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Georgia Southern's public impact research focus continues to flourish

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THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE ALGAE — Georgia Southern biology professors Anthony Siccardi, Ph.D., and John Carroll, Ph.D., are researching all the good ways that algae, an oft-maligned substance, can potentially be used to solve some of our more pressing environmental problems. They are serving as co-principal investigators on a project with the Sandia National Laboratory, under contract with the U.S. Department of Energy, to find out how to use algae grown on algal turf scrubbers to create biomass that is usable for biofuel.

Research activities and expenditures at Georgia Southern continue to grow, again validating the University's classification as a "high research activity" institution, according to two national organizations.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education has again classified Georgia Southern as an "R2" institution, which means it is a doctorate-granting university with "high research activity." Carnegie lists only 139 universities in the country as having achieved this R2 designation.

“We should all take pride in this classification,” said Carl Reiber, Ph.D., Georgia Southern’s provost and vice president for academic affairs. “It shows that we are a major public impact research institution and that we are competitive on a national and international level. Our competitiveness is being noted by Carnegie, the USG, and other institutions. It is also being recognized by current and future students, alumni, and donors.”

Starting in 1970, the Carnegie Commission developed a classification of colleges and universities to support its program of research and policy analysis. Carnegie Classification is regarded as the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity. Carnegie has designated 141 institutions as Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity, or R1.

Part of the reasoning behind Georgia Southern’s R2 designation is research expenditures. For the fiscal year 2021, Georgia Southern reported \$37.2 million in research expenditures to the National Science Foundation’s Higher Education Research and Development Survey, the primary source of information on research and development expenditures at U.S. colleges and universities. With a new vice provost for research and a new methodology for identifying research expenditures, the \$37.2 million provides a new baseline for the university to benchmark progress.

“I’m confident that our research activities will continue to grow,” said Chris Curtis, Ph.D., Georgia Southern’s vice provost for research. “We have gained some significant momentum over the past few years. Our focus on public impact research has allowed us to better leverage our strengths and resources to support our outstanding faculty researchers.”

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