



**INSTITUTIONAL  
MISSION**

# INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

## I. Preface

Georgia Highlands College, a two-year unit of the University System of Georgia under the governance of the Board of Regents, was founded in 1970 to provide educational opportunities for the physical, intellectual and cultural development of a diverse population in seven Northwest Georgia counties. With the advent of distance learning technologies, specialty programs, satellite centers, collaborative arrangements and cooperative degree programs with technical institutes, the college has expanded its scope of influence beyond the institution's original geographical area.

The philosophy of Georgia Highlands College is expressed in the beliefs that education is essential to the intellectual, physical, economic, social, emotional, cultural and environmental well-being of individuals and society and that education should be geographically and physically accessible and affordable. In support of this philosophy, the college maintains a teaching/learning environment that promotes inclusiveness and provides educational opportunities, programs and services of excellence in response to documented needs.

## II. Mission Statement for University System of Georgia

The MISSION of the University System of Georgia is to contribute to the educational, cultural, economic and social advancement of individuals within its scope of influence; thus, Georgia Highlands College, in conjunction with the other institutions in the University System, supports this MISSION by exhibiting the following characteristics and purposes:

- supportive campus climate with the necessary services, leadership and development opportunities to educate the whole person and meet the needs of students, faculty and staff
- cultural, ethnic, racial and gender diversity in the faculty, staff and student body, supported by practices and programs that embody the ideals of an open, democratic and global society
- technology to advance educational purposes, including instructional technology, student support services and distance education
- collaborative relationships with other University System institutions, state agencies, local schools, technical colleges, and business and industry, sharing physical, human, information and other resources to expand and enhance programs and services available to the citizens of Georgia.

## III. Core Mission Statement for Two-Year Colleges in the University System of Georgia

Within the context of the MISSION of the University System of Georgia, Georgia Highlands College shares with the other two-year colleges in the University System the following characteristics and purposes:

- a commitment to excellence and responsiveness within a scope of influence defined by the needs of a local area and by particularly outstanding programs of distinctive characteristics that have a magnet effect throughout the region or state;

- a commitment to a teaching/learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, that sustains instructional excellence, functions to provide University System access for a diverse student body and promotes high levels of student learning;
- a high-quality general education program that supports a variety of well-chosen associate programs and prepares students for transfer to baccalaureate programs, learning support programs designed to insure access and opportunity for diverse student body, and a limited number of certificate and/or career degree programs to complement neighboring technical college programs
- a commitment to public service, continuing education, technical assistance and economic development activities that address the needs, improve the quality of life and raise the educational level within the college's scope of influence
- a commitment to scholarship and creative work to enhance instructional effectiveness and meet local needs.

#### **IV. Institutional Elaboration**

In support of the mission of the University System of Georgia and the core mission components for two-year colleges in the University System, Georgia Highlands College, possessing a degree authority to award the Associate of Arts, the Associate of Science, and the Associate of Applied Science, is committed to student success. Georgia Highlands College is a collegial community that values academic excellence, individualized quality service and community outreach. The institution emphasizes an education based on the college's student-learning outcomes, which promote diversity and global awareness in a technologically enhanced environment through multiple instructional sites that include distance-learning delivery systems. To achieve this mission of being a gateway to success for students, Georgia Highlands College has articulated the following goals:

- provide core curriculum and transfer programs
- provide learning-support programs
- provide cooperative degree programs with area technical colleges through collaborative agreements and partnerships for four-year degree completion programs
- provide career programs that complement community needs
- provide student services that meet the needs of our population
- serve our communities through multiple educational sites
- be involved in our communities and responsive to their needs
- be innovative in our approach to teaching, learning and support services
- use technology as a teaching and learning tool
- maintain efficient and effective administrative services to support the instructional and community outreach programs of the college

## **Georgia Highlands College Welcome Statement**

Georgia Highlands College embraces its responsibility to foster an environment of respect and understanding among all individuals and groups. We welcome everyone to participate in our learning community, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religious or political beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status, physical or mental abilities, or any other distinction that represents the wide variety of experience offers.

In order to preserve this atmosphere of free thought, positive interaction and mutual respect, we promise that bigotry will not be tolerated at Georgia Highlands College, nor will any expressions of hatred or prejudice, or behaviors that infringe upon the freedom that every individual deserves. Abuse or harassment against anyone on our campuses, whether verbal, physical or psychological is unacceptable and will not be allowed.

All students and employees of Georgia Highlands College dedicate themselves to the defense and implementation of these principles as core values of the college's goals and mission.