external communications inform alumni, potential students, and other constituents of our accomplishments.

## **A. Students**

### **1. Recruitment**

A major comparative advantage for Georgia State University is its location in Atlanta, a cosmopolitan city. As a result, Georgia State enrolls students from all 159 counties, fifty states and over one hundred and forty countries around the world. These include high school graduates, transfer students from two- and four-year programs, working and "returning" students, and graduate and professional students. While the university attracts students worldwide, the downtown campus and the Alpharetta Center provide access to quality education in particular for residents of the entire metropolitan area. With the opening of the Aderhold Learning Center and the Student Recreation Center in the past five years, students have modern facilities in which to meet and study. A Science Teaching Laboratory building should be completed before 2010. Further, with the opening in fall 2007 of an additional 2,000 beds in residence

halls to be constructed on the Piedmont-Ellis site, there will be affordable housing available close to campus for over 4,000 students. Availability of student residence halls has increasingly made Georgia State an institution of first choice for freshman students.

A student body of 32,000 by fall 2009, with approximately 8,000 being in graduate and professional programs, is a recruitment **goal**, with an increase in quality while maintaining the diversity of all incoming students. This goal includes a continued increase to 1,500 in the number of doctoral students in departments that have nationally competitive doctoral programs and/or advance interdisciplinary, urban, and international foci of other parts of this strategic plan. In fall 2004, there were 27,100 students (including 1,600 international students with visas). Georgia State will continue to serve both traditional and non-traditional students. A 'best class' strategy will be used to recruit 3,200 freshmen for the downtown campus and possibly 400 freshmen at the Alpharetta Center. The Alpharetta Center will be explored for its potential to serve more undergraduate students while preserving an urban experience, an essential characteristic of Georgia State, through required semesters at the downtown campus. The university is a major transfer institution with approximately half of the undergraduates entering as transfer students. The minimum transfer GPA was raised to 2.5 in spring 2004. In the future, it might be necessary to limit transfer into certain majors. We will seek to raise the minimum transfer GPA so as to achieve an optimum balance between freshmen and transfer students, probably at an approximate 2:1 ratio.

Applications for professional students in law are highly competitive as are graduate assistantships in many of the disciplines. A **goal** is to attract more higher-qualified graduate students, especially in doctoral programs. Strategies include improving support packages to include health care insurance, more nationally-competitive stipends, and realistic teaching loads.

Part of a strong recruitment effort to attract and retain excellent students involves availability of scholarships and fellowships. A new **goal** is to increase the number of National Merit Scholars to at least 10 from the current four students. The recently completed comprehensive campaign increased scholarship endowments by \$18.5 million. In addition, many faculty include support for students on their external grants and contracts. A continuing **goal** is to increase financial support from various sources for undergraduate and graduate students.

## 2. Undergraduate experience

A more welcoming environment is being provided through programs such as the [Freshman Learning Communities](#), Emerging Leaders Program, [Campus Atlanta](#) and the [Honors Program](#). As one of the

strategies to increase retention rates for freshmen, a **goal** is to increase participation in Freshman Learning Communities (FLCs) to serve more than half of the entering class. In fall 2004, over 940 out of 2,270 freshmen students participated in FLCs. In addition, a similar strategy, or at least a transition course, might be tried for transfer students in order to afford them an opportunity to connect more closely with the campus. The Emerging Leaders Program provides students ways to reflect systematically on the exercise of leadership. Campus Atlanta provides students a continuum of engagement opportunities to learn about Atlanta settings, to learn from Atlanta systems, and to learn through Atlanta community service and Atlanta service learning.

Improving retention rates is a significant continuing **goal** for the university. Retention from freshman to sophomore year for the fall 2003 cohort increased over that of the previous year to 83 percent. A **goal** is to increase first-year retention rates to 86 percent for the fall 2009 freshman class. Nationally, attrition rates are 20 percent for the first year, ten percent for second year, and a cumulative nine percent for the next four years. For Georgia State, over twice as many students leave during years two through six than leave after the first year. Thus, there is potential for significant improvement in second and subsequent year's retention rates. A new **goal** is to decrease attrition rates to less than ten percent for the second year and less than five percent for the third year. While students enter with higher SAT scores than previously, many are poorly prepared for the rigor of coursework in college and lack the study strategies to meet course demands. Programs that attracted students to the university should also play a role in retention especially those that provide a vibrant learning community. Strategies to increase retention rates include new students being aided in their transition to Georgia State through a centralized [Student Advisement Center](#) that assists all freshmen, transfer, and undecided students. This centralized facility is available to all students until they have completed areas A - F of the University System Core curriculum. Additional assistance for students is available through the Counseling Center's academic skills programs, African American Student Services & Programs, Writing Center, Language Acquisition & Resource Center, Cooperative Learning Center, and many of the core departments provide tutorial support - the Counseling Center produces a brochure that lists the various tutoring services available. There needs to be better coordination and awareness of the overall services that are available to increase student success.

