

*The Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools*

THE FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT

Name of Institution: Waycross College

Address of the Institution: 2001 South Georgia Parkway

Waycross, GA 31503

Name, title, contact numbers of person(s) preparing the report:

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Part I: Signatures Attesting to Integrity
(Applicable to all institutions)

By signing below, we attest to the following:

That Waycross College (*name of institution*) has conducted an honest assessment of compliance and has provided complete and accurate disclosure of timely information regarding compliance with the identified Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements of the Commission on Colleges.

Date of Submission: 09/25/08

Accreditation Liaison

Name of Accreditation Liaison Sara Selby

Signature

Chief Executive Officer

Name of Chief Executive Officer David A. Palmer

Signature

**Part II: The Abbreviated “Institutional Summary
Form Prepared for Commission Reviews”**
(Applicable to all institutions)

History and Characteristics

Waycross College, an associate degree granting institution, is one of thirty-five institutions in the University System of Georgia (USG). The System, composed of four research universities, two regional universities, thirteen state universities, eight state colleges, and eight two-year colleges, is governed by a Board of Regents that was established in 1931 as a part of a reorganization of Georgia’s state government. Eighteen members, five of whom are from the state-at-large and one from each of the thirteen congressional districts, are appointed by the governor to serve on the Board of Regents for a term of seven years. The Board elects a chancellor who serves as its chief executive officer and the chief administrative officer of the University System.

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia originally approved the establishment of a University System two-year college in the Ware County-Waycross area in December 1970. The Board approved a site for the College in February 1973, and a bond issue was approved in May 1973.

The Regents authorized the execution of a contract with the Board of Commissioners of Ware County for the development of the College in July 1973. The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Ware County presented to the Board of

Regents a deed for the land and a check to be used for construction of the initial physical plant facilities in March 1974. In January 1975, the Board of Regents awarded a \$1,833,600 construction contract to Richards and Associates, Inc., of Carrollton, Georgia, and approved an official name, Waycross Junior College.

Waycross Junior College opened for classes with a single academic building containing classrooms and science labs (the present Administration Building) and a physical education building in September 1976. During 1976-77, the Waycross College Foundation was established to promote higher education at the College, to expand educational opportunities for the citizens of southeast Georgia, to create scholarships and endowments, to promote scholarly research, to support college enhancement, and to acquire and administer funds for these purposes. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredited Waycross Junior College in December 1978. In April 1982, the Board of Regents appropriated funding for an additional academic building. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools reaffirmed accreditation in December 1983, and construction on the new Educational Building was completed in 1984.

In June 1987, the Chancellor of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved changing the official name of the institution to Waycross College. In June 1989, the Board of Regents approved an addition to the Library, with construction completed in January 1991. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools again reaffirmed accreditation in December 1993. In 1995, founding president James M. Dye retired.

A Physics/Electronics Classroom and Laboratory was added to the Educational Building in 1996. In the same year, President Barbara P. Losty assumed leadership, and the Board of Regents approved a \$4.6 million project to construct a Student Services Building and an addition to the Physical Education Building. Construction began during Winter Quarter 1998. In Fall 1998, the College implemented a revised USG Core Curriculum when the System converted to a semester calendar. Construction on the Student Services Building and Gymnasium and Weight Room was completed in Spring Semester 2000. The James M. Dye Student Services Building was named in November 2002 and dedicated on October 6, 2003.

In 2005, the Board of Regents approved a \$2.3 million project to renovate library and classroom space in the Administrative Building. A year later, president Barbara P. Losty retired, and David A. Palmer became the College's third president. A professional design contract was awarded to Smoak Designs in November 2006, and library and classroom construction work is scheduled to begin in January 2009.

The College's current mission statement is as follows:

As a unit of the University System of Georgia, Waycross College is a student-centered institution of higher education committed to instructional excellence. The college provides accessible, affordable, high quality educational opportunities for all southeast Georgians in a diverse and dynamic campus environment through a comprehensive range of programs and services:

- *Associate degrees that prepare students for careers and transfer*
- *Partnerships and collaborative programs with other institutions*

- *Certificate and career preparation programs*
- *Educational support services*
- *Lifelong learning educational programs*
- *Public service*

Waycross College is located in the county seat of Ware County, the largest county in the state. Consisting primarily of farm, forest, and swampland, the sparsely populated area's best-known feature is the Okefenokee Swamp. In Fall 2007, 95% of the students attending Waycross College lived in seven counties: Appling, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Pierce, Ware, and Wayne. Within this seven-county area are seven public school systems, eight high schools, and two technical colleges. The local economy is based upon forestry, small manufacturing, retailing, health services, and agriculture. Waycross is an important railway transportation center for CSX Rail Transportation, but no major commercialization of the area has occurred. Waycross College exists to provide programs of higher education for the citizens of the immediate and surrounding communities. The College's philosophy is to provide opportunities for those who need special preparation for regular college-level courses, while giving well-prepared students immediate access to transfer courses that can be applied toward advanced study appropriate to their academic goals.

The College attempts to provide a wide range of enjoyable and satisfying experiences intended to contribute to the intellectual goals, personal interests, and aptitudes of those we serve. Waycross College occasionally provides concerts, recitals, special lectures, independent study, club activities, social events, cultural

exhibits, and a variety of Continuing Education and public service programs for the local communities.

Admission to the College may be granted to any person who: is a graduate of a high school that is accredited by a regional accrediting association as defined by the US Office of Education or approved by a state board of education or other appropriate state educational agency; has a high school certificate of equivalency (GED[®]); or is a transfer student in good standing from another college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association.

Since the College opened its doors for classes, it has seen a 190% increase in enrollment. In Fall 1976, the College enrolled 341 students; in Fall 2007, the College enrolled 989 students. Enrollment increases have not been steady, however, with our highest enrollment at 1027 in Fall 2003. The following table shows enrollment figures for the past five years as reported in the College's annual *Fact Book* (2006-2007 issue, p. 24):

Enrollment Statistics

<i>Semester</i>	<i># of Students</i>	<i>% 1-yr. change (+) / (-)</i>
Fall 2003	1027	+14%
Fall 2004	1005	-2%
Fall 2005	882	-12%
Fall 2006	1018	+15%
Fall 2007	989	-3%

As recruiting and retention efforts increase and cooperative programs and partnerships with various institutions are solidified, the College should experience further increases in enrollment.

