

action plan report

SPRING 2022 SEMESTER

The COLLABORATIVE *on* ACADEMIC CAREERS
in HIGHER EDUCATION



ABOUT COACHE

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) is a research-practice partnership based in the Harvard Graduate School of Education. COACHE studies the work lives of faculty with a focus on actionable data to support academic administrators.

Studies are conducted in partnership with college and university leaders (both faculty and administrative) with an emphasis on using the data collected to improve the academic workplace.



TIMELINE

The university is reaching the end of the multi-year cycle, which first began in the fall of 2019. The cycle breaks down as follows:

▶ **2019-20**
ADMINISTER
THE SURVEY

More specifics about this timeline and how it progressed at Georgia State are available at provost.gsu.edu/coache/timeline.

The cycle is set to repeat in the 2022-23 academic year.

▶ **2020-21**
DEVELOP
ACTION PLANS

▶ **2021-22**
IMPLEMENT
ACTION PLANS



AREAS of STRENGTH

The university received its survey results during the summer 2020 semester and provided both a summary for the wider university community at a new website, provost.gsu.edu/coache, and more detailed quantitative data for faculty only through the iCollege learning management system.



DEPARTMENTAL
ENGAGEMENT



QUALITY *of*
COLLEAGUES



PROMOTION *to*
FULL PROFESSOR



TENURE
POLICIES



LOCATION



ACADEMIC
FREEDOM



DIVERSITY

ROOM for *IMPROVEMENT*

More details about faculty participation and survey results are available at provost.gsu.edu/coache/results. Below are areas of strength and areas for improvement:



NATURE OF
WORK: SERVICE



MENTORING



INTERDISCIPLINARY
WORK



APPRECIATION &
RECOGNITION



FACULTY
LEADERSHIP



GOVERNANCE



BENEFITS &
SALARY



BELONGINGNESS

TAKING ACTION ▶

Informed by the COACHE survey results, the Office of the Provost developed a **university-level plan to address areas requiring improvement**. Colleges, schools and institutes were directed to develop action plans specific to their units.

The first COACHE action plan progress report was published in April 2021. This report is a follow-up piece, outlining the steps Georgia State has taken to meet its goals for improvement and transformation.

MORE INFORMATION

Additional information, including the university- and college-level action plans, the first progress report, a detailed timeline, survey results and more, are available at the Georgia State COACHE website, provost.gsu.edu/coache.



COACHE ACTION PLAN:

A SPRING 2022 UPDATE

The university-level action plan, available at provost.gsu.edu/coache/path-forward, is divided into **six areas identified for improvement** and includes **14 specific steps as goals for achievement**.



1

BENEFITS and SALARY

Compensation was mentioned when faculty were asked to “Identify the one thing they feel their institutions could do to improve the workplace for faculty.” *It is a priority for Georgia State to ensure fair compensation for all faculty members.*



ACTION PLAN 1

The Office of the Provost will continue to **explore areas of salary equity, inversion and compression** and will work to **establish a long-term plan to support salary adjustments** as funding becomes available.



ACTION PLAN I UPDATE

As part of the compensation study launched by President M. Brian Blake during the 2021-22 academic year, the university hired EY (formerly Ernst & Young) to review existing compensation data, determine compensation levels at organizations comparable to Georgia State and compare Georgia State jobs to market data to identify compensation at the 25th, 50th (median) and 75th percentiles. This review includes faculty positions.

In the analysis, EY considered recruitment and retention, market competitiveness and internal equity to establish consistency in compensation between employees.

The faculty position analysis included hundreds of job codes at Georgia State, in addition to information from the College and University Professional Association (CUPA), the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and other information.

Results are expected in mid-2022, and the president's office will share an overview with the university community in May. Once the data is available, university leadership — including the Provost's Office — will determine an action plan to address the findings during the 2022-23 academic year.

ACTION PLAN 2

In FY22, the Office of the Provost, together with the deans and the University Senate, will **work toward a more consistent university-wide approach to faculty annual merit reviews and raises.**



ACTION PLAN 2 UPDATE

As part of the University System of Georgia's directive for institutions to examine post-tenure review, there are new standardized templates across Georgia State that will allow for greater consistency in annual merit reviews and raises.

