



# ACADEMIC



# TASK FORCE REPORT SUMMARY



# Preamble

Georgia College combines the strength of a public liberal arts education with robust programs to meet the needs of the state and region, however there is mounting evidence to support a rethinking of the relationship between a non-specialized, liberal arts education and workforce development in the 21st century. The skills employers seek--the ability to think critically about problems, to work in diverse teams, to face ambiguity and uncertainty with boldness, and to communicate effectively--are cultivated through the broad knowledge base and interdisciplinary engagement inherent in a liberal arts education. The liberal arts do not complement a workforce-driven education--they embody it. To enhance our ability to bring this liberal arts skill set to current and future workers, we have imagined the following innovative ideas for the contemporary liberal arts.



# Big Ideas

01

Markets  
Expand to  
Adult Learners

02

Graduate  
Programs  
Expand

03

*Grow with GC  
or Georgia College:  
Learning for Life*

04

Institute  
of Academic  
Innovation and Design

05

Core  
Themed/Clustered/  
Problem-Based

06

Calendar  
Flexible

07

Course-Delivery  
Tailored  
Options



# Big Ideas (continued)

08

School  
of Allied  
Health

09

Writing  
in the Disciplines and  
Across the Curriculum

10

Design-Your-Own  
*Major*

11

Degree  
Partnerships  
with Professional Schools

12

Focus  
on Our Institutional  
Brand

13

Exploratory  
Major

14

Degrees  
Accelerated



# 1. Markets: Expand to Adult Learners



Create an office of  
Nontraditional Student Services

- Focused mentoring and advising
- Course credit for prior learning and competencies
- Personal pathways to degree completion
- Financial aid assistance
- Enhanced career services
- Professional development
- Leadership preparation

# 1. Markets: Expand to Adult Learners (continued)



- Explore accelerated adult degree completion programs
- Start a student organization or affinity group for nontraditional students
- Participate in Employer Tuition Reimbursement / Educational Assistance Learning Marketplace
- Expand opportunities for delivery options and restructured semesters

## 2. Expand Graduate Programs

Provost Spirou convened a Graduate Education Task Force to address the ways in which the university could expand relevant graduate programming to meet the needs of the state and address the decline in graduate student enrollment over the last two years. The task force's report was completed in August 2022 and included the following recommendations.

### 01 Review

Existing programs with capacity and make changes to maximize potential

### 02 Implement

New online graduate programs/certificates

### 03 Explore

Existing human resources and structure to determine dedicated oversight and expertise in the areas of student recruitment, academic/program support, and student support



### 3. *Grow with GC*

or *Georgia College: Learning for Life*

- Lifelong learning alignment
  - Vertical integration of our educational offerings
- The Continuum
  - Pre-college: target high-achieving middle and high school students
  - Accelerated: **Double Bobcat**
  - Post-college: target alums
  - Enrichment: target alums
- Our academically-selective lane



## 4. Institute of Academic Innovation and Design

### 01 Encourage

Cross-college cooperation among students and faculty , e.g., developing multi-disciplinary thematic course offerings