A place to study individually and in groups, and to conduct research and write, is important for students. The Library transformation project will result in an attractive Learning Commons that will significantly enhance students' opportunity for collaborative learning and instruction coupled with technology resources. National studies show that academic advising is one of the keys to student success. Another

key is involvement of students in departmental extracurricular activities. Increased emphasis will be placed on departmental responsibility for retention of their majors, within available resources.

National studies indicate that student involvement in the university community is a good indicator of potential success in college. The [Student Life division](#) is involved in the development of good citizenship via community service and volunteer work, and generally serves as a dynamic laboratory in which students can apply or complement talents they also develop in classrooms. Student Life has developed learning outcomes for its programs. Student development and leadership enhancement occurs through participation in the 300 organizations and recreational services activities. A **goal** is to increase student engagement in the university through strategies such as to continue to increase student involvement in student organizations and recreational services activities and to measure student learning through such involvement.

Successful intercollegiate athletics programs, especially men and women's basketball, will help develop a sense of community and college spirit among students, staff and faculty. Recognition of the university can also be enhanced nationally through having successful sports teams. Participation in a new conference, the Colonial Athletic Association, starting fall 2005 will provide exposure to Georgia State in the large media markets of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC.

The academic enterprise will be further strengthened by efforts of both Student Life division and academic departments in building on the rich opportunities for community service by providing students with more occasions to reflect critically on their experiences in service. A **goal** is to increase student engagement in the university through strategies such as continuing to increase student participation in service activities and to measure their learning from participation. Moreover, opportunities for service-learning programs that engage students in service that meets unmet community needs while enhancing their academic study, civic skills, and sense of social responsibility will be developed and supported by the university. There are a number of voluntary community service opportunities at Georgia State that are coordinated through the [Office of Community Services](#). Location in downtown Atlanta, near the state capitol, gives students many possibilities for internships, cooperative education assignments, and other collaborative arrangements with business, law, fine and performing arts, industry, government, and service agencies. A strategy is to expand and better coordinate internship opportunities. The University participates in a number of outreach and enrichment programs, including several to increase minority participation in the sciences. [Career service](#) units provide career counseling and career development, teach job search skills and provide occupational information and work experience to students.

The growth of a more traditional undergraduate student body provides an opportunity for the university to increase [study-abroad programs](#). Further, advent of the student international fee provides a fund to support students studying abroad and to provide services for international students. A **goal** is to increase students' opportunities to gain international perspectives through increased participation in study abroad to at least two percent per year. FY 2004, 420 students participated in study abroad programs. If we reach our goal of 32,000 students by FY 2010, the goal for study abroad participation will be 640 students. These programs can be developed in traditional and non-traditional ways. For students who do not need to work, the traditional semester- or year-abroad program opportunities can be expanded. For working students, two- to three-week programs can be developed to link an experience abroad with continued coursework in Atlanta. Faculty and student exchange programs that provide for learning experiences on our home campus with faculty and students from institutions abroad can further enhance undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. A **goal** is to increase student's opportunities to gain international perspectives by continuing to have four percent of the undergraduate student body come to Georgia State with a high-school degree from outside the U.S. in an environment where the number of international students nationally is currently decreasing.

### 3. Graduate experience

The graduate student composition of the student body is approximately 660 professional students, 940 doctoral students, 5,300 master's students, and 400 non-degree-seeking students. A **goal** is to increase the number of graduate and professional students to at least 8,000 by fall 2009. Further, a **goal** is to graduate an increasing number of full-time doctoral students in amount of times that are comparable to median disciplinary ones. The largest numbers of graduate degrees conferred at the University are at the master's level, including the MA, MBA, M.Ed., MFA, and MS, all of which enroll a significant number of students. Master's degree programs fill unique niches in the University. Some serve as a progression into an available doctoral program, or as preparation for entry into doctoral programs elsewhere. In other areas, the knowledge base necessary to master a subject has expanded beyond that obtainable during the traditional four-year bachelor's degree program. In these areas, the master's degree is now considered the entry-level degree or the mark of a well-educated student of that discipline. In other areas, highly regarded professional programs at the master's degree level play an important role in educating professionals.