The University Senate passed the revised policies in March, and the Provost's Office published them to the website of the Office of Faculty Affairs, faculty.gsu.edu. The page includes a new standardized template for the review process for use across Georgia State's colleges, schools and institutes.

2

NATURE of WORK: SERVICE

The COACHE survey explores the nature of faculty work related to teaching, service and research. Service was an area of concern across all faculty groups. The data show that faculty believe there are too many service commitments, an uneven distribution of workload and a lack of appropriate recognition for time spent on service. Yet service to the university, professional organizations and the community is vital to meeting the needs of our students and accomplishing the university's mission. **We commit to changing the culture around service to value this contribution more clearly and emphasize that service is not only a responsibility of every faculty member but also a reciprocal obligation that we owe to each other** as members of our community.



ACTION PLAN 3

The Office of the Provost will **identify best practices for allocating service assignments**. In addition, all colleges will retrospectively review the apportionment of service tasks, engage in conversations with faculty members to **determine the expected service load for a typical faculty member** and **develop a policy for equitable distribution** moving forward. Colleges will also be required to include a discussion of service, focusing on service rendered to the college or university, in each annual review.



ACTION PLAN 3 UPDATE

A summer department chairs workshop on equity-minded faculty workload includes best practices in allocating tasks in their faculty members' workload.

In examining promotion and tenure (P&T) and promotion and review for non-tenure-track faculty, the university's P&T and NTT policy manuals were revised to include the allocation of service as a factor in review. In the revised manuals, annual reviews will consider service in a faculty member's workload percentages. Further, the revised annual review policies acknowledge student success activities, which are generally found in research and service related workload.

3

MENTORING

In response to Georgia State's custom questions about mentoring, 46 percent of faculty said they were not aware of a mentoring program in their department or division, and 13 percent said they were unsure. When asked about currently having a mentor, formally or informally, 59 percent of faculty said they did not have either. ***Effective mentoring is critical to faculty development, and we are committed to making it available to every early-career faculty member.***



ACTION PLAN 4

The Office of the Provost will develop a **university-level mentoring plan** and work with the colleges to support additional mentoring efforts.

ACTION PLAN 4 UPDATE

The Office of the Provost's mentoring initiative activities for the 2021-22 academic year included:

- During the spring 2022 semester, the Office of the Provost inaugurated the **Mentoring Faculty Workshop Series**, addressing best practices in different facets of faculty mentoring. The workshops were structured as learning and sharing forums to foster a shared understanding about faculty mentoring at Georgia State. Workshops were open to all faculty regardless of appointment type or rank, and four workshops were held during the spring semester. The workshops garnered participation from more than 150 registrants, which included a Mentoring 101 session, a session on mentoring and intersectionality, a session tailored to mentoring non-tenure track faculty and a workshop on listening skills for mentors.
- In December 2021, college mentor advocates presented mentoring projects for their respective colleges for implementation in the spring 2022 semester. The initiatives were designed around the priorities and specific mentoring needs in each college. In the spring semester, mentor-advocates engaged in conversations about the successes and challenges encountered during project implementation. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the mentor-advocate group will explore the creation of a mentoring badge and work on cross-college collaborations related to mentoring.



ACTION PLAN 5

Mentoring will be specifically identified as a category of valued service in the University Promotion and Tenure manual.

ACTION PLAN 5 UPDATE

Mentoring has been included in the revised university manuals, which can be found on the Office of Faculty Affairs website at faculty.gsu.edu/ptr.