### 02 Develop

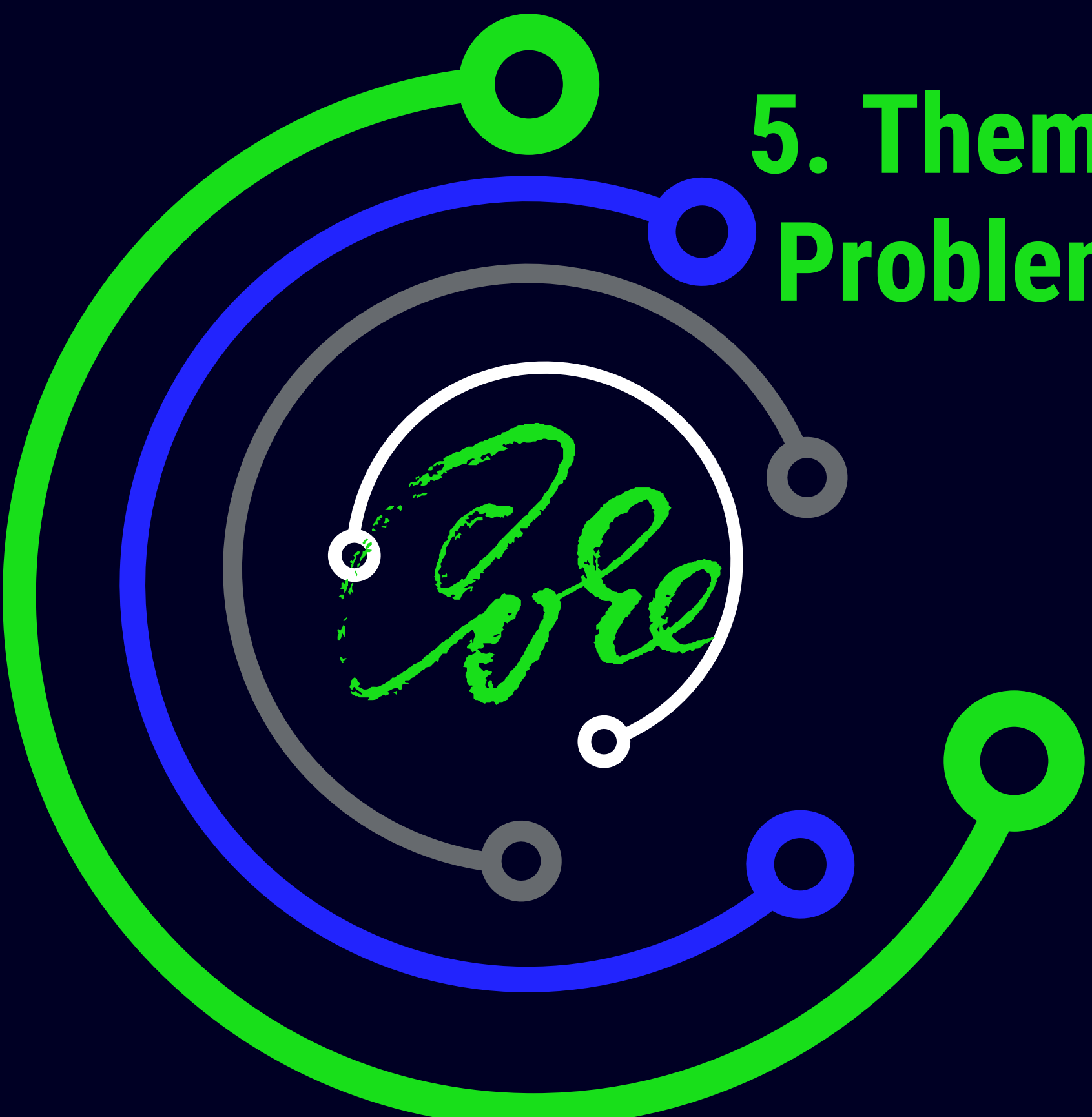
New courses, micro-credentials, badges, etc.



### 03 Host

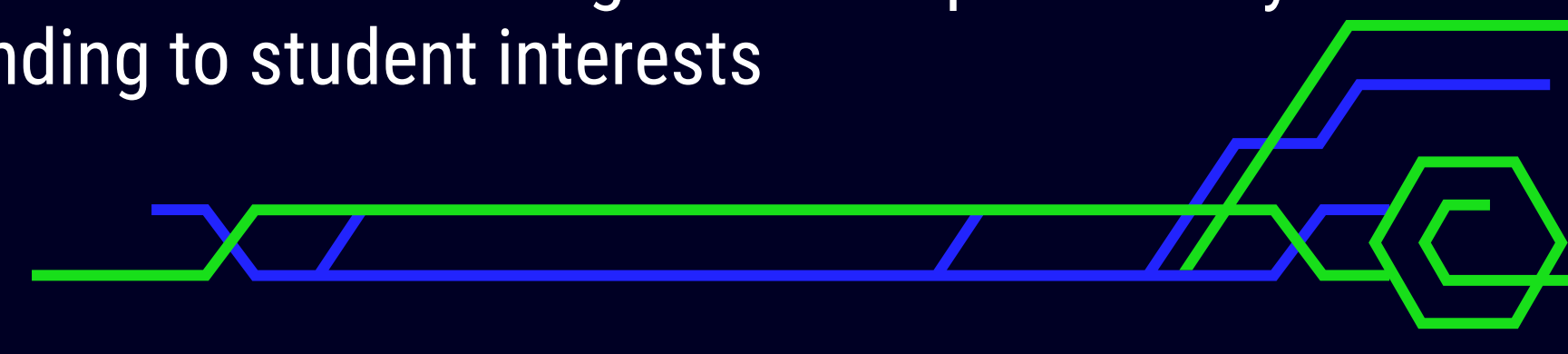
Conferences once a semester with workshops, seminars, panels etc.

