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Georgia Southern University elevates Honors Program into new Honors College

December 4, 2020



Georgia Southern University now encompasses 10 academic colleges with the transition of the University Honors Program to the Honors College. The move provides a growing community of honors students with enhanced experiential learning opportunities including undergraduate research, creative scholarship and the honors thesis, focusing on professional development, interdisciplinary education and global experiences.

“The elevation of the Honors Program into the Honors College is a reflection of the quality of our student body and the rigor of opportunities we provide,” said Steven Engel, Ph.D., dean of the Honors College. “This new distinction will make Georgia Southern an even greater destination for high-performing students and raise the overall academic reputation of the institution.”

“It is a natural progression of success when a university elevates their Honors Program to a College—recognizing and expanding the opportunities for our highest-achieving students,” said Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero. “With three Goldwater Scholars in the last few years and a long list of other national and international accolades for our students, we already have an impressive track record of educating bright and motivated students. An Honors College will allow us to build on this success and focus even more on creating a distinctive and challenging undergraduate experience for some of the nation’s best students.”

The University System of Georgia officially approved the program’s transition to the Honors College late last month.

Open to students in any major, the Honors College provides access to smaller classes and enriching seminars. The Honors College also prioritizes members of the military with a goal of becoming the most military-friendly honors college in the nation.

Inclusive excellence continues to be an important pillar of the honors experience at Georgia Southern. Students gain intercultural competence with curricular and extracurricular experiences that contribute to a

welcoming atmosphere. With 33% of students from minority racial and ethnic groups, the honors student population reflects the many forms of diversity within the University's broader student body.



Honors student Katie McIntosh

"I believe the transition will add more prestige to our degrees, increase the level of rigor and academic competition among peers, and enhance our education as a whole," said Katie McIntosh, a senior majoring in mechanical engineering on the Statesboro campus.

"I'm super excited about the program's transition to a college," said Zoe Lincoln, a junior majoring in health sciences on the Armstrong campus. "I think that becoming an Honors College will give students more opportunities in terms of funding and networking with professionals in their respective fields."

Honors education began at Georgia Southern in 1982, when the Bell Honors Program was founded. The University Honors Program was established on the Armstrong campus in 1996 and on the

Statesboro campus in 1998. Today, the Honors College enrolls more than 800 students across both campuses, representing all University colleges and academic disciplines.

"Building on decades of success, this change further demonstrates Georgia Southern's commitment to excellence in undergraduate education," said Carl Reiber, Ph.D., provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "The new Honors College will provide a rigorous curriculum for students that fosters intellectual and professional development, preparing them for top-tier graduate schools and meaningful careers."

Since the inception of the Bell Honors Program, approximately 1,650 students have graduated from the University's Honors programs. Thirty percent of graduates last year completed their degrees in less than four years.

The deadline for incoming freshmen to apply is Feb. 1, 2021. For more information, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/honors. Current Georgia Southern students are encouraged to apply.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers approximately 140 different degree programs serving almost 27,000 students through 10 colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

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Honors student Zoe Lincoln