An ongoing strategy is to continue to build library collections, primarily electronic, to support the university's strategic initiatives with a **goal** of joining the Association of Research Libraries. Libraries

will partner with faculty, departments, and interdisciplinary programs to develop a collection in all formats that support graduate programs of excellence and distinction, and to provide information services both virtually and in multiple physical locations, including the University Library, Law Library, and the Alpharetta Center, for all graduate programs. Libraries will partner with a variety of campus constituencies to provide institutional repositories that will provide a vehicle to showcase the university's research accomplishments.

Graduate faculty members serve as mentors directing the research of graduate students and supervising their maturation as teacher-scholars. An ongoing **goal** is to improve the preparation of doctoral students through strategies such as placing more emphasis on pedagogical preparation for those students who hope to become future teaching faculty. Strategies include students enrolling in college teaching courses and becoming involved with programs sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning and other departments.

A goal of Strategic Plan 2000 to be more competitive for strong graduate students by increasing the number, value, and benefits of graduate assistantships and fellowships was unrealized. Efforts to achieve this **goal** will be redoubled through strategies that include ensuring that all graduate assistants have at least partial health insurance and that all graduate teaching assistants have realistic teaching loads. In particular, doctoral students should be supported through a strategic balance of teaching and research assistantships. The intellectual vitality and active scholarly engagement of faculty and students enhances the overall quality of the institution. A large proportion of extramural funding goes directly to support learning opportunities for graduate as well as undergraduate students. Selected research projects in which graduate students are involved also contribute to improving the quality of life of the city and the region. Graduate programs are also a strong magnet for international students.

## **B. Faculty**

High quality faculty are imperative to maintaining high quality programs and attracting high quality students. Georgia State University's full-time instructional faculty number more than 1,000 for fall 2004, with approximately three-quarters being on the tenure track. One major element of internal quality is tenure-track (TT) faculty and increasing their number is a significant feature of any tactical strategy used to invest redirected or new resources, while recognizing that specialized non-tenure track (NTT) faculty can play important roles. A **goal** is to increase the number of tenure-track faculty to at least 800 through strategies such as: 1) reduce the number of PTIs and visiting faculty in departments where there is an unacceptably high percentage by converting to NTT and/or TT faculty; and 2) increase the number of

tenure-track faculty by converting non-clinical NTT positions into TT appointments and/or adding new TT positions in targeted departments where there are robust undergraduate majors and graduate programs.

Strong, nationally-recognized faculty are essential to attract increasing external grants and contracts to support students, faculty, and programs. In FY 2004, faculty were successful in securing \$60 million in extramural support. A new **goal** is to increase grant and contract support to \$100 million by FY 2010, with faculty writing proposals in excess of \$175 million. Specific goals will be set for each college with incentives for accomplishments to include additional tenure-track positions. In addition, a **goal** is to increase internal funding for the Office of Research at least at the rate of growth of extramural funding. Analyses of internal grants programs indicate that these programs provide a significant stimulus to research growth in the university. Attention should also be given to develop programs for underserved groups, especially those groups that do not traditionally attract significant external funds.

A **goal** is to continue to increase faculty and administrator diversity through strategies led by the senior faculty associates for Advancement of Women and for Recruitment & Retention of Underrepresented Faculty. Strategies include mentor programs and leadership programs.

A **goal** is to continue to attract and retain high quality faculty by providing competitive salaries and removing salary compression among faculty. Any adjustments must be based on market and merit evaluations. The past three years of decreasing state revenue has exacerbated the situation.

The Results campaign provided an opportunity to fund endowed chairs and Eminent Scholars in areas of strategic importance to the University. A continuing **goal** to build high quality academic programs will be pursued through strategies such as clustering current or new faculty in areas closely related to those of existing or newly-added endowed professorships and/or endowed chairs. Continuing development support will be sought to recruit and retain high quality faculty.

### **C. Programs**

Georgia State University will continue to strengthen its academic programs and administrative and student support services in concert with accepted recommendations of its program review process and of accrediting agencies for its professional programs. This process includes the University Senate in a review of academic and administrative departments, schools, Centers, Institutes and student support programs.

