

**Annual Report of  
Institutional Progress  
2005-2006**



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## Introduction

The 2005-2006 academic year was a significant year and saw the attainment of several key accomplishments. Among the year's highlights were the following:

- ✓ Gordon's Office of Institutional Advancement published the fourth edition of *President's Report*, an annual magazine aimed at alumni and other supporters, launching a continued effort to build a formal alumni organization.
- ✓ "Teaching Matters," Gordon's interdisciplinary conference on teaching, was held for a fourth time, continuing as an annual event drawing educators from throughout Georgia and the Southeast.
- ✓ Gordon College was approved by the Board of Regents to offer a four year program in Early Childhood Education. This will begin with a junior cohort in the fall of 2007.
- ✓ Gordon College completed its Compliance Certification and Quality Enhancement Plan for the SACS regional on-site visit in September 2006.
- ✓ Gordon's renowned nursing program secured another ICAPP grant to establish a bridge program for transitioning LPNs to RN certification.
- ✓ Gordon continued to enhance its involvement with the community, with numerous presentations by faculty and administrators to local schools, organizations, and civic clubs.

This was the third full year of operation under Gordon College's new strategic plan, adopted in spring 2003 for the five year period 2003-2008 and identifying the following strategic priorities:

- Priority 1: Gordon College will maintain a high quality instructional program with excellence in teaching as its defining characteristic.**
- Priority 2: Gordon College will provide quality community education training and non-degree programs that are responsive to local economic, workforce, and cultural needs.**
- Priority 3: Gordon College will provide quality enrollment management and student support programs.**
- Priority 4: Gordon College will enhance effectiveness through strategic personnel initiatives which promote the highest quality faculty and staff.**
- Priority 5: Gordon College will be a leader in the integration of technology with teaching and learning.**
- Priority 6: Gordon College will acquire and maintain equipment, facilities, and systems that improve effective operations and respond to growth and changing needs in a safe and hazard free environment.**
- Priority 7: Gordon College will pursue external relations which increase both enrollments and philanthropic contributions.**

## Section A: Summary of Major Institutional Accomplishments

### A1. Accomplishments Pertaining to the Educational Needs of the Area, the Region, and the State

*Complementing Gordon's third strategic priority on enrollment and student support, the Regents' Core Mission Statement for Two Year Colleges mandates "A commitment to excellence and responsiveness within a scope of influence defined by the needs of a local area and by particularly outstanding programs or distinctive characteristics that have a magnet effect throughout the region or state."*

As a two year residential college, Gordon College remains a major educational access point not only for its commuting students from the Atlanta and Macon metropolitan areas, but for students throughout Georgia who seek to begin their college educations at a full service, two year residential school. In fall 2005, Gordon enrolled students from 86 counties throughout Georgia, largely from the Atlanta metropolitan area. There were also students from 5 states outside of Georgia, and 18 foreign countries.

Gordon's growth seems to have leveled in the last year or so, but has grown an average of 3.27% each year since 2001.

	Fall, 2000	Fall, 2001	Fall, 2002	Fall, 2003	Fall, 2004	Fall, 2005
<b>Headcount</b>	2,890	3,074	3,116	3,415	3,449	3,500
<b>% Change</b>	4.8%	6.4%	1.4%	9.6%	1.0%	1.5%
<b>EFT</b>	2,268	2,495	2,436	2,898	2,959	3,014
<b>% Change</b>	8.8%	10.0%	-2.4%	19.0%	2.1%	1.8%

As the following table shows, Gordon has a diverse student body whose racial and ethnic composition mirrors that of the areas from which it draws its students.

#### Overview of Gordon College Students: Fall 2005

	Number of Students	Per Cent of Total		Number of Students	Per Cent of Total
Male	1247	35.6%	Freshman	2365	67.6%
Female	2253	64.4%	Sophomore	1055	30.1%
Age under 21	2318	66.2%	Other	80	2.3%
Age 21-25	599	17.1%	Full Time	2341	66.9%
Age 26-40	442	12.6%	Part Time	1159	33.1%
Age over 40	141	4.1%	Atlanta Metro	2854	81.5%
White	2207	63.0%	Other GA	628	18.0%
Black	1102	31.5%	Out of State	18	0.5%
Hispanic	71	2.0%			
Other	120	3.5%			
<b>Total Students: 3500</b>					
<b>EFT: 3014</b>					

## A2. Accomplishments Pertaining to Faculty Scholarship and Creative Work

*Complementing Gordon's first strategic priority on quality instruction and fourth strategic priority on faculty/staff development, the Regents' Core Mission Statement for Two Year Colleges mandates "A commitment to scholarship and creative work to enhance instructional effectiveness and meet local needs."*

The Gordon faculty sponsor clubs as well as the student newspaper, *Gordon College Press*. While Gordon's faculty emphasize teaching, over half of the faculty completed published works or presented papers at conferences last year. Gordon College faculty edited, contributed to, or authored the following books:

Pam Bell published her dissertation, *The Academic and Behavioral Benefits of Extracurricular Participation*, in November of 2005.

