

Policy Title: Georgia College Service Recognition

Policy Statement:

Georgia College (GC) recognizes the contributions and service of its employees through the GC Service Recognition program. Recognition will be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document and the USG Board of Regents policy on Employee Recognition Program.

Definitions:

1. **Key service milestones-** service anniversaries in five year increments beginning with the fifth year of eligible service (e.g. 5,10,15, etc.).
2. **Regular Employment Status-** is considered continuous and may also be defined by agreement, contract, term, or restricted funding source(s). Regular employment may be benefits eligible; partial benefits eligible, non-benefits eligible, full-time or part-time, exempt or nonexempt.
3. **Temporary Employment Status-** is short in duration to address business needs and must meet the following requirements and characteristics: non-benefits eligible; does not have an expectation of long-term employment; and may be full-time or part-time. Student employees including graduate assistants are considered temporary.
4. **Full Benefits Eligible:** This is defined as 30 or more hours per week or .75 FTE and greater, which applies to regular faculty and regular staff employees. Full benefits include all benefits in accordance with University System of Georgia of Board of Regents policy 8.2.9 Insurance.
5. **Partial Benefits Eligible:** This is defined as 20 to 29 hours per week or .5 FTE to .74 FTE. Partial benefits eligible may apply to regular faculty and regular staff employees. Partial benefits include retirement and pro-rated leave accruals.
6. **Non-Benefits Eligible:** This is defined as 19 or less hours per week (.49 FTE or less), which applies to regular faculty and staff employees. Non-benefits eligible also includes temporary faculty, staff, and student employees who may not work more than 1,300 hours in a 12 month period as defined later in this policy. Students may not be placed into a regular status.
7. **Active Employee Status-** consists of employees that are in an active payroll status in which a pay statement is generated when payroll is run.
8. **Faculty classifications-** consist of the corps of instruction and the administrative officers as defined in Section 3 of the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.
9. **Staff classifications-** consists of two major employee groups 1) staff professional and administrative employees and 2) staff non-exempt and defined as follows:
 - *Staff Professional and Administrative Employees* are exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities.; And

- *Staff Non-Exempt Employees* are not exempt from the federal wage-hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Keywords:

Service Recognition; GC total service; Service Milestones; Regular Employment

Reason for the Policy:

The Service Recognition Program supports the University's strategic initiative to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty and staff who are invested in the university's mission, students, and our commitment to reason, respect, and responsibility. It is an institutional priority to expand opportunities to celebrate faculty and staff achievements and to build community.

The GC Service Recognition program acknowledges that the contributions of Georgia College employees are critical to fulfilling the University's mission. Each employee makes a difference and as such, the University should endeavor to identify means by which meaningful recognition occurs.

Proposed Outcome:

This policy aims to promote employee longevity and outline the approval process for determining eligible service time as it relates to the GC Service Recognition policy.

Applicability of the Policy:

This policy and procedures applies to all active GC faculty and staff employees in a **regular full or partial benefits eligible** employment status.

Related Policies:

None

Procedures:

1. Eligibility

Eligible employees who have reached key service milestones will be honored the following calendar year at the GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony. Eligible employees must be in an active employment status on their service milestone date in order to receive this award. Employees on an approved leave of absence status and unable to attend ceremony will receive their awards upon their return.

Note: GC Service Recognition eligibility is separate from USG Retirement eligibility. For information regarding USG Retirement, visit <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/>.

2. Recognized Service Criteria

Recognized service is based on an employee's total years of service with GC and includes all periods of regular employment **with full or partial benefits eligibility**; this does not mean the service must be consecutive years. The following criteria shall be used to determine eligible service:

- Transferring between GC departments does not affect service date.
- Service date determination for employees changing from temporary to regular employment status will be calculated as of their regular employment hire date.

Note: Periods of service in a regular (**non-benefits eligible**) employment status and temporary employment status, including as a student employees or graduate assistant, are not counted.

- Academic year appointments of nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) months are considered the equivalent of a twelve (12)-month appointment for calculation of eligible service.
- Approved leaves of absence of one year or less are not deducted from the length of service calculation. Military leaves are included in eligible service calculations.
- Employees who retire during the year in which they reach a service milestone and who are in an active employment status at the time they reach the milestone will be recognized for their service at the GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony; in addition to being invited to the GC Retirement Ceremony.
- Employees who retire and had not reached a service milestone date prior to being removed from active employee status will be recognized as retirees and will be invited to the GC Retirement Ceremony.

3. Service Dates

Milestones occur between January 1 and December 31 of the subject year, based on service dates that are derived from **HRIS** enterprise system. Unless, the following occurred during the course of regular employment at GC:

- The employee has a break in service of (30) days or more
- The employees hire date is prior to 1989
- Misclassifications (e.g. temporary positions with regular employment status in the system)
- Other instances that may arise that need to be addressed will be handled on a case by case basis

Note: If any of the following occurred, employees shall complete the Employee Service Recognition Form as described in the Verification of Eligibility Process section.

4. Verification of Eligibility Process

- The Office of Human Resources will prepare a list of eligible faculty and staff to be recognized and share it with the appropriate Vice President and/or designee.
- Vice President and/or designee will distribute list to Department Heads for review.
- Department Heads will share list with faculty and staff. If discrepancies, employees need to complete the Employee Service Recognition Form.
- Department sends completed Employee Service Recognition Forms and corrected list to Vice President and/or designee.
- Vice President and/or designee works with the Office of Human Resources to verify and approve service dates discrepancies.
- The Office of Human Resources finalizes the list of faculty and staff employees to be recognized.
- The Office of Human Resources coordinates the program and finalizes the list of employees to be honored at the GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony.
- Honorees will receive a congratulatory letter and invitation to the award ceremony.

Forms:

Employee Service Recognition Form

Contacts:

Approval Date:

Appendices

- A. Verification of Eligibility Timeline

APPENDIX A: Verification of Eligibility Timeline

Complete by	Responsible	Action
April 1 st (2015 only)	Office of Human Resources	Sends Campus Announcements on initiatives to collect GC Total Service Information from all active faculty and staff. The Office of Human Resources will distribute personalized Employee Service Recognition Forms to employees via campus mail.
June 1 st (2015 only)	HR Benefits	Reviews and verifies employment data. Notifies employee of final determination. Note: Final GC total service years will be saved and tracked in an HR database for record keeping.
June 1st	HR Benefits	Runs <i>Service Recognition Report</i> in ADP Reporter.
July 1 st	HR Benefits	Analyzes data by comparing ADP reporter list to appropriate GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony list (e.g. current year minus 5 years). Removes employees that are terminating or retiring in current year. Reviews GC total service year database to determine eligible employees.
August 1st	HR Benefits	Sends list of faculty and staff that are eligible to be recognized to the appropriate Vice President.
August 15th	Vice President/Designee	Distributes list and instructions to Department Heads. Note: Instructions should include deadlines, link to GC Service Recognition Policy and forms.
September 15th	Department Head	Forwards list and instructions to direct reports. Submits completed Employee Service Recognition Forms to Vice President and/or designee.
October 1st	Vice President/Designee	Forwards Employee Service Recognition Forms to HR Benefits.
October 15th	HR Benefits	Reviews and researches employment data in personnel file, Payroll systems, etc. May work in collaboration with Vice President or designee in certain situations (e.g. faculty employment verifications)
October 31 st	HR Benefits	Finalizes the list of faculty and staff to be recognized at the upcoming GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony.
November 1st	Office of Human Resources	Coordinates and arranges for employees to be honored at the GC Service Recognition Award Ceremony.
January 15th	Office of Human Resources	Sends honoree invitation and letter.