Academic programs are at the heart of a university and are the attractant for faculty and students. An ongoing **goal** is to continue to provide academic programs that have high quality and are central to an increasingly sharpened mission of the university. One strategy is to build on programs that have demonstrated quality and are nationally recognized or have shown potential for national recognition. A clear and coherent vision of the future includes continued support to enhance development of programs of distinction, both disciplinary and multi-disciplinary.

The effort to improve the quality of support service to faculty and students has been a critical focus within the university. An ongoing strategy is to utilize the Administrative & Support Unit Review process and outcomes assessment to continue to improve the quality of support offered by various offices. An ongoing **goal** is to ensure that support activities are effective and efficient and regularly collect and use data to improve their services.

### **1. New academic programs (and modes of delivery)**

An ongoing **goal** to provide high quality, central academic programs is assisted through continuing to develop a limited number of new academic programs based on strategic strengths of the university and to develop more joint degree programs including those with national and international universities that will enhance the University's programs and reputation. It is recognized that as new programs are developed, some current programs may be scaled back through the Academic Program Review or other academic program evaluation processes.

There is a strong commitment to development of writing, communication, and information literacy across the curriculum. A new strategy is to implement computer-based writing practices in first-year composition classes that will require availability of small classrooms. A continuing **goal** is to produce literate graduates through strategies such as fully implementing a [writing-across-the curriculum](#) program and initiating a support program for oral communication similar to that supporting Writing Across the Curriculum.

Development of learning outcomes and their assessment will aid in quality control of courses and programs independent of the delivery mode that leads to a diploma or certificate. A movement to more course components and programs available on-line is accompanied by a demand for flexible, fast, high quality programs. Such programs will not be confined to on-line but may include hands-on experience, research lab, or community based experience. A **goal** is to increase flexibility of curricular offerings for

students through use of on-line as a delivery mode for courses and programs when justified pedagogically. A national trend is towards more non-degree granting programs or to certificate programs as part of degree granting programs. We need to consider these possibilities in order to leverage our considerable capabilities and to think in terms of sets of modular courses as part of certificate programs. A **goal** is to increase flexibility of curricular offerings for students through development of high quality diploma or certificate programs in areas that match our faculty strengths and market niches.

## **2. Interdisciplinary programs**

A clear and coherent vision of the future includes continued support to enhance development of programs of distinction that demonstrate quality and are nationally recognized or show potential for national recognition. A successful strategy was introduced in 2003-04 through the Areas of Focus initiative described in section on progress since 1999. In particular, programs should leverage comparative advantages of being in Atlanta and should connect with partners and collaborators in the Atlanta region and beyond Georgia, or with economic development in the region and state. An ongoing **goal** to provide high quality, central academic programs is assisted through continuing to enhance the following areas that cut across some traditional organizational lines within the university and advance a multidisciplinary approach to future complex problems and needs:

- Continue to strengthen the Molecular Basis of Disease program, including bioinformatics/biocomputing, structural biology, cancer, and infectious disease; the Brains & Behavior Program, including brain research through the neuroscience initiative; and environmental science. Utilization of the University's scientific talent and resources towards meeting economic and scientific development goals remains a matter of continuing interest. An economic development dimension to the biotechnology initiatives will continue to be strengthened through the CollabTech and VentureLab programs. Sustaining excellence in the interdisciplinary sciences will require the acquisition of new research facilities. A Science Research Park is anticipated being completed within the next five years [see Facilities section]. In addition to encompassing a broad area of interdisciplinary activity, there is considerable ongoing collaboration with other state institutions, some regional universities and several Middle Eastern countries.
- Continue to strengthen the urban health areas. Contemporary society, especially in urban areas, is plagued by a number of health problems that are disproportionately affecting minorities. Health science, social science, humanities, education and law faculty are combining to tackle four

priority urban health areas - chronic disease and aging, HIV/AIDS and infectious disease, injury and violence, and substance abuse and mental health. In addition, the Georgia Health Policy Center provides evidence-based research, program development and policy guidance on local, state and national levels to improve health status at the community level. The center distills its qualitative and quantitative research findings to connect decision makers with the objective research and guidance needed to make informed decisions about health policy and programming. The center's projects focus on some of the most complex policy issues facing healthcare in rural and urban settings today, including public and private health insurance coverage, long-term care, children's health and community health system development.

