The academic vision at the University of West Georgia is rooted in a century-old tradition of providing the best liberal arts foundation as preparation for a professional career. In honoring that tradition, however, we tend to use the more modern term of liberal education, rather than liberal arts. It is the vision of Benjamin Franklin and the founding principle of the University of Pennsylvania: liberal education as professional preparation. In the early days of the life of University of West Georgia, in the early twentieth century, the programs available to students were very few, primarily teacher preparation. Today, however, with eighty-seven programs of study, ranging from the Ph.D. to numerous programs at the baccalaureate level, West Georgia’s educational opportunities have grown as we offer programs in arts, business, education, nursing, and humanities. This expansion, while mindful of our foundational principles, enables us to extend our reach ever outward to meet the always surprising challenges of the twenty-first century.

We are committed, as directed by our historical tradition, to our communities, the community of Carroll and surrounding counties. The UWG campus in Newnan has nearly doubled its growth since its opening and has been a source of joy and pride to us as well as for the citizens of Coweta County. We are beginning a partnership in Douglasville which we trust will develop an equally appreciated educational enterprise for Douglas County. Our development of online education has become the envy of the state. West Georgia is the administrative home of eCore and eMajor, two online delivery platforms that service literally thousands of Georgia citizens every year. Finally, our work in community outreach and community engagement has grown and is getting notice and appreciation by our local chambers of commerce and political representatives.

In addition to the outreach we are constantly working on, we are also forever working on projects that reach inward and
ask that we improve and update our academic goals and tools. Three such projects cross college boundaries. LEAP is a national initiative for undergraduate education reform to which we are fully committed. Its goals are ensuring that each of our undergraduates meets the essential learning outcomes necessary to enter a world of employment opportunities rife with as yet unscripted challenges. Another project, Gateway to Completion, challenges us along with our partners in student affairs to help our incoming students who have the greatest needs in meeting the demands of a college education. Every student who is admitted to college nowadays, and some would say this has always been the case, is not equally prepared in the fundamental of education discipline. We at West Georgia want to provide help as appropriate in that first year especially. Finally, the program that we call CCEC, Carroll County Education Collaborative, but rapidly expanding beyond Carroll to other neighboring counties, is both a community outreach and an internal reform effort. The essence of this project is to bring leaders from public schools, private schools, technical colleges, University of West Georgia, and business leaders to the table to talk about ways to improve the readiness of students entering college and the workforce. This effort, consistent with everything in the academic vision of West Georgia, has as its sole mission a better educated Georgia, helping to shape responsible thinkers and citizens necessary to create and support the future of Georgia.

Finally, at the University of West Georgia, we believe that leadership development and full campus engagement are necessary for the complete realization of our potential. We call that program Engage West, and it affects every facet of our campus life. This initiative is based upon commitment to transparency, accountability, and collaboration and is driven to foster and promote evidence based leadership and a culture of high performance.
PRIORITY 1
Student Success

Academic Affairs is dedicated to providing all students with opportunities to develop their interests, talents, and passions. Through degree and non-degree programs grounded in high impact practices and experiences both in and beyond the classroom, Academic Affairs seeks to help all students access an education that transforms lives.

A. Create pathways to promote progression and timely graduation.

B. Expand access to high-quality professional advising and faculty mentoring.

C. Ensure students have the opportunity to engage in two or more high impact practices or experiences.
PRIORITY 2
Academic Programming   Success

To develop students’ global understanding, Academic Affairs creates and supports forward-thinking programs that are responsive to the evolving needs of students and society. We meet the unique needs of our diverse student population through high-quality teaching, student-centered programmatic design, and innovative delivery that span undergraduate through doctoral study.

A. Foster knowledge, skills, and integrity that empower students with intellectual courage and a love for learning.

B. Engage in ongoing academic planning and review of curricula.

C. Cultivate and support best pedagogical practices in all disciplines.

D. Advance opportunities for active learning in the curriculum that transform how students understand ethical action and inclusion.
PRIORITY 3
Faculty and Staff Success

Academic Affairs directs the recruitment and retention of a diverse, talented, and dedicated faculty and staff. We steadfastly support their continued holistic growth and professional development.

A. Prioritize and provide resources for professional growth and development of all faculty and staff.

B. Recognize and reward the unique contributions of both faculty and staff.

C. Encourage and support work-life balance within a cooperative work environment.

D. Allocate resources to recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff.

PRIORITY 4
Partnership Success

Collaborations that provide mutual benefit to all parties are an essential element of the academic mission of the University. Academic Affairs recognizes the interdependent nature of innovative and transformative education. We are committed to building internal and external partnerships that benefit our students, faculty, staff, and communities.

A. Support collaboration among colleges and units within Academic Affairs.

B. Actively partner with all divisions across UWG.

C. Build and engage in mutually beneficial external partnerships.
PRIORITY 5
Operational Success

Academic excellence requires a strong infrastructure and a culture of sustainable, inclusive, and ethical practices. Academic Affairs is committed to operational effectiveness and an environment that supports the intellectual and creative endeavors of the campus and community.

A. Support meaningful faculty and staff participation in shared governance.

B. Develop and implement transparent, ethical, and consistent policies, procedures, and practices.

C. Build a culture of assessment and continuous improvement that guides allocation of resources.

D. Promote the acquisition of external funding.

E. Create virtual and physical environments that meet the needs of diverse students, faculty, staff, and communities.