4

APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION

The COACHE survey asked faculty about a variety of ways they might feel recognized and by whom. While appreciation and recognition were an area of concern across all faculty groups, tenured faculty and under-represented minority faculty had lower levels of satisfaction. The qualitative data supporting faculty concerns range from lack of recognition for research, teaching and service to a general feeling of being undervalued. ***The faculty are the university's greatest resource, and we are committed to identifying, recognizing and praising the many contributions they make to our students and the university's mission.***



ACTION PLAN 6

The Office of the Provost will **implement new, concrete ways to recognize faculty** at the university level and encourage similar recognition efforts at the department and college levels. **New awards will be considered and implemented**, such as a university-level Distinguished Teaching Award (analogous to the Distinguished University Professor) and an award for faculty contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion on campus.

ACTION PLAN 6 UPDATE

- **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Recognition:** The Office of Faculty Affairs during the 2021-22 academic year announced a call for nominations for a new Outstanding Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Achievement Award, recognizing a non-tenure-track faculty member for outstanding achievements in their assigned areas of specialty, including scholarship and creative works, teaching or service. The first awardee will be recognized during the annual Celebrating Faculty Excellence event in the fall of 2022.
- **The Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Award:** The inaugural award was given to the Task Force for Racial Equality. The award recognizes those who work to create a campus free of barriers to ensure that all members have access and representation, to embrace differences in people and perspectives, and to foster a sense of belonging. This award will be expanded in the coming academic year with separate categories for groups and individuals and will include a monetary award supported by a donor contribution.
- **Mentor Recognition:** A new Mentoring Excellence Award will be introduced in the fall 2022 semester.
- **Research Recognition:** The new Recognizing Outstanding Achievements in Research & Scholarship (ROAR) Award was announced in April 2022 at the first annual Celebrating Outstanding Achievement in Research event. The inaugural ROAR Award winner will be announced at the next annual Celebrating Outstanding Achievement in Research event in 2023.
- **Online Recognition:** A new Twitter account for the Provost's Office, @GaStateProvost, was established in spring 2022 to share faculty achievements and other good news about their research and scholarship. These efforts also expanded in the Faculty Spotlight portion of the Provost's Office e-newsletter, distributed quarterly during the academic year.



ACTION PLAN 7

The provost will **highlight notable faculty achievements** in the Provost's Office newsletter and encourage department chairs and deans to also implement regular communications identifying faculty accomplishments.

ACTION PLAN 7 UPDATE

During the spring 2022 semester, the Office of the Provost launched the @GaStateProvost Twitter account to share recognition of faculty achievements, including newly published papers, books, service, awards, research, scholarship, creative works and more. Information for these tweets is gathered from direct contact between the Provost's Office and faculty, department chairs or deans, through a submission form or from the college-/school-/institute-level communications directors, whose unit-level newsletters contain faculty kudos for their areas.

The existing Provost's Office newsletter continued during the 2021-22 academic year with an expansion of the Faculty Spotlight section. Additional articles that highlight faculty achievements will be shared in the coming academic year.

The Provost's Office website's newsfeed included important administrative messages, original faculty profiles written by the department's communications staff and re-sharing of faculty profile articles as published by university communications staff on the university's News Hub at news.gsu.edu.

5

FACULTY RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & BELONGINGNESS

COACHE survey results reflect concern with recruitment and retention efforts, particularly as they relate to faculty of color. There were also seven custom questions on the COACHE survey that **concentrated on inclusion, belongingness and respect**. The results illustrated that underrepresented faculty in each case felt less positive in these areas than other faculty.



In 2017, the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost established the **Commission on the Next Generation of Faculty** and tasked them with **identifying ways to increase faculty diversity and enhance the campus climate**. That work continues, guided by the initiative's Implementation Steering Committee (ISC). In addition, in response to the senseless deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and countless other Black Americans, the university established the **Task Force for Racial Equality** in June 2020. Significant campus activity has taken place, inspired by their recommendations and the subsequent action plan issued by the provost.

- IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE
provost.gsu.edu/commission-report/implementation-steering-committee
- TASK FORCE FOR RACIAL EQUALITY
dei.gsu.edu/task-force

Georgia State is committed to ensuring equity and fairness in faculty search processes and exploring how to create a more welcoming environment to retain quality faculty members.



ACTION PLAN 8

The Office of the Provost will **offer best practices in hiring workshops, which will focus specifically on alleviating implicit bias**. This training will be mandatory for all search chairs.