- Goal to develop high quality learning content delivered in short intense bursts
- Embodies the long-term institutional commitment to innovation at GC



## 5. Themed/Clustered/ Problem-Based Core

### Benefits

- No impact on current USG Core structure (Areas)
  - Maintains transferability across USG institutions
  - Encourages interdisciplinarity (liberal arts mission)
  - Provides faculty with an opportunity to discuss/collaborate
  - Strengthens the academic preparation of students (e.g., Environmental Science major and Sustainability core)
  - Makes for a more meaningful core experience by responding to student interests
- 

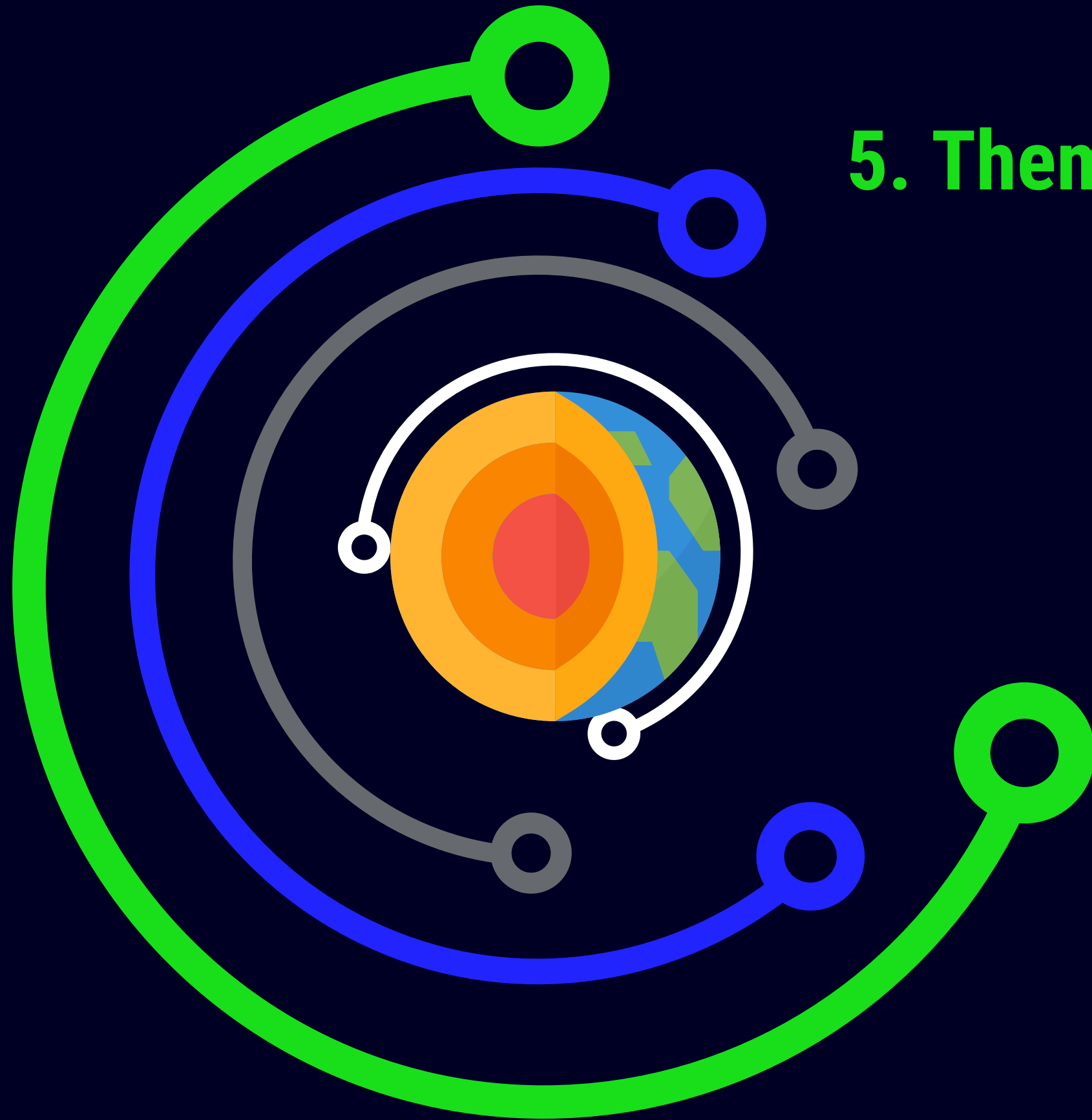
## 5. Themed/Clustered/Problem-Based Core

### Action Items

- Identify 3-4 courses that relate/connect to a broader academic theme
- Create 3 to 4 clusters for Fall 2023
- Name program and promote recruitment and academic distinctiveness

### Possible Themes

- Economic Development
- Sustainability
- Globalization
- Democracy
- Public Health
- Poverty
- Homelessness



## 6. Flexible Calendar

Our current calendar does not best support our liberal arts offerings. Options for a Flexible Calendar are listed below.