David Janssen and Edward Whitelock contracted for publication, "Apocalypse Jukebox: The End of the World in American Popular Music," to be a part of the PopMatters imprint, SoftScull Publishers.

Rhonda Wilcox published, *Why Buffy Matters: the Art of Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005) and contributed a chapter, "Unreal TV," in Gary Edgerton and Brian Rose's *Thinking outside the Box: a Contemporary Television Genre Reader* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005).

Mark King and Rob Koch wrote a prospectus for a book chapter, "Why I Do (Not) Use Turnitin.com" accepted for the upcoming book, *Understanding Plagiarism*.

Alcena Rogan contributed a chapter to the book, *Afrofuturism: Science Fiction's Newest New Wave Trajectory*, to be published spring, 2007 by Ohio University Press.

Alan Peterson published three biographical essays--*Bob Mathias, Bill Russell, and Bill Tilden*—with Salem Press.

Carol MacKusick wrote three chapters in *Primer for Critical Care Nursing: a Synergistic Approach* to be released December, 2006. She also wrote six chapters in *Pathophysiology: an Integrated Approach* with a publication date of May, 2007.

Joe Mayo contributed a chapter in an e-book, *The Teaching of Psychology in Autobiography: Perspectives from Exemplary Psychology Teachers*, scheduled for release in spring of 2007. As part of the Task Force for Strengthening the Teaching and Learning of Undergraduate Psychological Sciences, Mayo was one of several contributing authors in *Teaching, Learning, and Assessing in a Developmentally Coherent Curriculum*, published by the American Psychological Association.

Joe Mayo also completed a special project, the *Introductory Psychology Assessment Project*, for Allyn and Bacon Publishers, developing original exam questions to be available online for students using the publisher's texts.

Gordon College faculty authored, contributed to, or reviewed articles or chapters in the following periodic publications:

<i>Academic Exchange Quarterly</i>	<i>Modern Fiction Studies</i>
<i>American Literature</i>	<i>National League for Nursing Summit</i>
<i>American Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges Review</i>	<i>New Perspectives on the Eighteenth Century</i>
<i>Assessment Technologies</i>	<i>Northwoods Journal</i>
<i>Choice</i>	<i>President's Report (Gordon College)</i>
<i>Critical Studies in Television Criticism</i>	<i>Psychology Teacher Network</i>
<i>Dictionary of Literary Biography</i>	<i>Routledge Companion to Science Fiction</i>
<i>Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers</i>	<i>Science Fiction Studies</i>
<i>Driftwood</i>	<i>The Online International Journal of Buffy Studies</i>
<i>Encyclopedia of the United States Constitution</i>	<i>Social Studies of Science</i>
<i>Georgia Journal of Science</i>	<i>Socialism and Democracy</i>
<i>Georgia Runner Magazine</i>	<i>South Atlantic Modern Language Society</i>
<i>Gordon College Press</i>	<i>Southeastern Journal of Psychology</i>
<i>Gothic Studies</i>	<i>Studies in Popular Culture</i>
<i>Journal of Entomological Science</i>	<i>Studies in the Novel</i>
<i>Journal of the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers</i>	<i>Teaching English in the Two-Year College</i>
	<i>Teaching Matters: Delivering Ideas</i>
	<i>National League for Nursing Summit</i>

Gordon College faculty attended workshops in, received awards from, held office in and/or made specific presentations to the following organizations, institutions, and conferences:

Academy of Economics and Finance	Horror Writers Association
Agnes Scott College	Institute for Advanced Medical Education
American Astronomical Society	Interdisciplinary Research Conference,
American Ballet Theatre-Tuscaloosa	International Conference on the Fantastic in Arts
American Nephrology Nurses' Association	Journal of Gender Studies
American Psychological Association	Lamar Arts Show
Annual Nurse Educator's Conference	Newnan Society of Fine Arts
Computers and Writing Online 2006 Conference	Popular Culture Association of the South
Consortium on Negotiation & Conflict Resolution	Portrait Society of Atlanta
Delta Gamma Society of UGA	Science Fiction Research Association
Eureka College Sports Hall of Fame	Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society
Fine Arts Society of Middle Georgia	Slayage Conference on the Whedonverses
Georgia Academy of Science	Snake Nation Press Conference on Literature
Georgia Association for Nursing Education	Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts
Georgia Association of Economics and Finance	South Central Modern Language Association
Georgia Education Advancement Council	Southeastern Theatre Conference
Georgia National Fair	Southeast Conference on Language & Literature
Georgia Nurses Association	Southern Political Science Association
Georgia Perimeter College Mathematics Conf.	Southern Women Writer's Conference
Georgia Political Science Association	Study Abroad Program-Gordon College
Georgia Psychological Society	Student Success in First Year Composition
Georgia Undergraduate Research Program-	Task Force to Strengthen Teaching & Learning of
Kennesaw State University	Undergraduate Psychological Science
Georgia State University	Teaching Matters Conference on Pedagogy
Georgia Sociological Association	Trollope and Gender Conference- Exeter
Griffin RESA area middle school teachers	University of Wales
Griffin Technical College	University of South Carolina
	Who's Who Among America's Teachers

### **A3. Accomplishments Pertaining to Excellence in the Teaching and Learning Environment**

*Complementing Gordon's fifth strategic priority on educational technology and its sixth strategic priority on facilities and administrative technology, the Regents' Core Mission Statement for Two Year Colleges mandates "A **commitment to a teaching/learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, that sustains instructional excellence, functions to provide University System access for a diverse student body, and promotes high levels of student learning.**"*

Hightower Library averaged 2,750 student visits per week during the fall and spring semesters of FY 06. This figure denotes a small decrease from last year's 3,262 because more students are accessing electronic materials, databases and electronic books on their home computers. Gordon College faculty and staff initiated 17,005 circulation transactions (an increase of 636) during the 2005-2006 academic year. This includes circulating books, reserves, GIL Express, and ILL. The collection grew to 95,501 volumes (a 2.2% increase) and presently houses 8,673 microforms and 5,557 audio-visual materials. Underscoring the library's role as a focal point for campus learning, the Library staff conducted 150 bibliographic sessions (4 more than last year) for 3,715 students and 43 classes involving 901 students who met in the Library for reference work.

The library paid for the full text database CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) for our nursing students and obtained funding from the Student Government for technology funds, providing another database, RESEARCH LIBRARY because GALILEO dropped this database from its holdings. The RESEARCH LIBRARY provides abstracts and indexing for over 2,600 journals as well as full text for over 1,700 scholarly and general magazines that cover the core curriculum. There were 119,674 keyword searches done in GALILEO databases for FY06. The library also provides Books in Print (BIP) which are used heavily by both the Bookstore and faculty. The library also provides Newsbank, a database containing articles from papers in all 50 states. Two librarians obtained the rank of Associate Professor this last year.

Among the many student activity events held last year, the Black History Month events in February were some of the best attended due to faculty support and email announcements. The event has been a significant effort in educating students outside the classroom in creative ways.

Gordon's Spanish professor, Karen Guffy, has directed a successful Study Abroad program now in its seventh year. This is an effective immersion program that takes students to Barcelona for four weeks living with Spanish families, yet is less expensive than other comparable programs. Last year, Gordon College had more students participate than two other state universities with similar programs.

#### **A4. Accomplishments Pertaining to Community Education and Cultural Involvement**

*Complementing Gordon's second strategic priority on community education and its seventh strategic priority on external relations, the Regents' Core Mission Statement for Two Year Colleges mandates **"A commitment to public service, continuing education, technical assistance, and economic development activities that address the needs, improve the quality of life, and raise the educational level within the college's scope of influence."***

As an access point to higher education, Gordon College promotes diverse activities aimed at motivating K-12 students' interest in higher education, as well as encouraging incoming students and informing those in the surrounding community.