In Fall 2007, the majority of students at Waycross College were white (78.8%), female (71%), between the ages of 18 and 22 (55%), enrolled full-time (53%), from Ware County (51%), pursuing a degree in either teacher education (24%) or pre-ADN nursing (16%), and receiving federal financial aid (59.5%), as reported in the *Fact Book 2006-2007* (pp. 26-35, 40). To respond to the educational needs of the service area, Waycross College has diligently established cooperative programs and built partnerships with organizations and institutions in area communities. Among such endeavors are a Post-secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP); a Dual Credit Enrollment Program (ACCEL); a Tech Prep Program; course offerings at a joint off-campus site at the Liberty Center in Hinesville, GA, with Armstrong Atlantic State University; an AS Nursing program with South Georgia College; a BS Nursing program with Valdosta State University; a BS/MEd Teacher Education program with Valdosta State University; a BS Criminal Justice program and a BSW Social Work program with Albany State University; an on-line BBA Management program with Georgia Southwestern State University; a BS Psychology (Behavior Analysis) program with Savannah State University; and articulation agreements with other institutions.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Waycross College Fact Book 2006-2007* (available in print and online at www.waycross.edu/oir/factbkpg.htm), *Waycross College Catalog* (pp. 9-10 and 12-15, available in print and online at www.waycross.edu/catalogs/index.htm), and the Bachelor Degree Programs page (www.waycross.edu/Degrees/bachelors_degree_opps.htm) on the Waycross College web site, all of which are included in the folder labeled 2.0 on the accompanying CD.

List of Degrees

AA: Business Administration, Criminal Justice, English, General/Interdisciplinary Studies, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology;

AS: Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, Pre-Dental Hygiene, Pre-Engineering Technology, Health & Physical Education, Health Information Management, Mathematical Subjects, Medical Technology, Pre-Nursing, Physical Therapy, Physician's Assistant, Physics, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Therapy, and Teacher Education;

AAS: Business (Accounting, Business Office Technology, Computer Information Systems, Marketing Management), Services (Early Childhood Care and Education, Cosmetology), Health (Medical Assisting, Paramedic Technology, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology), Technology (Air Conditioning Technology, Advanced Air Conditioning Technology, Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Fundamentals, Automotive Technology, Drafting, Electronics Fundamentals, Electronics Technology, Forest Technology, Industrial Systems Technology, Machine Tool Technology, Advanced Machine Tool Technology, and Welding and Joining Technology);

Certificates: Teaching, General Business, and Accounting.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Waycross College Catalog* (p. 12, available in print and online at www.waycross.edu/catalogs/index.htm), the Degrees Offered page (www.waycross.edu/Degrees/index.htm) on the Waycross

College web site, and the Certificate Programs page

(www.waycross.edu/academics/cert_program.htm) on the Waycross College web site, all of which are included in the folder labeled 2.0 on the accompanying CD.

Locations and Distance Education

1. We have established no new off-campus sites where a student can be awarded a degree, certificate, or diploma or where a student can obtain 50% or more of credits toward the educational program since our last reaffirmation in 2003.
2. Students may complete Learning Support Requirements (a maximum of sixteen hours if placed in all three areas of English, Mathematics, and Reading), earn nine hours of coursework in the essential skills (English and Mathematics) area of the core curriculum, and earn fifteen hours of Business and Accounting courses at the Liberty Center in Hinesville, Liberty County, Georgia (USA). Essential skills courses comprise a maximum of only 36% of credits required for any certificate program or a maximum of only 14% of credits required for any degree program. The Business and Accounting courses comprise 25% of credits required for the AA in Business Administration; when combined with the essential skills offerings, a student could conceivably earn 39% of credits required for the AA degree in Business Administration.

Students may earn nine hours of Education coursework at Pierce County High School in Blackshear, Pierce County, Georgia (USA). Those nine hours comprise 36% of credits required for a Certificate in Teaching or 14% of credits required for an AS degree in Teacher Education.

Students may earn up to twenty-six hours of general education coursework (English, Mathematics, and Social Sciences) at Wayne County High School in Jesup, Wayne County, Georgia (USA). Those twenty-six hours comprise a maximum of only 36% of credits required for any certificate program or a maximum of only 41% of credits required for any degree program.

Although none of the off-campus sites allows students to complete an entire program of study, they do permit students to fulfill many core curriculum requirements without enduring a lengthy commute.

3. Since its last reaffirmation of accreditation, the College has been working to expand its use of distance learning technology. In some on-campus and off-campus classes, faculty have employed WebCT/Vista[®] technology or establishment of Web pages to assist with the delivery of instruction, either by offering the course in a completely online format, by incorporating a hybrid online/face-to-face approach, or by enhancing what is presented in the classroom.

Faculty are encouraged to develop courses for online delivery, and a Director of Information Management Systems was recently hired to assist with the development of a distance learning program. Currently, no degrees or certificates can be completed electronically, though individual courses are offered online. Most students enrolled in these courses are located within the College's seven-county service area.

Documents supporting this commentary include correspondence with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and course offering schedules

from Waycross College's main campus and the Liberty Center campus, all of which are included in the folder labeled 2.0 on the accompanying CD.

Part III: The Abbreviated Compliance Certification
(Applicable to all institutions)

1. The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.

Compliance Non-Compliance

As a two-year Liberal Arts college preparing students mainly for transfer, Waycross College requires its faculty to have at least a Master's degree from an accredited institution in their fields or a Master's degree in a related area and at least eighteen graduate hours earned in the area in which they teach. A directory of all full-time faculty members is available on the College's web site.

Waycross College typically employs twenty to twenty-three full-time faculty members teaching a minimum of fifteen semester credit hours and fifteen to twenty part-time faculty members teaching a maximum of eight semester credit hours per semester. Full-time faculty members are on nine-month contracts annually. Division chairs are also considered to be full-time faculty, with released time for administrative duties. They are on twelve-month contracts. The following tables, published annually in the Faculty/Staff section of the Waycross College *Fact Book*, show full-time vs. part-time instruction over the past five years:

Table 1.1: Instructional Faculty by Time Status

	Fall 2003		Fall 2004		Fall 2005		Fall 2006		Fall 2007	
Time Status	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Full-time	21	66%	21	68%	23	62%	21	60%	21	51%
Part-time	11	34%	10	32%	14	38%	14	40%	20	49%
Total	32	100%	31	100%	37	100%	35	100%	41	100%

Table 1.2: Total Student Credit Hours by Full-Time & Part-Time Faculty

	Fall 2003		Fall 2004		Fall 2005		Fall 2006		Fall 2007	
Time Status	Hrs.	%	Hrs.	%	Hrs.	%	Hrs.	%	Hrs.	%
Full-time	7090	88%	6823	89%	6790	86%	7789	87%	7062	80%
Part-time	968	12%	802	11%	1077	14%	1213	13%	1804	20%
Total	8058	100%	7625	100%	7867	100%	9002	100%	8866	100%

The determination of the number of faculty employed is based on a consideration for the various types of degree programs that are offered at the college and the necessity to provide flexible and adequate course offerings. The total number of full-time faculty employed is determined so that the percentage of total semester credit hours taught by full-time faculty is at least eighty.

Student-faculty ratio is determined by dividing total student FTE by total faculty FTE count. One student FTE is based on twelve credit hours per semester while one faculty FTE count is based on teaching fifteen credit hours per semester. The following table, compiled from information published annually in the Waycross

College *Fact Book*, shows student-faculty ratios for the past five years, as well as average class size and the number of classes offered:

Table 1.3: Student/Faculty Ratios and Class Size Statistics

Year	Student/Faculty Ratio	Average Class Size	# of Classes Offered
Fall 2007	28:1 (FTE)	24 students	110
Fall 2006	32:1 (FTE)	26 students	99
Fall 2005	28:1 (FTE)	23 students	99
Fall 2004	28:1 (FTE)	24 students	106
Fall 2003	24:1 (FTE)	24 students	112

Documents supporting this commentary include the Faculty and Staff Directory page (www.waycross.edu/facstaff.htm) on the Waycross College web site, Faculty Rosters Spring 2004-Fall 2004 and Spring 2005-Fall 2008, and the *Waycross College Fact Books* encompassing the years 2002-2007 (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbkpg.htm), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.1 on the accompanying CD.