- Achieve recognition for Georgia State as a national leader in urban education. While seeking to work with many school districts, Georgia State recognizes that the local urban school systems offer opportunities for addressing some of the more significant challenges that must be met throughout this nation. Georgia State will continue its progress in increasing the quality and quantity of educators – teachers, school leaders, and school counselors. In order to assist in producing more, highly qualified teachers for Georgia, a five-year **goal** is to more than double the numbers of certified teachers from 350 to 800 per year while also doubling the percentage of certified minority teachers. Faculty are responsible for piloting successful new models for advancing the achievement and well being of all pupils in the schools in partnership with their communities and in producing future educators who can work collaboratively to ensure that all students learn.
- Continue to develop and deliver educational programs with curricula imbued with global perspectives that earn the J. Mack Robinson College of Business continuing recognition as a world-class business school and as the dominant provider of high quality, practice-relevant graduate business programs in the metropolitan Atlanta market. The college will build on its reputation of delivering a national top-ten part-time MBA program through further development of the Center for Enterprise Risk Management and Assurance Services (CERMAS), the Herman J. Russell, Sr. International Center for Entrepreneurship, and a Center in Computer Information Systems. A **goal** is to be a major resource for Georgia in attracting and retaining "industries of the mind". One theme to be developed is risk and its management from three perspectives: societal, corporate, and individual/family. Multidisciplinary teams from risk management & insurance, accountancy, finance, CIS, law, and policy studies will evaluate risks holistically, from terrorism to public health and from public policy to risk-economics and law. Another theme is in

- information systems and technology among medical informatics, privacy and security, and digital supply chain management.
- Continue to strengthen the areas of focus in policy analysis and management for which the Andrew Young School has developed a strong national and international reputation. These include public finance and budgeting, social service delivery, environment and public/not for profit management. Strengthening includes facilitating a reaching out to allied programs outside AYSPS and developing closer relationships with the private sector and government. Continuing goals are to bring scholarship to the practice, and to bring the practice to the university.
  - Upgrade the depth and breadth of Georgia State University's currently nationally recognized work in order to create a world-class interdisciplinary program of basic and applied research on the acquisition of language and literacy. Language and literacy are the oral and written (reading & writing) dimensions of language acquisition. Interdisciplinary teams will collaborate to advance our understanding of the processes required and the role that acquiring language and literacy skills play in an individual's ability to function in society, particularly in individuals with disabilities or those who have different language backgrounds from the majority population.
  - Continue further development of digital content origination, particularly in the areas of film & video, art & design and computer science, in the Digital Arts and Entertainment Laboratory. By strategies such as enhancing on-campus space available for incubating entertainment production and research companies, securing a director of audience research to facilitate collaborative projects, and continued investment in state-of-the-art content creation tools, Georgia State will be positioned to further strengthen its contribution to Georgia's economy in the telecommunications sector and to enhance its ability to attract external support from public and private sources.
  - Continue to develop programs and curricula that bridge legal theory and practice, and that possess interdisciplinary dimensions. The Center for the Comparative Study of Metropolitan Growth joins social scientists, scientists, business and policy professionals and analysts, and law faculty in research on the environmental impact of metropolitan growth and on regulatory and legal mechanisms for dealing with it. The Center for Health, Law and Society joins lawyers, doctors, and social scientists in an effort to deal more effectively with the nexus of health, economic and legal issues that interfere with the effective and efficient delivery of health care.

- Continue further development of sustained collaborative efforts in the policy arena, particularly as it relates to economics, the environment, education, health, crime, poverty, transportation, and law. By being broad-based in academic disciplines, Georgia State University will be recognized as a premier resource for analyses of problems facing the citizens of Georgia and will become the pre-eminent think-tank in the South on policy issues. One purpose is to contribute to the base of knowledge about policy and thus produce information that is useful for making policy decisions, not just locally but also nationally and internationally.
- Enhance collaboration between artists of different disciplines and between artists and scholars of arts-related disciplines within the University community in areas of practice, theory, history, philosophy, education, and criticism. Georgia State University has many creative writers, visual artists, composers, musicians, actors, playwrights, filmmakers, and scholars engaged in arts-related research. Equally important is the enhancement of collaboration between members of the University artistic community and local, regional, and national communities.
- Consolidate already-established excellence and promote interdisciplinary initiatives through strategies that increase collaborations between humanities scholars and that enhance professional leave opportunities for faculty and graduate fellowships to strengthen research. Three of Georgia State's programs in the humanities have been recognized nationally for the quality of their scholarship and graduate education. A focus of efforts should be the development of mechanisms to give faculty the time that is the most valuable resource when it comes to research and excellence in the humanities. To maintain and enhance Georgia State's position nationwide in the humanities, the University plans to host visible public outreach for scholarly and community groups in areas such as world history, ethics, communication, religion, and historical preservation.
- Continue to develop an urban initiative that brings together the relevant strengths existing across departments, schools and colleges through the Center for Neighborhood and Metropolitan Studies. Georgia State University's schools and colleges contain the necessary faculty expertise to fully implement a multidisciplinary approach to problems of the cities. These strengths include emphases on urban sociology, anthropology, geography, economics, legal issues, politics, public policy, urban policy studies, urban education, historic preservation, real estate, community and clinical psychology, African American and ethnic studies, immigration, nursing, criminal justice, social work, and labor and public history. Together these areas house a critical mass of faculty

