

Georgia Southern and Armstrong Consolidation Q&A

Why consolidate the two institutions?

We have carefully assessed the benefits of consolidating Georgia Southern University and Armstrong State University. Consolidating Armstrong and Georgia Southern will create one institution with expanded regional presence, tailored degree programs for the coastal region and positioned to significantly enhance the USG's economic impact for the area.

Creating the new Georgia Southern University will combine the best of both institutions, which are just an hour apart and ultimately serve many of the same students. Georgia Southern is already the number-one transfer choice for Armstrong students, and both institutions are among top destinations for students seeking public higher education from Bryan, Chatham, Effingham and Liberty counties.

Why these institutions now?

We have said all along we will be considering more consolidations. We must constantly assess ourselves to ensure we have a 21st century structure that provides the most effective system of institutions offering the proper range of degrees, services and opportunities for students and faculty.

Who will be the president of the consolidated institution?

Georgia Southern President Jaimie Hebert is expected to lead the new consolidated institution.

How can I know what is going on? How do I get answers to my questions?

Both institutions' presidents will be involved in the consolidation. A website for the consolidation will be set up to keep campuses and the community informed. Questions can be submitted through the consolidation process, and this Q&A will be updated accordingly.

The consolidation committee will have a chair, who will serve as the lead contact point for the committee. John Fuchko, Vice Chancellor of Organizational Effectiveness, will serve as the point of contact in the USG office.

Will the Armstrong campus be renamed?

The Armstrong campus will be renamed to reflect its status as part of the new Georgia Southern University; however, the Armstrong name will continue to be honored and recognized in the new Georgia Southern.

How much money will be saved?

Reducing administrative costs and functions is a goal of consolidating institutions, but it will not be a quick process. It is anticipated it will take at least 18 months to implement the consolidation of the individual institutions and to properly calculate savings attained by the action. Savings will then be reinvested for academic and instructional needs for students.

Will there be layoffs?

A decrease in the number of positions will likely occur, but until details are worked out it is not possible to know how many or which ones. Certain administrative functions will be combined, resulting in the need for fewer positions over time.

When will the consolidation go into effect?

Pending approval by the Board, we will immediately begin the consolidation review and implementation process. We will provide updates along the way. The consolidation is expected to go into effect January 2018.

How will this be done?

The process will be transparent and will heavily involve each campus but with final approval of all decisions residing with the Board. An institutional implementation committee will be formed, which will include representatives of faculty, staff and students. It is expected the majority of decisions will be made at the institutional level subject to final approval by the Board. University System office staff will provide overall leadership to the implementation effort, but the campus committee will be identifying and recommending the resolutions for key issues. The committee will be formed and begin work immediately.

How will the campuses and community be able to provide input?

We plan to hold campus and community listening sessions to seek and hear input on the ways we can best design the new institution to serve students and the region and to build on what is best in both institutions.

Students***How will students have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?***

There will be student representation on the institutional consolidation committee.

When will this change go into effect?

The fall semester of 2018 is the targeted date for the consolidation to go into effect for students, but this could change depending on the needs of the institution.

How will this affect student activities?

The consolidation implementation committee will review the level and type of student activities now available to students at both institutions and develop an approach which provides the best mix of student activities on all campuses.

What will my diploma say?

The consolidation implementation committee will address these and other issues in a way that meets the needs of students. In some cases, students already enrolled may have choices as to the institutional name on their diploma.

How will my tuition and fees change?

The Board sets tuition and fees and will continue to do so for the newly consolidated institution. The implementation team may recommend a change from the current structure to the Board once the consolidation has been implemented.

Will my degree requirements change?

Every effort will be made to honor the current degree requirements for existing students. Institutions will be given flexibility to matriculate students already enrolled in specific academic programs.

Will I get the courses I need to complete my degree?

Yes, this will be required by the Board and is a major responsibility for the consolidated institution.

Will my adviser change?

It is possible that one's academic adviser will change given the need to deploy faculty in the most effective and efficient manner required at each institution.

Will some academic programs be discontinued?

There will be a comprehensive review of all academic programs offered by both institutions in order to develop the optimum program array for the consolidated institution. As a result, the possibility exists that academic programs may be continued, modified or discontinued. At the same time, current programs may be expanded and new programs may be considered.

Faculty

How will faculty have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?

There will be faculty representation on the consolidation implementation committee, which will be established to guide the consolidation process. Existing faculty governance processes on both of the consolidated institutions may also be used to provide faculty voice in the consolidation process. Final decisions on policy matters still reside with the Board of Regents.

How will this affect individuals who are up for promotion and tenure during the consolidation timeline?

It won't. The Provost will work with Deans, Department Chairs and other campus leaders to create a comprehensive list of those eligible for promotion and tenure during the period of consolidation. Based upon the final list, faculty will be informed of timelines for these actions.

Will the expectations/guidelines for promotion and tenure change?

Because faculty promotion expectations are grounded in institutional mission, it is possible that tenure and promotion guidelines may change. The Provost (in conjunction with the Deans, Department Chairs, faculty leaders and other institutional staff) will work in conjunction with the Board of Regents to determine the new guidelines appropriate to the mission of the consolidated institution and the appropriate procedures to implement the new performance expectations. Such changes will not go into effect right away.

How will this affect campus leadership and administration?

The President will build a new leadership team. The expectation is that there will be high-level involvement of faculty and staff in the building of new governance and communication structures.

Where and when will I be teaching?

This will be determined by the appropriate academic leadership at the institution.

Staff

How will Staff have a voice in the implementation of the consolidation?

Staff will be represented on the consolidation implementation committee.

Will all administrative staff retain their positions?

Over time there will likely be a reduction in staff positions, but it is not possible to know which ones at this time. The implementation committee working with the President will determine the new administrative structure.

Will I have to relocate?

Decisions affecting individuals will take place as part of the implementation process. It is possible that relocations could occur.

Facilities

Will buildings or facilities be shut down as a result of the consolidation?

The President of the institution will make these decisions locally as we strive for efficiency and effectiveness at all USG institutions.

How/when will all the signs be replaced (on-campus as well as directional from major roads)?

The implementation/transition team will coordinate these types of logistics and timelines within overarching target dates that will be established.