2. The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution.

Compliance Non-Compliance

To carry out its mission, Waycross College is organized into four major areas of responsibilities under the supervision of the President, who reports to Mr. Rob Watts, Chief Operating Officer who reports directly to the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia. The organizational chart for the USG is published on the USG web site (www.usg.edu/regents/org) and a narrative explanation of it is published in the *Board of Regents' Bylaws* (www.usg.edu/regents/bylaws), available online at the USG web site. The organizational chart for Waycross College and/or a narrative explanation of it is published in the annual Waycross College *Fact Book* (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbkpg.htm), as well as in the *Faculty Handbook, Part-time Faculty Handbook, Statutes, and Administrative Policies and Procedures Handbook*, all of which are available in print and online at the College's web site (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/policies_procedures_manual/).

The four basic administrative areas are Business Affairs (personnel, physical plant, budget and finance, business services, security, financial aid, and computer services), under the Vice President for Business Affairs; Academic Affairs (academic divisions, library services, community education, and off-campus and cooperative programs), under the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs; Student Services (admissions, student records, counseling and testing, academic support services, and student activities), under the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services; and Development and Community Services (development, college services, and community services), under the Director of Development and Community Services. These four administrators comprise the President's Cabinet. In addition, the Director of Institutional Research reports to the President and monitors,

through various statistical analyses, the effectiveness of the institution in carrying out its mission.

Administrative responsibilities and authority for all educational offerings and functions are clearly defined in the *Statutes* (I-1 through I-3, www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/statutes/revisions4-08/statutes1-rev8-07.pdf). The duties of the administrative and academic officers are clearly defined and made known to faculty and staff.

The President, members of the President's Cabinet, and the Director of Institutional Research possess the appropriate education and experience for their respective positions. The President is evaluated annually on job performance by Mr. Rob Watts. Copies of his evaluations may be obtained from Dr. Palmer or Mr. Watts. Evaluation procedures for senior administrators are outlined in the *Administrative Policies and Procedures Handbook* (I-23 through I-24, www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/policies_procedures_manual/pol-proc1.pdf). Copies of vitae, transcripts, organizational charts, and previous evaluations are kept in the President's Office; originals are maintained in the Personnel Office.

A summary of each administrator's qualifications follows:

Dr. David A. Palmer, President

Dr. Palmer was appointed President of Waycross College in August 2006.

From 2002-2006, he served as president of Andrew College in Cuthbert, Georgia, and was the college's primary fundraiser. He spent twenty-one years as vice president for student life and dean of students at Hanover College, in Hanover, Indiana, where he also taught courses in organizational behavior in the college's

Department of Economics and Business Administration for twelve years. Before that, he served as vice president and dean of students at Transylvania University, in Lexington, Kentucky, where he revised and rebuilt the student life program during the period of 1976 to 1981. He also was affiliated with Michigan State University, in East Lansing, from 1970 to 1976, supervising a 1,200-student residence hall for the first two years, and eight residence halls serving 5,100 students for the remaining four years. From 1968 to 1970, he served as the dean of men at Buena Vista College, in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Dr. Palmer earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration in 1976 from Michigan State University. He also received an M.B.A. in organizational behavior/management in 1986 from Xavier University; an M.A. in college student personnel in 1967 from Ohio State University; and a bachelor's degree in sociology/English in 1965 from Hanover College.

Dr. Mark Van Den Hende, Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs

Dr. Van Den Hende was appointed to his position at Waycross College in July 2007.

He began his career in higher education more than ten years earlier. Prior to his current position at Waycross College, he served as Dean of South Puget Sound College in Olympia, Washington. He has also served as Dean for Instruction at Cascadia Community College in Bothell, Washington, and Associate Dean for Communication Technologies at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Washington.

Dr. Van Den Hende earned a Ph.D. in educational leadership and administration in higher education from Washington State University. He also earned an M.Ed. in

student affairs administration in higher education and a bachelor's in secondary education/history from Western Washington University and an associate in journalism from Ventura College.

Mr. William E. Deason, Vice President for Business Affairs

Mr. Deason served as Waycross College's first comptroller from 1976 to 1983. He has held his current position at Waycross College since 1990.

He has also held a number of business operations positions in both the private sector and higher education. He was director of accounting for the Bibb County Board of Education in Macon, Georgia, from 1989 to 1990; controller and office manager at George Dempsey Buick, Olds, and Toyota, Inc., in Waycross from 1987-1989; and comptroller at both Waycross College (1976-1983) and Dalton College (1983-1987). He also has worked in business operations at Middle Georgia College and Georgia Military College.

Mr. Deason earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Georgia College & State University and a master's in business administration from Valdosta State University.

Dr. S. Neil Aspinwall, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services

Dr. Aspinwall was appointed to his position at Waycross College in August 2007.

He began his career in education more than twenty years earlier. He began as a classroom teacher at Glynn Academy High School in Brunswick before moving into higher education and serving as vice president of economic development at Okefenokee Technical College. He has also served as director of instruction (evening division) and director of adult education at Okefenokee Technical College.

Dr. Aspinwall earned an Ed.D. in educational administration from Georgia Southern University. He also earned an Ed.S. and M.Ed. in school administration and supervision and a bachelors in education, all from Georgia Southern University.

Mr. R. Taylor Hereford, Director of Development and Community Services

Mr. Hereford was appointed to his position at Waycross College in February 2008.

He previously served as director of marketing at Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Georgia, from 2006-2008.

Mr. Hereford received his bachelor of arts degree in journalism with an emphasis in telecommunications from the University of Georgia and an associate of arts degree in history from Waycross College.

Mr. Akin Akinruntan, Director of Institutional Research

Mr. Akinruntan was appointed to his position at Waycross College in September 2000.

His past experience includes Institutional Research Director, Institutional Research Associate/Instructor, and Academic Specialist/Instructor at Morris Brown College; Institutional Research Associate/Assistant Professor at Knoxville College; Assistant Professor at Pellissippi State Technical Community College; Chemistry/Engineering Consultant at KEMP Inc.; and Engineering Research Associate/Assistant Professor at Knoxville College.

Mr. Akinruntan received his M.S. and B.S. degrees in Industrial Engineering from the University of Tennessee and a B.Sc. in Chemistry from the University of Liberia.

He is a Ph.D. candidate (Industrial Engineering, Material Science) at the University of Tennessee.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Bylaws* (www.usg.edu/regents/bylaws) and organizational chart (www.usg.edu/regents/org), *Waycross College Administrative Policies and Procedures Handbook* (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/policies_procedures_manual/ppmanual.htm), *Waycross College Fact Book 2006-2007* (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbkpg.htm), *Waycross College Faculty Handbook* (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/faculty_handbk/SEC-II.pdf), *Waycross College Part-time Faculty Handbook* (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/pt_faculty_hdbk/Pt-hdbk_02_sec_II.pdf), and *Waycross College Statutes* (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/statutes/revisions4-08/statutes1-rev8-07.pdf), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.2 on the accompanying CD.