- Community Education assisted the Gordon faculty with two major events this year: "Teaching Matters" involving 64 attendees, and The Slayage Conference with 211 attendees.
- Community CPR was offered by nursing faculty member Annette Jackson.
- The Nursing program is continuing to offer "Camp I Can" to incoming first year nursing students with increased retention being the primary outcome. The number of students progressing from the first to the second semester of nursing increased by 5 percent over the previous year.
- Coordinated with Georgia State University, the "Bridges to the Baccalaureate" program promotes minority student participation in the sciences.
- The College entered into three cooperative programs with Darton College; Medical Lab Technology, Histologic Technology, and Health Information Technology.
- Gordon hosted the Regional Georgia Science Olympiad for area middle school students and Math/Natural Science Division faculty participated in many public school activities including serving as science fair judges in many local contests. These annual events bring local high school students to the Gordon College campus and expose them to a collegiate atmosphere while giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills in a competitive setting.
- Nursing and Health science conducted sessions related to health science for both the Science Olympiad and the Academic Contest during the 2005-2006 academic year.
- Coach Ally Carter Hattermann participated in the PumpCAN drive. She and the women's softball team served Thanksgiving Dinner in the cafeteria.

Gordon College's community education program completed its fourth full year of operation. Over the course of the year, the Community Education Department offered 20 instructional programs for K-12 students, 16 mixed-age programs, and 178 instructional programs for adults. A total of 1,393 students (126 more than last year) enrolled in courses offering continuing education units resulting in the award of 1,646.05 CEUs. The public can access the program's web page from which can be viewed the course catalog, press releases, and information on course changes and additions.

The Theater, Music, and Art Departments, along with Community Education, provided a number of cultural activities aimed at both the campus and the community. The Theater Department also staged the following productions:

<i>A Chorus Line</i>	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>
<i>Tartuffe</i>	<i>Sound of Music</i>
<i>Do You Hear What I Hear?</i>	<i>Cinderella</i>
<i>Misery</i>	

## A5. Accomplishments Pertaining to Variety of Programs

*Complementing Gordon's first strategic priority on quality instruction and its third strategic priority on enrollment and student support, the Regents' Core Mission Statement for Two Year Colleges mandates "A high quality general education program that supports well-chosen associate programs and prepares students for transfer to baccalaureate programs...and a limited number of certificate or other career programs to complement neighboring technical institute programs."*

In May 2006, 415 students received associate degrees from Gordon College. To date, this is the largest number of graduates from Gordon. AACC and ASCC transfer degrees were given in 35 different areas of concentration:

Art	Health Info. Management	Physics
Biology	Health/Physical Education	Political Science
Business (transfer)	History	Pre-Nursing
Chemistry	Information Systems	Pre-Pharmacy
Computer Science	Mathematics	Psychology
Criminal Justice	Music	Radiologic Technology
Dental Hygiene	Nuclear Medicine Technology	Secretarial Science
Diagnostic Medical Sonography	Nursing (ASN)	Social Work
English	Nursing (transfer)	Sociology
Foreign Languages	Occupational Therapy	Teacher Education
Forestry	Physical Therapy	Theatre (Drama)
General Studies	Physician Assistant	

In addition to transfer degrees, students were awarded the Associate of Science in Nursing, a program that is marking its thirty-second anniversary at Gordon College. The Nursing Program continues to be the top ranked two year program in the state, with 85 percent of its 2005 graduates and 96.4 percent of its 2006 graduates passing the National Council Licensing Exam (NCLEX). The final results are still pending. The Nursing Division also was awarded a \$253,967 grant sponsored by the Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP) to address the shortage of registered nurses in Georgia by providing a bridge program facilitating the transitions of LPNs to RN's. The program graduated the first LPN to RN class in December 2005. All the LPNs, except for one, passed the NCLEX exam on the first attempt. Of the June 2006 graduates, all of the LPNs passed the NCLEX on the first attempt. The program began the fifth LPN to RN class in June 2006 that will be slated to graduate in June 2007.

## **Section B: Annual Progress in Institutional Strategic Planning**

### **B1. Ongoing Annual Planning Cycle**

The college completed its third full year under the Gordon College Planning Model adopted in 2003. The model's purpose is to integrate strategic and annual planning, and the cycle completed last year included the following steps:

- The Cabinet, along with academic division chairs and administrative directors, put together detailed plans for 2005-2006, stating objectives, outcomes, communications linkages, and timelines. The Office of Institutional Research again prepared a unified summary of all divisions' and departments' annual plans.
- Late in the fall semester, cabinet members prepared reports on progress toward meeting annual objectives for review by the Faculty Senate Planning Committee.
- During the spring semester, the process of formulating the fiscal 2006 budget was linked to the college's strategic priorities.
- In early summer, 2006, the cabinet prepared year-end progress reports on attainment of objectives for discussion at the annual retreat. The cabinet evaluated progress in pursuing strategic objectives and used their findings to outline plans for 2006-2007.
- Planning templates were unified and additional departments were added to the planning process and submitted plans. These included the new office of Public Information, the office of Development, and the four academic divisions of the college.

