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Substantive Change Prospectus Section 1. Abstract- Final Narrative

Georgia Southern University

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1. ABSTRACT (limit to one page or less)

Describe the proposed change, the location, the projected date of implementation and factors affecting the final date, and the organizational structure of the current institution. The date of implementation listed in the prospectus shall be the official effective date of change approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. This date should take into consideration the proposed date of approval by the Commission's Board, the date of approval by the institution's governing board, and U.S. Department of Education reporting timelines affecting Title IV funding. The date may not exceed 30 days beyond approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

Acting within its constitutional authority as the governing board, the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG) voted January 11, 2017 to pursue consolidation of Georgia Southern University (GaSou) and Armstrong State University (Armstrong). Further, the board gave the Chancellor and USG staff authorization on all measures needed to achieve this consolidation pending SACSCOC approval and final determination by the BOR. Since 2012, this is the fifth round of institutional consolidations in the USG, with seven institutional pairings being consolidated previously, and two more scheduled to be consolidated in 2018.

As part of that process, the USG, Georgia Southern University, and Armstrong State University now seek approval for the proposed consolidation of the two institutions by the SACSCOC's Board of Trustees at its December 2017 meeting. Pending SACSCOC approval, the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG) are expected to vote in late December 2017 to finalize the Georgia Southern-Armstrong consolidation, effective January 1, 2018.

The name of the newly consolidated institution will be Georgia Southern University. The consolidated GaSou will be led by BOR-appointed President Jaimie L. Hebert. This proposed consolidation will combine two public, SACSCOC-accredited institutions, GaSou, a Level VI institution, and Armstrong, a Level V institution. The consolidated GaSou will continue to function as a Level VI institution that reflects the programmatic offerings of the combined institutions, including associate's, bachelor's, master's, specialist's, and doctoral degrees. Because this is a proposed consolidation of two USG institutions currently controlled by the same governing board, no changes in governing board membership, structures, or policies are anticipated.

The main campuses of GaSou and Armstrong are approximately 59 miles apart. The main campus address for the consolidated institution will be Georgia Southern University, 1332 Southern Drive, Statesboro, GA, 30460. The current Armstrong Campus in Savannah and its off-campus instructional site, the Liberty Center in Hinesville, will both function as off-campus instructional sites for the new GaSou, along with GaSou's Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah. The Armstrong Campus will remain a full-service operation, offering consolidated versions of its current curriculum and support services. The Liberty Campus will offer all associate's degrees.

The primary factor for proposing an effective consolidation date in January 2018, as opposed to July 2018, is to avoid disruptive delays that could occur in the allocation of federal financial aid to students of the newly consolidated institution, effective in Fall Semester 2018. Previous experience with consolidations by the USG suggests that such delays are less likely if the United States Department of Education (USDOE) and the consolidated institution have more time between January and July to process the paperwork required to shift accounts and allocate FY 2018-2019 financial aid funds to the new institution for distribution to students in a timely

manner. All previous USG consolidations have followed this timetable successfully.

In the new Georgia Southern University, the President will have twelve direct reports, including the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs, the VP for Finance and Operations, the VP for Enrollment Management, the VP for Student Affairs, the VP for University Advancement and External Affairs, and the Vice President for Armstrong and Liberty Campus Operations, as well as the Athletic Director, Chief Information Officer, Chief Auditor, Executive Counsel, Chief of Staff, and the Executive Associate to the President. The current college structures of GaSou and Armstrong's 12 colleges will be reconfigured to include nine colleges, which will be more manageable across the three campuses. Those colleges and their locations in the new GaSou will include:

- Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Computing - Statesboro Campus
- College of Education– Armstrong Campus
- Don and Cindy Waters College of Health Professions– Armstrong Campus
- Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health– Armstrong Campus
- College of Science and Mathematics- Statesboro Campus
- College of Business- Statesboro Campus
- College of Arts and Humanities – Statesboro Campus
- College of Behavioral and Social Sciences- Statesboro Campus
- Jack N. Averitt College of Graduate Studies- Statesboro Campus

The greatest efficiencies and cost savings resulting from consolidation are expected to come from reductions in redundant administrative officers and administrative support services. No substantive reductions are expected in instructional delivery, academic support, or student support services. Curricular overlap of GaSou and Armstrong degree programs is extensive and will require a substantial number of degree program consolidations, but notable cutbacks in consolidated program delivery are not expected. Armstrong brings substantial strengths in health professions programs to its consolidation with GaSou.

Under the BOR's consolidation initiative, the governing board and the chancellor have instructed consolidating institutions to retain and redirect their freed resources from administrative consolidations to the strengthening and expansion of instruction in response to state needs, the advancement of student success initiatives, and the pursuit of other USG strategic imperatives.

Constituent participation in the planning and implementation of the consolidation is wide-ranging and highly representative of all who are affected. The Chancellor appointed Dr. Jaimie Hebert, President of Georgia Southern University, as lead President for this consolidation. Dr. Hebert, and Dr. Linda Bleicken, President of Armstrong State University, served as co-chairs of the Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC), until Dr. Bleicken's retirement June 30, 2017. From July 01, 2017 forward, Dr. Hebert was joined by Armstrong's Interim President, Dr. Jennifer Frum, as co-chair. The CIC includes constituent representatives from both institutions to work through major coordination and implementation issues of consolidation. The CIC created 93 Operational Working Groups (OWG's) with co-chairs and representatives from both institutions in all functional areas of institutional operation to facilitate a successful and smooth transition to institutional consolidation of educational programs, support services, and administrative operations. Under the direction of John Fuchko, Vice Chancellor for Organizational Effectiveness, a USG Consolidation Working Group, composed of key system-level administrators from all functional working areas of the University System Office (USO), meet weekly to review consolidation issues and progress from the System perspective. Lessons

learned from the previous seven institutional consolidations in the USG are applied at the system and institutional levels.

Many individuals have worked diligently to advance this institutional consolidation since January 2017. They are confident that their accomplishments to date comprise a sound foundation for readiness to implement the proposed institutional consolidation of GaSou and Armstrong in January 2018 and respectfully request approval to proceed.