### 01 8-week

Two eight-week sessions within each existing sixteen-week fall and spring semester would facilitate

- accelerated courses for reduced time to degree completion
- half courses that could be combined in interdisciplinary curricular clusters cohering around specific problems, projects, or themes

### 02 3-year

Accelerated degree completion pathways



### 03 Other ideas

- A reimagined and reinvigorated on-campus Maymester
- Experiential micro-sessions over spring break and the winter holiday
- Self-paced options, including selections for evening and online courses, and accelerated or extended pace options



# 7. Tailored Course-Delivery Options

Increased flexibility for liberal arts learning that is tailored to learners' needs and objectives

## 01 Temporal Flexibility

- Evening and weekend synchronous online delivery for working professionals
- Asynchronous self-paced learning for certain text-based courses



## 02 Collaboration from a Distance

- GC Border-Free offerings allow cross-cultural collaboration
- Adopt-a-Stream project collects water samples from across the state of Georgia

## 03 Other ideas

- Face-to-face and hybrid courses draw upon distinctive, local resources
- Andalusia, Stem labs, Art studios, Central State Hospital, University Archives, Special Collections



## 8. School of Allied Health



- Expand current degree offerings to include a targeted series of Allied Health disciplines to support workforce needs for a broad range of health professions
- Complement current programs in health and human performance, psychology, environmental science, music therapy, and languages
- Establish a pre-health professions program that would provide support for graduate school preparation for those degrees requiring additional education beyond the bachelor's degree
- Provide a strong liberal arts background needed to care for individuals holistically
- Give opportunities to grow as professionals and leaders within an ever-changing healthcare system

## 8. School of Allied Health (continued)

### Potential Target Disciplines

- Healthcare administration and informatics
- Exercise physiology
- Athletic training
- Public health
- Mental health counseling
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Recreational therapy
- Rehabilitation counseling
- Speech-language pathology



# 9. Writing in the Disciplines and Across the Curriculum

## Opportunities

- Writing intensive courses are a “high-impact practice” and could be added to GC Journeys
- Writing Program Association is doing a self-study on Writing at GC (Fall 2022)
- Writing intensive courses fit with our institutional liberal arts brand & history
  - MFA program, Flannery O’Connor, etc.

## Potential Action Items

- Expand existing writing center
- Add support for faculty development/designation of writing intensive courses





The background features a complex abstract design of blue and green lines and shapes. On the left, there are overlapping circles and a vertical line connecting to a hexagon. In the center, a large, multi-layered hexagon contains a teal-to-blue gradient with small white and green dots. On the right, there are horizontal lines and a zig-zag pattern. At the bottom, there are more geometric shapes, including a hexagon and various line patterns.

## 10. Design-Your-Own Major

Most likely under the purview of the Institute of Academic Innovation & Design

- Serve as an advisor to students on this personalized pathway
- Create thematic programs of study outside existing structures in a multi-disciplinary manner
- Exist as a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with specific concentrations
- Develop preset pathways/concentrations such as globalization, legal studies, democracy, political economy, and other novel options

# 11. Degree Partnerships

with Professional Schools and State Colleges

01

## Existing Programs

- GC chemistry majors accelerated track to pharmacy school at University of Georgia (UGA), Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), and Auburn University
- GC physics majors for three years plus two years of engineering at Georgia Tech = dual degree

02

## New Programs

Investigate and arrange dual degree partnerships with professional schools in such areas as

- Computer science
- Dentistry
- Engineering
- Law
- Medicine
- Social work

03

## New Pipelines

Consider establishing dual degree partnerships with state colleges that would lead to study in our graduate programs

- e.g., Oglethorpe University and Mercer University.