### **B2. Key Accomplishments of Strategic Priorities**

Substantial progress was made this year on a number of strategic priorities:

- ✓ **Quality Instruction (Priority One)**
  - Gordon's nursing program received an ICAPP grant of \$253,967 to support an LPN to RN bridge program for fiscal 2006-2007.
  - Gordon faculty participated in two major events this year: "Teaching Matters" involving 64 attendees, and The Slayage Conference with 211 attendees.
- ✓ **Community Education (Priority Two)**
  - Gordon again held the Teaching Matters Conference, and, for the first time, the Slayage Conference. Together they enrolled 275 participants.
  - There were a total of 178 programs for adults, 16 programs for mixed age groups, and 20 programs for children K-12. The enrollment for the year totaled 1,393 participants with 1,646 CEUs awarded.

- ✓ **Enrollment Management and Student Support (Priority Three)**
  - New forms were developed to assess the satisfaction of those students and parents attending the New Student Orientations this year. Results will help in making changes to attain greater customer satisfaction.
- ✓ **Faculty and Staff (Priority Four)**
  - Improvement of the advising and registration process for students and faculty.
  - Planning templates were unified and additional departments were added to the planning process and submitted plans. These included the new office of Public Information, the office of Development, and the four academic divisions of the college.
- ✓ **Educational Technology (Priority Five); Facilities and Administrative Technology (Priority Six)**
  - Expanded the wireless access on campus for faculty, staff, and students.
  - Increased the number of buildings on campus with Gigabit bandwidth and separated dormitory connections from the rest of campus.
- ✓ **External Relations (Priority Seven)**
  - Gordon's Office of Institutional Advancement set an impressive, but reasonable goal of \$15,000 for the Annual Campus Campaign for FY 2006-2007.
  - President Larry Weill made individual visits to nearly all members of the Gordon foundation to secure their continued commitment and support.

## **Section C: Annual Progress in Assessing Institutional Effectiveness**

### **C1. Quality Enhancement Plan**

While a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) had been in formulation since early 2005, Gordon College's committee on SACS compliance brought the plan to fruition, in preparing for reaffirmation of accreditation, in 2006. A QEP Committee was formed in 2005 and began research and laying groundwork for the QEP. The plan was based partially on internal surveys of faculty and staff that focused on academic literacy across the curriculum. "Academic Literacy" was defined by the committee as, "the necessary skills, practices, and attitudes for successfully engaging oneself within the academic community and ensuring continued academic progress."

This plan addressed concerns drawn from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) administered in spring of 2005 and Gordon's internal survey of students regarding support for learners, especially in the areas of academic planning, effective study habits, career counseling, coping with non-academic responsibilities, and belonging to a community of learners.

Consequently, by August 2006, crucial initiatives were identified that will improve student performance and persistence including:

- An established Task Force for Academic Literacy in the First Year that will shape and guide the initiatives of the Quality Enhancement Plan including the following:
- An Expanded New Student Orientation that will include a college student expectation survey
- Learning Communities (linked courses that enhance learning and retention) that will enhance broader learning and student engagement
- A First Year Experience Course for Freshmen to begin in fall 2008

### **C2. Faculty Evaluation of Division Chairs**

During the 2005-2006 academic year, continued systematic evaluation of division chairs by faculty was implemented. Standardized evaluation forms were distributed to the faculty for anonymous submission to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who utilized the input in his annual evaluation of division chairs.

### **C3. Survey of Presently Attending Students**

Gordon's Office of Institutional Research conducted the second of what is planned as an annual Survey of Presently Attending Students (SOPAS). Questions on the survey are selected on the basis of input from the entire faculty, staff, and administration of the college, so that the survey addresses issues of specific concern to the Gordon Community. The second round revealed some encouraging indicators of increased student involvement and satisfaction.

- 71.9 per cent of the sample is first generation college students (compared to last years' 65.9) with neither parent having completed a four year college degree.