with strong reputations and extensive experience both in basic research, which produces clearer understandings of urban structures and dynamics, and applied research, that lends itself to policy and programmatic analysis and reform. Their foci are both domestic and international.

### **3. International initiatives**

Georgia State University has developed a strong [international reputation](#) through its two-pronged strategy of thematic initiatives and regional initiatives. A continuing **goal** is to be recognized (in Atlanta, nationally and internationally) as an institution with a strong global perspective and a center of international excellence in a number of areas in which we are engaged with other countries. These areas include biotechnology training and development, election monitoring, entrepreneurship development and business training, environmental economics, instructional technology, international and comparative law programs, professional media training, tax and fiscal policy, teacher education, tourism, and programs for peoples with disabilities.

A ongoing **goal** is to have Georgia State constantly sought out by international development agencies and international higher education institutions for expert advice and consultation on matters related to the above. Parallel to these research and technical assistance programs are graduate degree programs tailored to the needs of leaders of tomorrow from the developing countries. Countries, corporations, and international agencies will provide principal funds for the university's international initiatives and programs. A **goal** is to increase student and faculty opportunities to gain international perspectives through continuing to internationalize the curricula, and to leverage the potential of international linkages through strategic alliances that facilitate faculty research on global issues.

While there are multiple international cooperation partnerships that facilitate academic and other exchanges, thereby strengthening international education at Georgia State, a **goal** is to have at least fifteen active international cooperation partnerships and that delegation visits yield at least one new cooperation agreement, extension, exchange program, or collaborative research initiative each year.

## **D. Staff and Facilities**

### **1. Staff**

Georgia State University's staff is a diverse and multi-cultural body of approximately 2,000. Full-time staff members fulfill a critical role in support of the academic environment, administration and facilities. They afford the University a high-quality foundation upon which scholarly agendas of the academic community may be built. There is a strong sense of staff commitment to the university with

approximately 250 either alumni or currently enrolled in classes. Some scholarships are available for staff to pursue further education. Their commitment is also demonstrated significantly through annual giving to the university. Over 84% of staff and faculty contributed in FY 2004. In addition to their involvement in the university community, staff are strongly tied to the Atlanta community through volunteer and leadership roles in civic organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and United Way.

Although some progress continues to be made toward bringing the salary ranges of staff positions to the median market value, average actual salaries of many groups of incumbents still fall below market value. The past three years of decreasing state revenue has exacerbated the situation. A **goal** is to attract and retain highly competent staff by providing competitive salaries, by continuing to close the gap between average salaries and median market salaries and by correcting salary inequities among staff. The adjustments must be based on market and merit evaluations. Further efforts need to be directed toward objectives to improve performance management (from defining job descriptions to providing appropriate feedback to, and developmental opportunities for, staff) and to staff recruitment outcomes (including more active recruitment and applicant tracking) to ensure high skill levels and diversity.

In light of a declining budget, many support areas' staffing levels have not kept up with increasing demand and increased complexity of work. Despite this situation, a continuing **goal** is to enhance customer service and preserve fiscal and administrative accountability. Continuous quality improvement principles will be promoted to underscore a strong student-centered and customer-focused orientation that, in turn, will lead to improved administrative processes. These principles include respect for ideas and people, enhanced leadership and empowerment, use of facts to guide management decisions (and the processes and systems for collecting those data), satisfying those people served, and inclusion of appropriate faculty, staff, and students on cross-functional efforts to improve and streamline processes. Work will continue to be directed at ensuring that the processes meet standards established by State and Federal agencies.

An ongoing **goal** is to develop a workforce that is effective and able to meet the changing needs of an evolving university. All employees must be empowered and assured of appropriate development opportunities. In order to deliver effective administration services, leadership skills will be enhanced through training, role modeling, and opportunities for participation.