3. The institution publishes admissions policies that are consistent with its mission.

Compliance Non-Compliance

General admission policies have been established by the Board of Regents, the governing board of Waycross College, and are found in the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (Sections 3.01-3.10, www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section3/301-310/) and in the *Board of Regents' Policy Manual* (Section 400, www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/400.phtml), as well

as online at the Georgia College 411 web site (www.gacollege411.org/). The College has been chartered as a two-year unit of the University System of Georgia and is legally obligated and mandated to adhere to all policies set forth by the Board of Regents that apply to two-year institutions. The Director of Admissions and Records is responsible for carrying out admission policies at Waycross College.

Our mission requires that we provide a quality education that is both accessible and affordable to the residents of our service area. Our admissions requirements represent the minimum standards allowed by the University System of Georgia. These standards, combined with the several listed admissions categories, provide significant access to our academic offerings. We accept and enroll students of various backgrounds and preparations, from joint enrollments to transfer students to GED[®] completers. Our admission policies include both qualitative and quantitative requirements, and the primary purpose of these admission requirements is to identify students who demonstrate reasonable potential for successful completion of an Associate degree program.

Grade point averages and test scores are usually good indicators of academic success. We require transcripts from traditional, nontraditional, transfer, and GED[®] students. Students are required to have completed an accredited high school program or earned the GED[®] to attend Waycross College. Home-schooled students are required to submit a transcript for evaluation, provide a detailed portfolio, or earn a GED[®]. Home-schooled coursework is then examined to determine if the student has been exposed to the skills necessary for successful completion of college-level

work. Home-schooled students are also required to submit SAT[®] or ACT[®] scores, as they are both good indicators of probable academic success.

Waycross College includes diagnostic testing as part of the admissions process for all students, except those exempt from testing based on SAT[®] scores (although as of Fall 2005, completion of the SAT[®] is no longer a requirement for admission at two-year schools in the USG; see news releases at www.usg.edu/news/2005/042005-1.phtml and www.usg.edu/news/2008/061108-2.phtml). Students with demonstrated deficiencies in their preparation for collegiate study in mathematics, reading, and/or writing are placed in learning support classes. In fall 2007, 32% of incoming freshmen placed into one or more learning support. Students whose SAT[®] verbal test scores fall below 430 are required to take the Computerized Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System test (the COMPASS[®] test) to determine the appropriate English or reading course(s). Similarly, students whose SAT[®] math test scores fall below 400 and who have less than a 75 average in each high school class of Algebra I and Algebra II are required to take the math portion of the COMPASS[®] test to determine placement in the appropriate mathematics course. Minimum placement scores for the COMPASS[®] test have been determined by the Board of Regents. Policies concerning academic requirements to exit Learning Support and continue with courses leading to an Associate degree are published in the *Waycross College Catalog* (pp. 39-40).

All admission policies are published in the *Waycross College Catalog* (pp. 19-28), which is available in print and online at www.waycross.edu/catalogs/index.htm. The Board of Regents periodically institutes a system-wide review of admission

policies for all institutions in the USG in order to identify more clearly the appropriate roles and purposes of two-year, four-year, and research institutions. Waycross College evaluates and modifies its admission policies as directed by the Board of Regents.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (Sections 3.01-3.10, www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section3/301-310/), *Board of Regents' Policy Manual* (Section 400, www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/400.phtml), GACollege411.org web site (www.gacollege411.org/), USG news releases (www.usg.edu/news/2005/042005-1.phtml and www.usg.edu/news/2008/061108-2.phtml), *Waycross College Fact Book 2006-2007* (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbook06-07.pdf), and *Waycross College Catalog* (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/index.htm), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.3 on the accompanying CD.

4. For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Waycross College assigns general responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to two Division Chairs (for Division of the Arts and Division of the Sciences), who are full-time faculty members. In twenty-five of the twenty-six areas of concentration for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees (with the exception being the General/Interdisciplinary Studies emphasis), a full-time faculty member has primary teaching assignment for most required courses in a program of study. In the case of the General/Interdisciplinary Studies area of concentration, different full-time faculty members have primary teaching responsibility for courses in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics taken to complete the degree requirements. Faculty curricular areas of expertise are, for the most part, indicated in their position titles as listed in the directory in the Catalog (pp. 96-98) and in the online Faculty/Staff Directory (www.waycross.edu/facstaff.htm). In addition, five specific coordinators have been appointed to oversee operation of Teacher Education and Studies Abroad programs, as well as to serve as liaisons with cooperative programs with other institutions in Business, Criminal Justice, and Nursing.

Because preparing students for transfer is a primary goal for Waycross College, that we offer a core curriculum of courses common in scope and outcome to those offered at other institutions within the University System is vital to our success. At the System level, twenty-four academic advisory committees have been established to coordinate curriculum development, and Waycross College faculty members represent us on the sixteen committees pertinent to our offerings. Our representation is documented in the membership rosters of each advisory committee.

The University System requires comprehensive academic program review on a periodic basis. Administrators and faculty responsible for program coordination are expected to supply analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data to support judgments about the viability of academic programs. The System's process for program review is currently under evaluation for possible revision.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (Section 2.03.05, www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.03/2.03.05.phtml), Board of Regents' Advisory Committee rosters (www.usg.edu/academics/comm/) *Waycross College Catalog* (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/index.htm), Waycross College Faculty and Staff Directory (www.waycross.edu/facstaff.htm), and the Bachelor Degree Programs page on the Waycross College web site (www.waycross.edu/Degrees/bachelors_degree_opps.htm), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.4 on the accompanying CD.

5. The institution provides ***student support programs***, services, and activities consistent with its mission.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Waycross College provides many student support programs that serve to enhance the educational experiences of all the students it serves and that help to

ensure that each student achieves success in his/her chosen program of study.

These programs include:

- Minority Advising Program (MAP) – The MAP was designed to enhance the academic welfare of minority students in the USG. The Waycross College MAP program seeks to promote success and develop human potential while creating an environment that fosters the success and retention of minority students. The program supports minority students through the early warning program, academic counseling, personal counseling, suspension/readmission counseling, SGA social activities, and peer counseling.
- Academic Support Center (ASC) – The Academic Support Center provides instructional aids for English, math, reading, science, humanities, and foreign languages; practice tests for the Regents' exam; and COMPASS[®] math/reading tests. Tutoring services are available for students who need extra remedial and/or additional help in specific classes. The ASC provides alternative learning opportunities that allow students to develop strengths and eliminate deficiencies.
- Student Testing Lab – As a part of the Academic Support Center, the Testing Lab allows students the opportunity to make up missed tests or retake other tests as allowed by instructors. The lab is usually open and proctored approximately twenty hours per week, and students must make arrangements with their individual instructors in order to utilize the lab.
- Student Clubs, Organizations, and Activities – Waycross College offers numerous clubs, organizations, and activities available to help complement and supplement classroom instruction by enhancing the leadership, academic, and

social skills of all students involved. Financed mainly by student activity fees, these clubs, organizations, and activities are developed in response to student interest areas. Clubs and organizations include Brothers and Sisters in Christ (BASIC), Business Club, Circle K Club, Drama Club, Georgia Association of Nursing Students (GANS), Globetrotters (Study Abroad Program), Multicultural Student Alliance, Outdoor Adventure Club, Psychology/Sociology Club, Science Fiction Club, and Student Government Association. Activities include, but are not limited to, intramural sports, lectures, family activities, musical concerts, and student publications, including *Crossties* (student newspaper) and *FoxPrints* (literary magazine). The College has designated activity periods at noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays when no classes are scheduled. These activity periods are used to schedule club meetings, speakers, concerts, and other events of interest to students.