- 80 per cent “intend” to obtain a two year degree from Gordon (compared to last years’ 79.4) with a stronger commitment to the two year degree from the older, less traditional students.
- Regardless of intention to pursue a two year degree, a significant majority—89.3 per cent—(compared to 92.5 last year) of the students intend to pursue a four year degree.
- On average, Gordon students still spend about five hours in preparation for classes. Class time, preparation, and commuting typically take up an average of 18.5 hours a week for full time students.
- A good majority of students—83.7 per cent-- reported increased satisfaction with the ease of the computerized registration process.
- Almost a third of the students expressed preference for two early afternoon classes. Over 62 % wanted two mornings a week for 75 minutes, while over half desired three mornings a week for 50 minutes. Last year, over a third of the students expressed a preference for more late afternoon classes and 39.6 per cent wanted more evening classes at off campus locations.
- 72.2 per cent of the sample said they would choose Gordon College again as their college of choice.

Results of the survey have been widely used for a number of purposes such as planning student activities, putting together the retention plan, and providing data for the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan.

#### **C4. Ongoing Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness**

Each of the academic divisions of the college conducts assessment activities on an ongoing basis.

The Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences made a number of program improvements based on its ongoing assessment program. Highlights included:

- Learning Support faculty who worked with Prentice-Hall Publishing to develop a math text that was custom made for Gordon College.
- The Physical Science course, PHSC 1011 that was changed from a problems/solutions format to one that focuses on model building and critical thinking.
- A new math course, Math 1001, Quantitative Skills and Reasoning, which was adopted to replace Math 1101, Math Modeling.
- A new textbook that was adopted for CSCI 1301 (Computer Science I).
- A biology manual that was completed for use in Principles of Biology I.
- Seven faculty members who have been nominated for “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers for 2005 and/or 2006.

The Division of Nursing and Health Sciences also employed a number of assessment methodologies:

- 96.4 percent of the 2006 graduates passed the State Nursing Board Exams on their first take. This was up from 85% in 2005. Of the June 2006 graduates, all of the LPNs passed NCLEX on the first attempt.
- The annual post graduation survey of graduates was mailed to 55 graduates with a 17 survey return. Of the 144 possible responses from the eight nursing courses, 142 rated the nursing courses excellent or good.
- A commercial computerized testing program was begun so students have access to testing in certain areas 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the intent of increasing retention.

In addition to the academic divisions, the Office of Student Affairs regularly assessed effectiveness of student programming along several lines of inquiry:

- The Office of Residence Life forwarded to appropriate departments information collected at meetings of the Residence Hall Activity Team and the Residence Hall Safety and Maintenance Team. Appropriate staff met with students throughout the academic year and received input from students.
- Commuter and non-traditional students are targeted and encouraged to participate in student surveys and open forums. Relevant information is forwarded to appropriate departments for consideration. There were several new activities implemented based on survey results, particularly the annual Student Activities Survey in the spring. These included additional recreational and counseling activities. One, in particular, was the introduction of Study Hall Sessions begun in spring 2006. These involve putting students together within their disciplines/major to study, discuss coursework, and exchange notes in order to enhance academic success and persistence.
- Student Services introduced new assessment forms in 2006 to survey parents and students after completing the New Student Orientations. These are showing favorable results, but comments and suggestions are already helping to shape the structure of the orientations and identify the expected outcomes.

## Section D: Improving Student Retention and Graduation

### D1. Ongoing Attainment of Retention Goals

In 2004-2005, the retention rate dropped nearly four points, close to the 55.6% in 2001-2002. For the last several years, Gordon's retention rates have varied greatly. The retention rate for 2005-06 was 55%. While one of our objectives has been to bring this rate back in line to the trend over the last five years, we also have to adjust retention targets for next year to about 59% to accommodate increasingly underprepared cohorts of freshmen under the open admissions policy. However, Gordon anticipates increasing these rates as initiatives in the Quality Enhancement Plan unfold over the next few years.

	2002 to 2003	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006
Retention Target:	57.0%	58.4%	59.8%	61.2%
Attained Retention	58.3%	60.0%	55.9%	55.0%

An evaluation of more recent transfer rates and system-wide retention, critical to Gordon's mission as an access point to the University System of Georgia, awaits data from the Board of Regents.

Gordon College has undertaken several initiatives over the last few years which will help in pursuing retention goals.

- The Nursing Program's Camp-I-Can program, in which newly matriculating nursing students along with their families complete orientation sessions familiarizing new students with the routines, requirements, and demands of the Nursing program, continues successfully and has retention as a primary objective. The number of students progressing from the first semester to the second in nursing has increased by 5% over the previous year.
- The Department of Student Affairs continued to provide a broad range of activities and clubs through both Campus Programming and Athletics and Recreation. A special effort was made to schedule additional daytime activities in order to engage commuting and non-traditional students in the college community.