## 2. Facilities

The improvement of campus facilities since 1998 has been spearheaded by a physical master plan. A refined version of this master plan will be developed in 2005. A **goal** is to continue to develop facilities that support student success and faculty scholarship. This goal will be achieved by continuing to increase the quantity and quality of classroom, teaching and research laboratory, and office space to accommodate additional growth in student enrollment and faculty and student research. In particular, strategies include providing an adequate number of state-of-the-art classrooms; providing more space for faculty-student interaction; providing buildings where like-minded faculty are clustered in order to stimulate joint research across disciplines; providing undergraduates with easy access to quality laboratories; decreasing offices in classroom buildings by leasing office space; and reducing the amount of deferred maintenance by advocating for an equitable percentage of major repair and renovation funds from the Regents.

At our downtown location, the next major complex of buildings to be constructed is the Science Park at Decatur and Piedmont. A Science Teaching Laboratory building is anticipated to receive partial funding from the state in FY 2006, with an additional \$25 million to be raised from private individuals and foundations. Simultaneously, a Science Research Laboratory building will be constructed such that the two buildings can share common core support. These new buildings will provide for relocation of programs from marginal laboratory space in Kell Hall and free that building to serve as swing space for future capital replacement projects. In addition, federal funds are being sought to build a Southern Laboratory for Infectious Diseases in the Science Park.

A request to the Regents for a Humanities building to replace Sparks Hall will be made in June 2005. However, this building would not be ready for occupancy until the next five year plan. In addition, the University will continue to explore ways to establish a Business and Law Professional Building Complex. Such a building would provide needed facilities for the J. Mack Robinson College of Business and the College of Law and also help to relieve space shortages for other University units which currently must lease private office space for their operations.

With the expansion of campus westward, building access and other security issues have become a growing concern to many in the community. The concerns have been partially addressed by installing security card access technology in the buildings, introducing a community policing paradigm (including bicycle patrols) to the police operations, and taking a broader role in downtown (for example, pedestrian safety in crossing Peachtree Street near Woodruff Park). Safety will be enhanced through continued policy development and training programs for the campus community. An ongoing **goal** is to continue to monitor closely safety and security issues and to take rapid corrective action as needed.

Georgia State will continue to encourage positive development around the campus through good relationships with neighborhood and city constituencies. Public/private partnerships for student housing will particularly be encouraged. Joint efforts for the development and maintenance of traffic improvements, streetscape, and open green-space will be continued. The university and the city have received matching federal funds to improve sections of Decatur and Piedmont streets.

Along with new construction, a continuing **goal** is to maintain and upgrade Georgia State University existing facility inventory and develop strategies for improving operational efficiency. A major \$20 million Library Transformation project, funded in part by a student fee, is underway. A minor capital \$3.5 million improvement project for the Arts & Humanities building is also underway. Securing adequate funding for deferred maintenance, code compliance, and systems infrastructure improvements will be a particular focus. Currently, a one-time allocation of \$5 million was received for minor capital infrastructure improvements. Efforts will be made to increase our environmental stewardship by reducing our use of energy and increasing our recycling.

When the Alpharetta Center was constructed, it was designed for expansion. Over the next five years, as enrollments at the Alpharetta Center increase, consideration will be given to adding to services and facilities at this site.

### **3. Technology**

A **goal** is to continue to remain current in the application of computing and information technologies, congruent with the needs of the Net Gen students. All students should have ready access to computing resources and an opportunity to develop information management skills for lifelong learning. The educated citizen of the future will need to know how to access global databases. Administrators will need easy electronic access to data on which to base decisions for execution and continuous improvement of the University's activities. Faculty and staff will need the support of human resources, equipment, and classroom facilities in the transfer and application of technology to new learning environments. Out-of-class electronic connections between faculty and students will be encouraged. Because of the University's growing dependence on a secure technology infrastructure, it is essential to plan for and upgrade adequate network and other infrastructure capacity in advance of when it is needed. Regardless of whether courses are being offered with technology-enabled components or completely on-line, slow response and outages are debilitating to the educational experience. Similarly, adequate network and other infrastructure capacity are essential for administrative and service functions.