ACTION PLAN 8 UPDATE

This information has been included in workshops for chairs of search committees and department chairs. Training is offered twice yearly and upon request.



ACTION PLAN 9

The university will continue to execute on the recommendations in the Implementation Steering Committee for the Next Generation of Faculty’s action plans, which **center on how to attract and retain a diverse faculty**. Specifically, the Office of the Provost, Office of Faculty Affairs and Graduate School will work collectively on **pipeline programming to encourage underrepresented minority doctoral students in their pursuit of faculty positions**, hosting future faculty and hiring-day events. Further, the Office of the Provost will **coordinate recruitment efforts** at the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholars Institute on Teaching and Mentoring and the McKnight Fellowship Program. There will be a continuation of faculty receptions to welcome new faculty and networking of current faculty from underrepresented groups.



ACTION PLAN 9 UPDATE

Georgia State continues to make significant progress in its efforts to attract and retain a diverse faculty. In particular, Georgia State’s efforts through SREB and the McKnight Fellowship Program have resulted in at least one faculty hire and increased targeted outreach to individuals expressing interest in Georgia State through an interest form on the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion website.



▶ MCKNIGHT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

- **Virtual Recruiting:** With the McKnight Fellowship Program, a key goal is to make connections and garner interest from Ph.D. students who will eventually enter the academic job market. A virtual recruitment event, at no cost to Georgia State, was held in 2021, resulting in a faculty hire and 33 attendees who were Ph.D. students. As of press time, a second recruitment event is planned for late March 2022, with the potential to double the number of attendees.
- **Annual McKnight Conference:** This November 2021 event — with the participation of Georgia State’s special adviser to the provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the associate dean for strategic initiatives from Perimeter College — resulted in 35 Ph.D. students from underrepresented minority backgrounds signing up and a total contact list of 567 McKnight Fellows. This list was distributed to Georgia State colleges and schools for their own targeted faculty recruitment efforts.

▶ SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD

- **Virtual Annual Conference:** The SREB’s annual conference, which was moved from in-person to an online modality, garnered interest from 15 doctoral students and 5 undergraduates interested in faculty positions and graduate school. It yielded additional contacts from various scholar programs — from those for undergraduates looking toward graduate programs.

▶ CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF STUDENTS & ALUMNI

- **The Center for the Advancement of Students and Alumni (CASA)** continues its work to engage with, encourage and support Georgia State undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds. The CASA has assisted thousands since its launch in 2018 and continues its support efforts, from applications and scholarships to mentorship from faculty affiliates and more. Its 25 to Thrive initiative, which teaches students 25 things they need to know to prepare, apply for and pursue graduate and professional education, is critical to its efforts.



ACTION PLAN 10

Georgia State will **maintain and expand its virtual repository for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion activities** (DEI website). The Diversity Database houses more than 100 programs, initiatives and policies related to DEI. The provost will continue to support and encourage an environment dedicated to these endeavors.

ACTION PLAN 10 UPDATE

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion website has grown significantly since its inception. Originally started during the reckoning over racial injustice and inequality in 2020, the website has moved from an immediate crisis response to a long-term perspective, built for utility to provide an enduring university-wide, cross-institutional information hub.

For readership statistics, because this report is being published before the end of the 2021-22 academic year, comparisons with the previous academic year must only be for the partial 2020-21 academic year. On an academic-year-to-academic-year basis, from August 2020 to March 2021 and August 2021 to March 2022, there was a 40 percent increase in new users and a 39 percent increase in page views. The totals for the 2021-22 academic year are well on the way to exceeding those of the website's first year.

The Diversity Database, a core part of the DEI website, grew in the number of programs and initiative listings it contains, from 144 to 151, with outreach in the spring for units that already have programs in the database to provide updates. The searchable Resource Library increased from 190 to 241 entries, which includes books, guides, policies, procedures, on-demand training listings, journal articles and more.