### D2. Gordon College Retention Plan

Gordon's Regents' Test Task Force was charged more than a year and a half ago to "achieve greater coordination among faculty, especially English and Learning Support faculty, and resources in preparing students to pass the Regents' Test and carry improved writing and reading skills with them as they graduate." The Chair of Humanities, under which the Regents' Test is administered and under whom English and Learning Support (LS) courses fall, has been working this year with faculty to accomplish the following:

- Developed further the English 1102 course objective concerning the Regents' Test, giving it more emphasis and detail.
- Enhanced conditions for testing by posting signs during testing and notifying Plant Operations personnel of test dates and times. Noise outside testing rooms from students and grounds work had been distracting students during past tests.
- Changed college policy so that students are not allowed to take the test until after they complete English 1102, unless students have earned 30 credit hours. The new policy took effect in fall 2006.
- Hired an ESL-qualified professor in Learning Support and instituted an ESL program. Non-native speakers of English now take the ESL COMPASS exam and may be placed into ESL sections of Learning Support Reading and English.
- Developed the Writing Center as a resource for further improving student skills in writing and reading. More workshops in Citations, Quotations and Paraphrasing have been held and additional workshops are scheduled this fall in Comma Use, Fragments, and Splices; there has been strong encouragement for faculty referrals, using a form that allows tracking; The ESL professor tutors in the Writing Center. In the 2005-2006 academic year, Writing Center attendance increased 87% over the previous year. Exactly 1,112 writing tutorial sessions were held, which is about a 250% increase over the previous year.
- Developed a website with a link on the college's homepage providing items such as:
  - a summary of general information about the test and additional practice reading tests;
  - A link to the BOR Regents' Test site;
  - Additional practice reading tests;
  - Information about Writing Center help and resources;
  - Test registration information, deadlines, and test dates;
  - Web links and print resources for additional help.
- Plan to procure a full-time Writing Center Coordinator, or faculty member with 12 hours release time. This will occur once a Student Success Center is created.
- Proposed the following changes in the Learning Support program:
  - Change the credit hour status for LS classes from 3 to 4 credits.
  - Convert the current curriculum which has one level of LS English and Reading to two levels each.
  - Raise the COMPASS placement scores. This change, based on performance data of ENGL 1101 students who exited LS English and Reading, will place more students needing remedial work into the LS program.

### **D3. Learning Support Program**

The Learning Support (LS) faculty in English and Reading, under the Division of Humanities, continues to operate the Minority Advising Program (MAP). Each semester, these Learning Support faculty follow up with personal contacts of all students in Learning Support English and Mathematics who have failed their LS courses and regular for-credit courses at midterm. The purpose is to circumvent any stop-out or drop-out situations and encourage students to continue with LS assistance, thus encouraging enrollments and continued learning. The English and Reading LS faculty is provided a complete data chart of these students by the Office of Institutional Research.

While an increasing number of Gordon's entering students require some Learning Support, an increasing number of students are passing the LS courses and taking the required core. By way of illustration, the Learning Support Report for fall 2005 indicated that of the students who completed ENGL 0098 and took ENGL 1102, 74% passed with a "C" or better. The mean point average was 2.08. Of the non-Learning Support students taking the same course, 79.9% passed with a "C" or better and had a mean score of 2.47. In addition, of the students who completed READ 0098 and took ENGL 1102, 78.9% passed with a "C" or better and averaged a 2.26 GPA. Of the non-Learning Support students who took ENGL 1102, 78.7% passed with a "C" or better and had a 2.41 average GPA.

Information was collected to determine the number of Learning Support students who graduated from Gordon College. Of the 433 who graduated in May 2006, 147 (33.9%) were enrolled in at least one Learning Support course. This is the largest percentage to date of such students graduating.

The above illustrates, as it has for the last several semesters, that the Learning Support Program is doing what it was designed to do: provide solid foundational preparation for students proceeding on to requisite courses in English and Math and eventually progressing on to graduation and transfer.