- Student Government Association – Begun in 1977, the SGA establishes and maintains communication between students and the College’s administration and faculty. It cultivates and preserves the ideals of responsible citizenship on campus and helps to create an atmosphere of learning.
- Academic Counseling – Counseling services are available to students through the Academic Support Center (ASC) and the Office of Student Life. The ASC provides counseling to students who are having difficulty with course work and may be in jeopardy of withdrawing from college. The Director of Student Life meets individually with any students who have been referred by instructors for academic counseling. These students are provided information and/or

techniques on how to enhance their study skills, how to prepare for exams, and/or how to gain access to remedial/learning support assistance. Confidential records of ADA accommodations requested and granted are kept by the Director of Student Life.

- Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC) – The GCIC web site (www.gcic.peachnet.edu/) allows students to create career profiles and determine for what type of career they are best suited. This site also provides students access to information about specific careers and the education and training required to enter and be successful in a chosen occupational field.
- Special Needs and Disability Services – In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Student Services Office provides disability-related accommodations, information, and referral services to students who qualify for such services. The ultimate goal of these services is to ensure the independent functioning of each disabled student in the collegiate environment. Students who suspect they have a learning disorder are encouraged to seek the services of the University System of Georgia's Regents' Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD; see www.usg.edu/academics/initiatives/cld/) in order to obtain a thorough diagnostic evaluation which is requisite for academic accommodations.
- Steps to Student Success Course – This course (WAYC 1101) is designed to provide students with the skills, information, and guidance useful for success in college. All beginning freshmen and transfer students with less than twelve credit hours are required to enroll in the course. The course focuses on cultural values of a college education; realistic assessment of employment opportunities;

improvement of study skills; awareness of college facilities, technology, and services; familiarization with the teaching/learning process; student responsibilities; and group work along with personal, social, and academic growth.

Documents supporting this commentary include the Annual Report on the Minority Advising Program and the Academic Support Center, *Club Advisor Handbook*, GCIC web site (www.gcic.peachnet.edu/), RCLD web site (www.usg.edu/academics/initiatives/cld), SGA Constitution, and WAYC 1101 syllabus, all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.5 on the accompanying CD.

6. The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Space allocated to any institutional function at Waycross College is adequate for the effective conduct of those functions. The Facilities, Curriculum, and Room Utilization Report (FCRU), published annually in the *Information Digest* by the USG (http://www.usg.edu/usg_stats/info_digest/2005/facilities0506.pdf), provides Waycross College with a detailed statistical profile of campus facilities. The data provides comparative assessments of utilization of classrooms, lecture rooms, and laboratories for units of time by institution.

The most recent report available from the System is the report for 2005-2006. The report refers to an index of instructional use of campus facilities. One index is a ratio comparing Waycross College's square footage of classroom facilities to its full-time equivalent enrollment. Waycross College had an index of 14.2. The average for two-year institutions is 14.5. Based upon this index, Waycross College is comparable to that of other two-year units of the USG. Waycross College conducts effective allocation and utilization of classroom space essential for all educational programs.

Each year the Office of the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs prepares a Room Utilization Report that gives a listing of all classrooms, usage by College and outside institutions, square footage per classroom, number of students, and number of stations. This Room Utilization Report is submitted to the office of the Board of Regents for inclusion in the FCRU Report. A copy of the Room Utilization Report is housed in the office of the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs.

Other institutions also use the College facilities. Valdosta State University uses four classrooms five days a week for education classes. South Georgia College uses one classroom and a nursing lab four days a week for its nursing instruction. Savannah State University uses two classrooms three days a week for behavioral sciences instruction. Albany State University uses two classrooms four days a week for instruction in its Social Work program.

Waycross College maintains a Physical Master Plan that provides for orderly development of the College and relates it to other institutional planning efforts. Incorporated into the Physical Master Plan is a facilities plan that details the current use and future needs for buildings and land. The facilities plan details the facility

support needed for expansion or addition of course offerings, building space, and land use. The plan was last revised in 2007; professional services in the planning field are recruited to perform studies and update the plan in conjunction with College faculty and staff and the Board of Regents. The plan is available in hard copy only in the Business Office.

All new buildings, major remodeling, and rehabilitation projects involving campus buildings require authorization by the Board of Regents and are implemented in accordance with established Board of Regents' procedures.

Two skilled trades/maintenance personnel currently perform routine maintenance and some emergency repairs as appropriate. Outside contractors are hired as needed for jobs that require skills beyond in-house capabilities. Five College employees perform all landscaping-related upkeep and repairs to support grounds maintenance. Five custodians are employed to maintain the cleanliness of buildings. The College also contracts preventive maintenance with Johnson Controls, Siemens Energy Management, and Anco Chemicals for quarterly inspections and maintenance of all major HVAC mechanical, life safety systems, building automation controls, and water treatment systems. Maintenance contracts are kept on file in the Business Office.

Current off-campus sites at the Liberty Center, Pierce County High School, and Wayne County High School are located in facilities maintained by other academic institutions. Waycross College evaluates the condition of off-campus sites from both a physical and technological viewpoint to make sure they meet the standards and

requirements necessary for students to maintain a safe and sufficient learning environment.

Waycross College's Physical Plant department is dedicated to making sure that all faculty, staff, and students are provided with a safe, clean, and well-maintained environment in which to work and study. Prompt attention is given to correct any condition that may arise which interferes with the normal operations of the campus. In order to reduce delays, online work order systems have been created and made available to all faculty and staff for requesting the services of the department. Campus maps showing building and room locations are available both in print and online. Facilities use both e-mail and web site bulletins to announce future work and weather-related events that may interfere with the normal operations of the campus.

Documents supporting this commentary include the FCRU from the *USG Information Digest 2005-2006* (http://www.usg.edu/usg_stats/info_digest/2005/facilities0506.pdf), Waycross College campus map (www.waycross.edu/CompServ/CampusMap/), and Waycross College Room Charts, all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.6 on the accompanying CD.

7. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area:

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

Compliance Non-Compliance

The two-year transfer mission of Waycross College defines the primary educational activities as teaching and public service within the context of the Board of Regents' Six Major Goals contained within the University System of Georgia's Strategic Plan (www.usg.edu/strategicplan). At Waycross College, desired outcomes are established college-wide using a systematic, broad-based, interrelated approach to the institution's mission. To what extent these outcomes are successfully attained is an ongoing process monitored by the College's Institutional Research Office, which provides analysis and documentation of achievement.

In the past, the Division Chairs of Arts and Sciences prepared planning and assessment documents that established a three-year plan for the respective divisions in accordance with templates and procedures set forth in the *Waycross College Planning and Assessment Guide* (www.waycross.edu/planning_council/planning_guide/wc_planning_guide.pdf).

Revisions to these plans and their assessments were submitted to and reviewed by a Planning Council on an annual basis. The divisions were required to demonstrate how the results of the assessment were used to improve the respective division's programs and student outcomes.

Over the past year (2007-2008), the process for planning and assessment has been under review, moving to a continuous improvement model mandated by the USG using Lean Six Sigma's process improvement and variation reduction

strategies. These strategies have been implemented at Waycross College through monthly Faculty Senate meetings functioning within the bylaws established by the USG's Faculty Council. At the campus level, the Faculty Senate identifies expected outcomes and assesses the extent to which outcomes are being achieved in an ongoing format to foster a shared vision in accordance with the college mission. This continuous process has streamlined decision-making processes between traditional committee/council structures while facilitating joint Presidential Cabinet and Senate decisions. Additionally, the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs developed a college-wide strategic plan in accordance with the President's initiative to align the University System and College strategies with the Board of Regents' Six Major Goals.

The strategic plan document is located in the President's office; past planning and assessment documents for each division are located in the respective divisions, as well as online at the College's web site. The current draft of the *Waycross College Planning and Assessment Guide* is located in the offices of each member of the Planning Council (www.waycross.edu/planning_council/index.htm), the President, the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Director of Institutional Research.

Expected educational results and the methods for analyzing the results are defined on two levels. For the institution, educational outcomes are defined, along with methods of analysis, in each division's planning and assessment document. The student learning outcomes for Waycross College evolve from both the USG Common Student Learning Outcomes for the Core Curriculum

(www.usg.edu/academics/programs/core_curriculum/outcomes.phtml) and from Student Learning Outcomes established by some of the USG Academic Advisory Committees (www.usg.edu/academics/comm/). These outcomes are incorporated into each Division Chair's planning and assessment document as part of his/her division's goals. Educational objectives and assessment measures are defined for individual courses in course syllabi. In August of this year, a faculty workshop required faculty to examine student learning outcomes for every course taught; evaluation and revision, if necessary, of those outcomes are presently underway.

Routine and periodic course assessment occurs annually by students via the Student Class Evaluation Survey. Additionally, Division Chairs and/or the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs evaluate faculty performance on an annual basis. This evaluation involves assessment of pre-set goals and objectives from the previous year. It is a comprehensive process that involves classroom observation by each division chair and/or the dean in addition to the student evaluation of instruction through the Student Class Evaluation Survey. Faculty members are also required to maintain documentation demonstrating their progress toward their personal and professional goals and objectives. Results of these assessments are used to assist in course review and recommendation for promotion in rank, salary increase, or termination of employment.

The College has developed and implemented procedures to evaluate the outcomes resulting from its educational goals. Educational goals and outcomes are assessed through each Division Chair's annual assessment report (which is part of the planning and assessment document), student course evaluation (through the

Student Class Evaluation Survey), and in an annual report submitted to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs during the summer of each year. These annual reports highlight each division's accomplishments in achieving its goals and objectives. Additionally, the College has administered a variety of other student-driven surveys, including the Academic Advising Survey and the Graduate Survey. These survey instruments and corresponding data are located in the offices of the Director of Institutional Research and the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs.

The Office of Institutional Research compiles the data from the surveys listed above, and the results are distributed to Division Chairs and Department Heads, who generally share them with faculty and staff members of their units. When the results indicate a need for improvement, the units and/or the College formulate measures to be implemented to bring about the desired changes. Sometimes these suggested changes are incorporated into the units' future plan.

Examples of this process are found in the planning and assessment process of the academic divisions. The divisions identify both areas of concern and successful practices and also analyze ways to correct or maintain those areas to best serve the students. The divisions monitor (by surveys, test scores, retention and graduation rates, division meetings, and/or comments from faculty, staff, students, and community members) each change made to determine if improvement has resulted from its implementation. Detailed descriptions of the assessment process and data gained to support decisions concerning procedures currently in use as well as innovative ideas to improve past practices are included in assessment documents. In

addition to assessment by students at the course level, each Division Chair incorporates data from institutional surveys into the Planning and Assessment Documents, which are reviewed and revised, as needed, on an annual basis.

Program review is accomplished by periodic faculty review of current programs involving both terminal and transfer students. Evidence of this review is found in the recent addition of a Student Success course required for all beginning students, as well as recent revisions to the core requirements for the Teacher Education program of study.

Review of retention and graduation rates indicated the need for early intervention and led to the design (by a group of nine staff members, faculty members, and administrators) of the WAYC 1101: Steps to Student Success course that is required for all freshmen and any transfer students having earned less than twelve semester credit hours at the time of admission. The course is designed to assist students in transitioning into the college culture by exposing them to a variety of learning styles analyses, study skills techniques, time management and stress management strategies, degree planning exercises, and College policies and procedures discussions.

Review of course requirements for the Teacher Education core resulted in the revision of existing Education courses and development of specific Science and Mathematics courses to meet the needs of the Teacher Education students. Courses were developed by faculty, approved by the Faculty Senate, and added to the schedule of course offerings in Fall 2007.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Six Major Goals* (www.usg.edu/strategicplan/docs/strategic_goals2007.pdf), Student Learning Outcomes PowerPoint™ presented at Waycross College faculty workshop, USG Academic Advisory Committees web site (www.usg.edu/academics/comm/), *USG Common Student Learning Outcomes for the Core Curriculum* (www.usg.edu/academics/programs/core_curriculum/outcomes.phtml), *USG Strategic Plan* (www.usg.edu/strategicplan/docs/strategic_plan2007.pdf), Waycross College Planning and Assessment Reports (www.waycross.edu/planning_council/index.htm), and the *Waycross College Planning and Assessment Guide* (www.waycross.edu/planning_council/planning_guide/wc_planning_guide.pdf), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.7 on the accompanying CD.

8. The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, State licensing examination, and job placement rates.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Student achievement in relation to purpose with consideration of course completion is addressed through Learning Support exit rates and tracking data, grade distribution evaluations, retention rates, graduation rates, and transfer rates. The USG provides data to the College on an annual basis, reflecting the graduation

and retention rates of Waycross College students. The USG has implemented accountability measures for all thirty-five institutions making up the University System.

As it is not our primary mission to prepare students for immediate employment, we do not determine or monitor job placement rates of our graduates. Our mission is mainly to prepare students for transfer to baccalaureate institutions. Therefore, we do track our graduates for subsequent enrollment at other institutions. The graduates' and other students' (those who transferred before graduating) academic performances at the receiving institutions are monitored. An annual report showing Waycross College's graduates' subsequent enrollment rates, transfer rates of non-graduates, and their academic performances is produced by the Institutional Research office and disseminated to administrators, department heads, and division chairs.