In partnership with the Cultures, Communities & Inclusion initiative of the Division of Student Engagement and Success, new one-stop web pages were established for the seven signature heritage months observed by the university. These pages are intended to provide a single location that is division-neutral, uniting student-oriented activities with academic-oriented activities corresponding to the month's theme. These themes are listed on the DEI site at dei.gsu.edu/signature-heritage-months. These pages have been among the top 10 most-read on the DEI website during the 2021-22 academic year.

ACTION PLAN 11

The Office of the Provost will **engage in and support the six faculty affinity groups created to promote conversations and community engagement among faculty**, especially including those from underrepresented groups. Further, the provost will meet regularly with faculty affinity groups to solicit feedback and identify ongoing issues challenging faculty.



ACTION PLAN II UPDATE

The number of faculty affinity groups has increased, with a new group oriented to department chairs. The various affinity groups met with the former provost and the interim multiple times over the 2021-22 academic year to discuss concerns related to academics and issues affecting their relevant communities, provide feedback and share ideas to enhance the university community.

6

SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH/ CREATIVE WORK

A number of faculty in the COACHE survey identified lack of support for research/creative work as a challenge of working at Georgia State. In particular, faculty mentioned a desire for greater support for internal interdisciplinary research clusters and expressed concerns relating to release time for scholarly and creative activities. As an R-I university, **Georgia State is committed to supporting and developing opportunities for faculty to engage in meaningful scholarly activities.**



ACTION PLAN 12

The Office of the Provost will **implement a Minimester pilot to explore**, among other things, if giving faculty members **the option of more flexible teaching schedules** would support them **developing more active research agendas**.

ACTION PLAN 12 UPDATE

While the Minimester format has been available for several years at Georgia State, it has not been historically well-used. Departments can use this term at their discretion. The university is exploring offering students the option to register later for the second part of the term, as more frequent registration options are especially popular among students taking classes in online programs.



ACTION PLAN 13

The Office of the Provost, in conjunction with the Faculty Senate, will **examine the current Faculty Workload Policy** and make changes where possible to **support flexible teaching options**, including course banking.

ACTION PLAN 13 UPDATE

In the 2021-22 academic year the Office of Faculty Affairs published a **guidance document on equity-minded faculty workload**, and in spring 2022 arranged a workshop for deans, associate deans for faculty affairs and department chairs. The Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate continue to explore opportunities for further faculty support.



ACTION PLAN 14

The Office of the Provost will work with the Office of Research & Economic Development to **facilitate the development of interdisciplinary research clusters between faculty**, such as hosting discussions for identified research areas to foster collaboration.

ACTION PLAN 14 UPDATE

With President M. Brian Blake's four pillars to guide the strategic visioning process and several immediate initiatives to bring them to reality, the Office of the Vice President for Research & Economic Development and the Office of the Provost launched the **Research Innovation and Scholarly Excellence (RISE) challenge** to leverage the strengths of Georgia State's research community to address complex problems through interdisciplinary collaboration. The initiative will provide resources for five interdisciplinary teams to develop transformative research, taking bold new approaches to the nation's most pressing societal challenges.

A call for proposals was issued in February 2022 with a submission deadline in early April. A corresponding webinar in February provided faculty with the opportunity to ask questions of the interim provost and the vice president for Research and Economic Development. As of press time, award notifications are anticipated for May 2022. Winning teams will receive one-time seed funding of up to \$500,000 over the course of one year. RISE funds may only be used to support nonrecurring costs. Further information about RISE is available at ursa.research.gsu.edu/rise.

Additional initiatives expanding upon the president's pillars will be announced later in 2022. The pillars include:

- Research and Innovation
- Student Success
- College to Careers
- Identity and Placemaking

Other initiatives under the Research and Innovation pillar include the expansion of research capacity and further work to amplify strategic faculty hiring.

More information about the pillars and immediate initiatives directed by President Blake for 2022 is available at strategic.gsu.edu/pillars.





OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

100 AUBURN AVE. NE, SUITE 500 ▲ ATLANTA, GA 30303
provostcommunication@gsu.edu | provost.gsu.edu/coache