### **D4. Quality Enhancement Plan**

As stated in Section C, the Quality Enhancement Plan addresses concerns regarding retention of and support for students. By strengthening the academic literacy skills of our students, they will be better prepared for success in pursuit of the Associate's Degree and amplify their potential for completing a Bachelor's Degree program at transfer institutions. Several skills, practices, and attitudes were identified in the Plan as those that would evidence success:

- A working knowledge of the policies and procedures of the college
- An ability to locate and utilize resources to the fullest extent
- An appreciation of the college's history and continued mission
- A willingness to interact with diverse faculty, staff, and students
- An understanding of the connection of knowledge with learning
- An active awareness of the different expectations of college
- A mature and respectful classroom presence
- An overall sense of connection to the Gordon College community

## **Section E. Management of Campus Conflict and Change**

Fortunately, there were no personal conflict resolution issues to handle again this year at Gordon College. It is also worth noting that Gordon College enjoys a well-structured organization and process for dealing fairly with actual and potential conflict whether that involves faculty, staff, or students.

Grievance procedures for faculty and staff outline the steps necessary for redress and the responsibilities of the Grievance Committee. These are found in the College Statutes on the college website, [www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter3D.pdf](http://www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter3D.pdf) . The Staff Council, which is essentially all employed staff at Gordon College, and the Faculty Senate have met and elected members for a new Grievance Committee for 2005-2006.

In the same Statutes, there is found Appeal of Academic Evaluation and Student Conduct (Academic Irregularity) [www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter5A1.pdf](http://www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter5A1.pdf) , as well definitions and procedures for handling issues of sexual harassment, [www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapterE5.pdf](http://www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapterE5.pdf) .

The Academic Judicial Committee determines if and when a student violates college policy or regulations and “recommends appropriate discipline when deemed necessary.” The Academic Judicial Committee meets as needed when a grievance is filed. “The Faculty Senate Chair will select, by lot, a panel of four faculty and three students to serve on the committee for that grievance. .” [www.gdn.edu/statutes/AppendixA.pdf](http://www.gdn.edu/statutes/AppendixA.pdf)

The responsibility for ensuring compliance and continual affirmation implementation of the Equal Employment and Affirmative Action policies is assigned to the Director of Human Resources, Ms. Peggy Warren, who is designated the Affirmative Action Officer of the College. Dr. Peter Boltz, communications faculty, is Gordon’s designated liaison for Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR). ADR is a confidential process intended to be non-threatening and accessible to all employees and students of Gordon College and employs mediation that seeks mutually agreeable terms for resolution of conflict. See: [www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter3D.pdf](http://www.gdn.edu/statutes/chapter3D.pdf).

## **Section F. Overall Institutional Health**

Gordon plays a unique role in the higher education of Middle Georgia. Located on the boundary between two growing metropolitan areas, Gordon provides a full range of services to residential and commuting students alike. With primary focus on both access and excellence, Gordon continues to seek ways to expand the contribution it makes to the education and culture of its community, even in an environment of growing budgetary constraints. Gordon has obtained state funding for planning our Academic Success and Retention Center, which will maximize all of our students’ opportunities for success, and we will continue to seek funding for construction.

The Gordon Foundation continues to play a critical role in supporting and promoting higher education in Middle Georgia and Gordon College. Each year the advancement office conducts an annual giving campaign for off-campus donors. Community members, business leaders, organizations, friends, and all of the College's alumni are approached. Total philanthropic giving was \$106,968 in academic year 2005-2006 and there were a total of 415 donors contributing to the Foundation last year, a record for Gordon College. The Foundation's corpus for the year is now over \$6 million.

During the 2005-2006 academic year the Office of Institutional Advancement took new initiatives in its marketing and public relations:

- The annual *Presidents' Report* magazine is now in its fourth year of publication.
- Unrestricted funds in 2005-06 supported events like the Georgia Academy of Science, Nursing Luncheon, Alumni Association meetings, the district meeting of the Regents plant operations group, a Legislative Breakfast, and the Academic Contest.
- Plans are drawn for another faculty/staff annual giving campaign with a goal of \$15,000 in annual giving.
- An Alumni Relations Coordinator and Public Information Coordinator were hired this last year to better address the needs of a growing alumni and wider community capital outreach.

Gordon's reaffirmation process, which culminated this fall, proceeded well. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was well-received by the visiting reviewers and along with its committed faculty, administration, and Learning Support endeavors, Gordon is confident that its QEP will contribute greatly to the increased development and retention of students. Additionally, an internal Comprehensive Program Review will commence this year headed by the College's Assessment Committee. The expected outcomes and achievements stated in this report will provide a significant set of changes and structures that will keep the college's mission as a point of access solidly unchanged and will endeavor to place Gordon as a benchmark college in the west central Georgia region.