## 12. Focus on Our Institutional Brand

Establish a unique and powerful positioning platform, implement a resonant key messaging process, and develop a prestige-building, creative campaign framework



- Review Educational Marketing Group's Situational Analysis from 2016 and reevaluate the recommendations
- Clarify marketing to graduate and international students to highlight “university” in our name to help increase awareness of The Graduate School

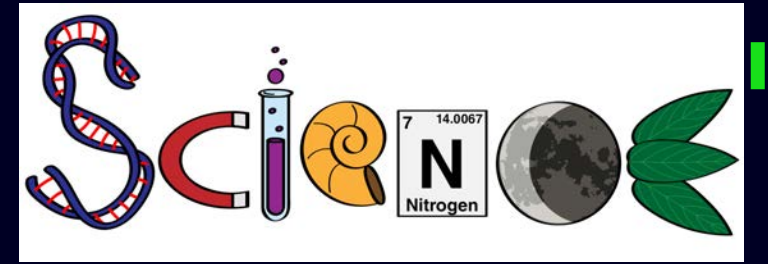
THINK INDEPENDENTLY. LEAD CREATIVELY.

## 12. Focus on Our Institutional Brand (continued)

### Five Steps to Achieve Georgia College's Strategic Goal of National Preeminence among Liberal Arts Institutions

1. Implement a consensus-based process to refresh the Georgia College brand platform
2. Build a consistent, institution-wide key messaging matrix based on top competitive advantages and core values
3. Update the brand creative framework with a conversation-starting campaign theme and visually arresting design approach that builds prestige and differentiates the College as a dynamic, innovative, and energetic organization on education's leading edge
4. Implement an institution-wide integrated marketing plan on an annual basis that leverages the College's great strengths in content marketing and social media and becomes a tactical roadmap to achieve strategic bottom-line goals
5. Launch an integrated statewide image marketing campaign that increases brand awareness, understanding, and esteem within the state, and reaches out to national influencers in higher education





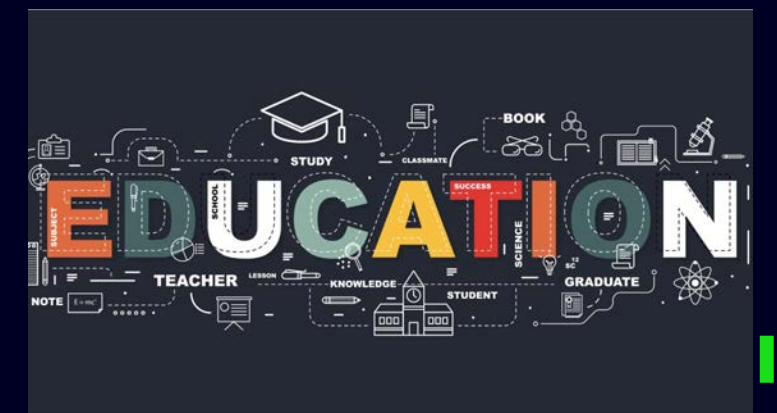
## 13. Exploratory Major

### Opportunities

- Large contingent of students in 'undeclared' and 'business undeclared'
- Exploratory fits in with liberal arts brand
- Could serve both traditional undecided students & returning students who just need a degree

### Potential Action Items

- Work with Academic Advising & Career Center to re-work our current structure for undeclared students
- House major in degree program (Liberal Studies) or create a separate major



## 14. Accelerated Degrees

The students

- Highly motivated traditional students
- Traditional students with AP/IB or dual enrollment credits
- Adult Learners



# 14. Accelerated Degrees (continued)

## The degrees



- Undergraduate: innovative course scheduling
- Undergraduate in 3 years: dual enrollment and previous credit
- Undergraduate degree completion program: prior learning assessment, competency-based education
- Adult Undergraduate degree completion program
  - Behavioral Science (CoAS)
  - Health Care Leadership (CoHS)
  - Management (CoBT)

# Task Force Members

Co-Chair



**Costas Spirou**  
Provost and  
Vice President for  
Academic Affairs

Co-Chair



**Jennifer Flory**  
Professor of Music and  
Presiding Officer of  
University Senate



**Jordan Cofer**  
Associate Provost of  
Transformative Learning  
Experiences



**Nicholas Creel**  
Assistant Professor of  
Business Law and Director  
of Center for Innovation



# Task Force Members



**Angela Criscoe**  
Executive Director of  
School of Continuing and  
Professional Studies



**Mandy Jarriel**  
Associate Professor of  
Athletic Training



**Libby Murphy**  
Professor of French and  
Chair of World  
Languages and Cultures



**Holley Roberts**  
Associate Provost of  
Academic Affairs and Director  
of The Graduate School

# Task Force Members



**Rob Sumowski**  
Associate Professor of Special  
Education and Presiding Officer  
Elect of University Senate



**Eric Tenbus**  
Dean of the College of  
Arts & Sciences



**Shaundra Walker**  
Director of University  
Library



# THANK YOU

for reviewing our innovative ideas for the  
contemporary liberal arts at Georgia College!