The Learning Support program serves the needs of students who do not meet the standards for regular admission into the College and must therefore complete remedial coursework in English, Reading, and/or Mathematics. The USG provides annual feedback concerning placement into Learning Support courses, exit rates from Learning Support programs, and subsequent performance of Learning Support students in core curriculum courses (see www.usg.edu/research/students/lis/). Waycross College's Learning Support program is coordinated through the Division of the Arts; analysis of data provided by the USG is included in the annual report prepared by the Chair of the Division of the Arts.

Total student retention is assessed through reports generated on first-time full-time students each fall semester to determine returning students. Course completion and student achievement are addressed through grade distribution reports generated each semester. Each division's planning and assessment document includes goals to improve student outcomes. Additionally, the College has used the Graduate Survey and the Regents' Test to evaluate academic programs and general education.

The Regents' Test is a standardized test provided by the USG System Office (see www2.gsu.edu/%7Ewwwrtp/). It has been used to assess student learning outcomes in general education, specifically in the areas of writing (essay) and reading. The Regents' Test is mandatory; students cannot be graduated until they pass both sections of the Regents' Test. In the past, the USG System Office has provided statistical data to allow for comparative analysis among institutions, but that data has not been available since Spring 2007. Regents' Test results have shown Waycross College students consistently performing above average among the two-year colleges in the USG, for both first-time test takers and repeaters. Furthermore, the percentage passing for Waycross College has been consistently among the highest of the two-year institutions in the System. The Division of the Arts provides analysis of the results from the Regents' Test, including evidence of the use of results.

Documents supporting this commentary include the Division of the Arts' Regents' Test Reports, Division Planning and Assessment Reports, USG Learning Support Reports (www.usg.edu/research/students/lr/), USG Regents' Test web site

(www2.gsu.edu/%7Ewwwrtp/) and the *Waycross College Fact Book 2006-2007* (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbook06-07.pdf), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.8 on the accompanying CD.

9. The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded.

Compliance Non-Compliance

The principal focus of Waycross College is the education of its students, and all aspects of the educational program are clearly related to the purpose and goals of the institution. All curricula are directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of Waycross College, to the diplomas and degrees awarded, and to the financial and instructional resources of the institution. The Board of Regents' policies concerning additions, deletions, or changes to the College curriculum are located in Sections 1.07 and 2.04 of the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section1/1.07.phtml and www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.04/2.04.phtml).

Examination of 110 course offerings from Fall 2007 determined that all of them are directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the College as defined in its mission statement. All courses offered fit into the core curriculum and/or one or more areas of concentration. No course creates a particular or undue burden on the financial or instructional resources of the institution.

To preserve the integrity of academic programs and to assure transferability of coursework, the University System has established a common set of principles and framework for the core curriculum at each institution. That common framework establishes program length from which institutions may not deviate without specific approval of the Council on General Education. The Core Curriculum consists of six areas, designated A through F. They are: A - Essential Skills (English composition and mathematics); B - Institutional Options (courses addressing general education outcome's as chosen by the institution); C - Humanities/Fine Arts; D - Science, Mathematics, and Technology; E - Social Sciences; and F - Courses Related to the Program of Study. These areas comprise 60 semester credit hours of coursework.

Waycross College has a clearly defined process by which the curriculum is established, reviewed, and evaluated. This process includes review and/or approval by the faculty, the administration, and the Board of Regents. The Faculty Senate, which was organized in 2007, reviews and investigates any requests from faculty members concerning changes to the curriculum or inquiries into the current curriculum. The Senate then considers and votes on the motion to change the curriculum. A recommendation is made to the President's Council, who then approve the change, send it back to the Senate for further study, or reject the change. If a change to Core Curriculum Areas A through E is approved by the Senate and the President's Council, then it must also be approved by the Council on General Education of the Board of Regents' office before it can take effect (www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section1/1.07.phtml). Changes in Area F of the Core Curriculum do not require approval by the Council on General Education.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (1.07 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section1/1.07.phtml and 2.04 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.04/2.04.phtml) and the *Waycross College Faculty Handbook* (www.waycross.edu/faculty_files/policies_procedures_manual/), both of which are included in the folder labeled 3.9 on the accompanying CD.

10. The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Waycross College provides current and potential students information about the academic calendar, grading policies, and refund policies through the following venues:

- The academic calendar is posted on the Waycross College web site (www.waycross.edu/calendar.htm), in the *Waycross College Catalog* on pages 7 and 8 (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf), and in individual course syllabi (which are kept on file in division offices and are currently being developed for online access).
- General college grading policies are available on the Waycross College web site in the *Waycross College Student Handbook* on pages 9 and 10 (<http://www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/academicpolreinfo.pdf>) and in the

Waycross College Catalog on page 41

(<http://www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf>). Instructor-specific grading policies are included in course syllabi.

- Refund policies are printed in the *Waycross College Student Handbook* on page 8 (<http://www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/academicpolreinfo.pdf>) and in the *Waycross College Catalog* on page 30 (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf).

The *Waycross College Student Handbook* is made available to students who attend new student orientation sessions and to students who enroll in the Steps to Student Success course. The *Waycross College Catalog* is mailed to students requesting admission and general information and is available in hard copy at the College library and various offices throughout the campus. Both publications are also available online to current students and the general public via the College web site.

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Waycross College Catalog* (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf) and the *Waycross College Student Handbook* (<http://www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/academicpolreinfo.pdf>), both of which are included in the folder labeled 3.10 on the accompanying CD.

11. Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Program length, clock hours and/or credit hours, are appropriate for the degrees and credentials offered by Waycross College. The Board of Regents of the USG has established a uniform associate degree program length of sixty semester credit hours of general education and an area of concentration. Waycross College, like a number of other institutions in the USG, also requires additional semester credit hours of a Student Success course and physical education courses. Sixty semester credit hours of instruction for an Associate Degree is common throughout the American educational system.

The Board of Regents has also determined that one semester credit hour of instruction shall consist of 750 minutes of instruction, which is equivalent to fifty minutes of instruction per credit hour per fifteen-week semester. This practice is also consistent with general higher education practices in the United States. The Board of Regents publishes policies governing program length in both the *Academic Affairs Handbook* (Sections 2.01.01 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.01/2.01.01.phtml and 2.03.04 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.03/2.03.04.phtml) and the *Policy Manual* (Sections 304.01 and 304.02 www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/300.phtml).

Almost all Waycross College courses are three semester credit hours, while laboratory courses are generally four semester credit hours, although two-hour and one-hour courses exist, especially physical education courses. The administration assures that the requisite minutes of instruction will be met by ensuring the exact number of weekdays each term (e.g., fifteen Mondays, fifteen Tuesdays, etc.) and by

submitting academic calendars to the University System Office for approval. In addition, class periods may extend beyond the standard seventy-five minute, twice-a-week schedule for certain courses, such as the four semester credit hour precalculus class (MATH 1113), which may meet from 8:00 a.m. to 9:40 a.m. two days a week to insure that the full minutes of instruction are met during the term. The USG publishes academic calendar guidelines on their web site (www.usg.edu/academics/calendars).