Improvement of the electronic infrastructure and support is an ongoing **goal** from the 2000 Strategic Plan. A decision support system that incorporates a data warehouse and provides the distribution of information has been initiated. The warehouse is to include student, financial, and HR marts, functioning from an institutional data model, hosted by Georgia State, with capability to feed data to the USG model, housed at the System level. An overall **goal** is to provide reliable, quality data through which various levels of administrators can be informed in making decisions and reporting campus statistics to various constituencies and agencies by replacing the current STATWARE system with a robust series of data marts.

#### 4. External Relations

A **goal** is to continue to enhance activities in the areas of alumni support and fundraising, in public relations, and to win supporters in the Legislature and Governor's Office and also in the community. Alumni involvement at all levels of university activities will be increased. Strategies include participation of alumni as guest lecturers in classes and in panel discussions where relevant, as well as in fundraising activities. We will continue to work with local, state and federal governments to build better relations. Good stewardship of gift funds, the identification of strategic opportunities for programmatic investment and a redoubled effort to present the University's genuine needs in compelling fashion has allowed Georgia State University to mount a successful capital campaign that surpassed its goal of \$125 million in November 2004. A new **goal** is to launch the next campaign for at least double the amount of the recently concluded one. Specific goals will be set for each college and strategies will include more active involvement of the colleges and alumni.

A **goal** is to continue to increase our national, state and local reputation by developing and executing effective internal and external communications plans. Efforts to develop a strong web presence are being aided through a redesigned web site, launched in November 2004. Identification of the campus continues to be improved significantly through unified identification in signage on various locations.

A clear and realistic image of Georgia State University's distinctive strengths as a research university in an urban setting engaged in significant teaching, research and outreach needs to be projected. Since the perception of quality does not necessarily track the actual level thereof, continuing improvements in and accomplishments by, the faculty must be heralded more effectively than heretofore. This is particularly important for attraction of high quality faculty and students and for national ratings. Published ratings normally place significant weight on academic reputation as measured by a survey of college presidents.

A **goal** is to continue to increase our national reputation as reflected, for example, in *The Center* or *U.S. News & World Report* annual rankings. This goal includes increasing the number of programs ranked as well as increasing the ratings of those ranked. Overall, we need to execute a strategy to portray the very strong academic attributes of Georgia State University to the region and the nation.

### **E. Financial Support**

Throughout this document reference is made to the importance of strong financial support to attract great students, faculty, and staff, and to maintain and develop great programs and facilities. Success of our strategic initiatives depends on availability of significant resources. The University must expand its sources of support. State support will continue to be paramount, but more private, corporate and federal support must be sought and secured, and more imaginative, entrepreneurial, fiscal and programmatic partnerships with public and private entities must be developed. The president must actively continue to seek increased funding from the University System of Georgia so that Georgia State University receives a more appropriate share of funding within the System and the System more appropriately links costs with price to students and state appropriations. If the actions proposed above are pursued, the University should stand an even better chance of securing a larger share of state resources. This would follow, since the University would present a clearer image of itself to the external world, would carry out actions that implement this image, would capitalize on its comparative advantages, and would utilize resources in cost-effective ways.

Another element of the solution is for the campus to continue to utilize its present level of resources in ways consistent with its primary goals. Therefore, on-going, planned reallocation is being used as a central approach to the problem. It will take a combination of additional resources and reallocated resources to propel the University forward to higher levels of achievement of its mission.

Of increasing importance will be resources secured by faculty through external grants and contracts and through gifts to the university from alumni, friends, and corporate and philanthropic foundations. In order to attract high quality undergraduate and graduate students, private support for scholarships and fellowships is needed. For high quality faculty to be recruited and retained, private support is necessary for professorships and endowed chairs as well as to enrich academic programs and centers. Facilities, especially new buildings, increasingly require private support. Our plans to provide state-of-the-art facilities such as the Science Teaching Laboratory, the Library Transformation project, and the Business and Law Professional Building Complex all require private support in order to supplement some state or student-fee funding.

### **Conclusion**

The process that led to the development of this document was telling. It revealed broad sentiment that there is an intellectual vibrancy among the faculty and staff, an openness to change, and an eagerness to address new challenges. There is a shared view that the University must continue to work together to redefine itself and sharpen the focus of its activities. Now having engaged fully in the examination of its mission in greater detail, Georgia State University stands resolute in its commitment to attain a position among the nation's premier state-supported universities located in an urban setting. The success of these Strategic Initiatives will depend on maintaining and improving strong undergraduate programs, and strong programs of research and graduate education in key departments, schools, and colleges, in addition to fostering interdisciplinary and co-curricular programs. It will also require greater resources and closer links with external constituencies than currently exist.