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Georgia Southern College of Education master's degrees ranked top 25 in nation

APRIL 12, 2018

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Georgia Southern University's online special education and educational leadership degrees in the College of Education (COE) have been recognized in rankings released by [SR Education Group](#), which has published national rankings of online colleges since 2009 and awarded more than \$200,000 in scholarships since 2010, for academic strength and affordability.

The COE programs were ranked No. 7 in the 2018 Best Online Schools Offering a Master's in Educational Leadership list and No. 13 in the 2018 Best Online Schools Offering a Master's in Special Education list.

These rankings include the nation's top 25 higher education institutions offering the best balance of cost and academic strength for a master's degree in each content area. Methodology used for this ranking includes degree-specific tuition rates that are researched by SR Education Group, as well as data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

The Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Educational Leadership offered by Georgia Southern prepares candidates for Tier I initial leadership positions that include pre-K through 12, school-level assistant principal or equivalent in accordance with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). The 36-hour, fully online degree program includes 250 hours of clinical practice that are job-embedded and performance-based throughout the program.

"Our newly redesigned master's in educational leadership is a great opportunity for those looking to transition into leadership roles within their school systems," said Juli Sergi McBryer, Ed.D., coordinator for the M.Ed. Education Leadership program. "Our program meets the newly announced revisions to the GaPSC standards and assists candidates in growing professionally through collaboration with our expert faculty and relevant, applicable curriculum."

The educational leadership master's degree was also ranked No. 25 in the 2018 Most Affordable Online Colleges for a Master's in Educational Leadership list.

In the area of special education, the University's Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), which provides initial certification for special education teachers grades pre-K-12, and M.Ed., which provides advanced preparation for special education teachers, both garnered No. 13 rankings.

"Special education teachers are in high demand right now not only in the state of Georgia but in the nation," said Shelley Woodward, M.Ed., MAT Special Education program coordinator. "Both our MAT and M.Ed. degree programs in special education offer an online option to allow current teachers to advance their skill sets in the classroom or for those wanting to enter the special education classroom to earn certification."

Special education programs at Georgia Southern are based on the concept of developmentally appropriate practices and the value of diverse, intensive field experiences with varied populations. All programs are approved by the

GaPSC.

For more information on graduate programs at Georgia Southern, visit [COE.GeorgiaSouthern.edu/degrees](https://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/degrees).

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 27,000 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Savannah, Statesboro, 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](https://georgiasouthern.edu).

Georgia Southern University announces Spring 2018 Commencement speakers

APRIL 12, 2018

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Three influential Georgians will help Georgia Southern University celebrate the academic accomplishments of graduating students at the 2018 Spring Commencement ceremonies.

Georgia Attorney General to speak to Statesboro Campus graduate students



Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr will speak at the ceremony for graduate students on Friday, May 4, at 1 p.m. in Hanner Fieldhouse, 590 Herty Drive in Statesboro. Carr is Georgia's 54th attorney general. As the state's chief legal officer, he is tasked with protecting and defending the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and the interests of the people of the State of Georgia.

Appointed by Gov. Nathan Deal to fill the unexpired term of the former attorney general, Carr's work to end human trafficking, combat opioid abuse and protect older and at-risk Georgians has already led to results. Soon after he began his term in November 2016, Carr was appointed to the National Association of Attorneys General's Human Trafficking and Substance Abuse Committees. Carr realizes that these are "all-in" issues, and is dedicated to working with all who are willing to come to the table to find solutions. In Georgia, he created a statewide network for stakeholders to share ideas and strengthen our state's response to the opioid crisis. The Statewide Opioid Task Force now includes more than 250 public, private and nonprofit entities that are working together to close gaps and save lives in this fight.

In 2017, Carr was appointed to Gov. Deal's Older Adults Cabinet and the Executive Committee for the National Association of Attorney General Committee on Elder Abuse. Currently, Carr is a member of Georgia's Judicial Nominating Commission, the body charged with reviewing and recommending judicial appointments, as well as the board of advisors for the Atlanta Lawyers Chapter of the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies.

Previously, Carr served as Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), the agency responsible for creating jobs and investment in the state. Prior to joining GDEcD, Carr was chief of staff for U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson for six years. He began his career with Georgia Pacific, practiced law with Alston & Bird LLP in Atlanta and later was the vice president and general counsel for the Georgia Public Policy Foundation.

Carr is a graduate of both the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business and Lumpkin School of Law. Carr and his wife, Joan Kirchner Carr, have two daughters.

Alumnus to address graduate and undergraduate students from the Armstrong and Liberty campuses

Attorney W. Ray Persons will be the keynote speaker at the combined ceremony for graduate students and undergraduates on Friday, May 4, at 6 p.m. at the Savannah Civic Center, 301 W. Oglethorpe Avenue. Persons is a



senior litigation partner at King & Spalding, an international law firm with more than 1,000 lawyers.

In his law practice, Persons focuses on product liability, mass torts and complex litigation. He regularly appears before the state and federal courts throughout the country and has served as lead counsel in more than 80 jury trials, 90 percent of which went to verdict. He is a past president of the Atlanta Bar Association, and past chair of the Evidence Study Committee for the State Bar of Georgia. He was selected by his peers as one of the “Top 10 Super Lawyers in Georgia” for eight consecutive years.

Persons is a fellow in the 600-member International Society of Barristers; the American College of Trial Lawyers and the Litigation Counsel of America, a national honor society of 600 trial lawyers. Persons received his undergraduate degree from Armstrong State College and his law degree from The Ohio State University. He is a recipient of the State Bar of Georgia Tradition of Excellence Award and the

Distinguished Alumnus Award from Armstrong State University. He is married to Wendy-Joy Persons and they are the parents of two adult children.

Alumna and CEO to address Statesboro Campus graduating seniors



Hala Modellmog, a business and civic leader, will address undergraduates as they receive their degrees on Saturday, May 5 at 9 a.m. at Allen E. Paulson Stadium located at 207 Lanier Drive. Modellmog, who attended Georgia Southern University, is the president and CEO of the Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC). She is the first female leader in the Chamber’s nearly 160-year history. As the Chamber’s leader, she works on behalf of FORTUNE 500 companies and smaller companies in Atlanta, the country’s ninth largest metro region. In this role, she recruits companies to the region and works closely with venture firms, technology companies and universities to secure growth for metro Atlanta’s target sectors, including financial technology, cybersecurity, health information technology and digital media and entertainment. She also launched ChooseATL, a first-of-its-kind marketing movement designed to attract next-generation talent to the region.

Prior to joining MAC, Modellmog was president of Arby’s Restaurant Group, president and CEO of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and the first woman to lead an international restaurant company as president of Church’s Chicken. Her current

nonprofit board memberships include Georgia Public Broadcasting, the Woodruff Arts Center, the Alliance Theatre and Georgia Tech’s Scheller College of Business. She also serves as a corporate director for two NYSE companies – FLEETCOR Technologies and Lamb Weston.

She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Georgia Southern and a Master of Arts in journalism and mass communications from the University of Georgia. Georgia Southern awarded Modellmog an Honorary Doctorate of Letters. Hala resides in Atlanta with her husband, Steve. They have two adult children.

Commencement ceremonies will be available via livestream