Documents supporting this commentary include the *Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook* (Sections 2.01.01 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.01/2.01.01.phtml and 2.03.04 www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.03/2.03.04.phtml), *Board of Regents' Policy Manual* (Sections 304.01 and 304.02 www.usg.edu/regents/policymanual/300.phtml), and USG Academic Calendars (www.usg.edu/academics/calendars/usg-cals.phtml and www.usg.edu/academics/calendars/long-range.phtml), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.11 on the accompanying CD.

12. The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Waycross College publishes on its web site the following Student Grievance Policy (www.waycross.edu/academics/academic-freedom.htm - studentgp) :

A student with a faculty grievance of performance should seek to resolve that grievance at the lowest level possible and then pursue the grievance resolution in the following ascending order. A grievance [is] defined as a violation of student academic freedoms and/or personal freedoms.

- 1. Unless the grievance is of such an egregious nature that the student believes meeting with the instructor is unacceptable, the student should meet with the instructor about grievance resolution during the instructor's scheduled office hours.*
- 2. If no resolution is reached, the student should meet with the Division Chairperson to mediate a discussion between the instructor and the student.*
- 3. If no resolution is reached, the student should meet with the Division Chairperson and Vice President & Dean of Academic Affairs and the instructor to discuss resolution options.*
- 4. If no resolution is reached, the student should petition the Office of the Vice President & Dean of Academic Affairs who shall hear the case and make its recommendation.*
- 5. If all else fails, the student should appeal in writing to the College President for terminal resolution.*

This policy is also disseminated in the Student Success course, in syllabi, and face-to-face as necessary.

A student wishing to dispute a grade may appeal the course grade by contacting the instructor; if no satisfaction is obtained, the student may appeal in writing to the Division Chairperson. If the student is still dissatisfied, s/he may appeal to the Academic Policies Committee, who will make a recommendation for resolution to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs. This procedure is disseminated via the *Waycross College Student Handbook* (pp. 10-11, www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/academicpolreinfo.pdf).

The *Waycross College Student Handbook* also outlines procedures for addressing both informal and formal student complaints (www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/std_complaint_pro_inf.htm and www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/std_complaint_pro_form.htm). These procedures avail students the objective counseling of the College's Alternative Dispute Resolution liaison.

The *Waycross College Catalog* details procedures governing student academic appeals on page 39 (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf). Students may appeal their academic status in writing to the College President; such appeals are subsequently referred to the institution's Academic Policies Committee for a recommendation. Students may also appeal the loss of financial aid in writing to the Financial Aid Committee, as detailed on page 32 of the Catalog (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf).

All records of students' grievances, complaints, and appeals are kept confidential. Confidential documentation of resolution includes Presidential

correspondence to students, procedural reports and findings, and minutes of committee meetings.

Documents supporting this commentary include the Student Grievance Policy on the College's web site (www.waycross.edu/academics/academic-freedom.htm - [studentgp](#)), the *Waycross College Catalog* (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf), and the *Waycross College Student Handbook* (www.waycross.edu/stlife/handbook/index.htm), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.12 on the accompanying CD.

13. Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Recruiting materials and presentations accurately represent the College's practices and policies. The Director of Admissions and Records is responsible for recruiting activities. These consist primarily of visits to local high schools and visits made to the College by eighth-grade students as part of orientation programs or classes conducted at some of the middle schools.

Waycross College publishes a variety of brochures, all of which are available at the Student Services office and at other locations on campus. Among their subjects are: General Information; Financial Aid Information; Adults Start College; Associate of Applied Science Programs with Okefenokee Technical College; Criminal Justice;

Nursing Programs; Teacher Education Programs; and Scholarships and Grants. The information contained in the brochures is consistent with information found in other published documents (such as the College catalog) and accurately portrays the institution.

Information contained in our recruiting materials is usually taken directly from institutional or other University System sources. It is always designed to accurately reflect current policies, standards, and offerings.

Documents supporting this commentary include the GACollege411.org web site, the Prospective Students page on the Waycross College web site (www.waycross.edu/prospective_students.htm), and the *Waycross College Catalog* (www.waycross.edu/catalogs/2006-2008/catalog06-08.pdf), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.13 on the accompanying CD.

14. The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the *1998 Higher Education Amendments*. The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Waycross College provides an effective program of financial aid consistent with its purpose and reflecting the needs of its students. The College is committed to the philosophy that no student should be denied college education because of lack of financial resources. College students are aided in meeting college costs through

various forms of financial aid, such as Federal Pell Grants and Georgia HOPE Scholarships/Grants. Services provided by the Financial Aid Office contribute to the educational goals of the College and to the social and intellectual development of students who would not otherwise attend.

Most aid is granted based on financial need rather than scholastic ability. The Financial Aid Office utilizes the Free Application of Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to analyze applicant data and determine eligibility for financial aid. All Waycross College students are encouraged to apply for financial aid via the online application process through the Waycross College web site (www.waycross.edu/finaid/ApyFinAid.htm). The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for Federal Student Aid offered at the College.

Every year non-governmental scholarships are awarded to students based on need, academic achievement, and field of study by the Waycross College Foundation. There were 101 Foundation scholarship recipients in 2006-07, and a total amount of \$56,450 was disbursed (*Fact Book 2006-2007*, p. 50). The Waycross College Foundation also provides a limited number of grants based on the special circumstances of students.

The Financial Aid Office is under the direction of the Director of Financial Aid. Two additional full-time staff members, an Assistant Director of Financial Aid and a Financial Aid Assistant, are employed.

Waycross College uses web-based financial aid counseling that students can review at their convenience. Students are required to go through the entrance loan counseling online program before processing initial loan applications. Students are

also required to complete an online exit loan counseling program after graduation or leaving college. Computers with Internet access where students can access this information are available in the Student Services offices, the Waycross College Library, and two computer labs.

At the end of each year, the Financial Aid office balances with the US Department of Education. We have no significant unpaid monies due back to the federal department, nor have any complaints been filed nor litigation been pursued against us to our knowledge. The student loan default rate has decreased from 9.3% in 2004 to 7.8% in 2006, as indicated in our default rate history report from the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Auditors from the State of Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts annually audit financial aid reports and procedures. The Financial Aid office is required to provide the auditors with documentation showing reconciliation with all State programs and with our *Financial Aid Policy and Procedure Manual*, which is available in the Financial Aid Office. HOPE audits are conducted every three years. The United States Department of Education also conducts periodic compliance reviews. All audits, which are available from the Vice President for Business Affairs, show that Waycross College is in compliance both with financial regulations of the Georgia Student Finance Commission and with program responsibilities stated under Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments.

Documents supporting this commentary include the College's NSLDS default rate history report, the Financial Aid page of the College's web site (www.waycross.edu/finaid/index.htm), and the *Waycross College Fact Book 2006-*

2007 (www.waycross.edu/oir/factbook06-07.pdf), all of which are included in the folder labeled 3.14 on the accompanying CD.