

## Table of Contents

<a href="#"><u>Institutional Summary</u></a> .....	2
<a href="#"><u>Section One: Abstract</u></a> .....	21
<a href="#"><u>Section Two: Background</u></a> .....	26
<a href="#"><u>Section Three: Assessment of the Need</u></a> .....	37
<a href="#"><u>Section Four: Description of Change</u></a> .....	44
<a href="#"><u>Section Five: Faculty</u></a> .....	51
<a href="#"><u>Section Six: Library and Learning Resources</u></a> .....	57
<a href="#"><u>Section Seven: Student Support Services</u></a> .....	70
<a href="#"><u>Section Eight: Physical Resources</u></a> .....	76
<a href="#"><u>Section Nine: Financial Resources</u></a> .....	84
<a href="#"><u>Section Ten: Evaluation and Assessment</u></a> .....	98
Section Eleven: Appendices (appendices notebook).....	117



*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges*

**INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY FORM  
PREPARED FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Name of Institution:** Proposed Consolidation of Albany State University and Darton State College to become the new and expanded Albany State University

**Name, Title, Phone number, and email address of Accreditation Liaison**

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**IMPORTANT:**

**Accreditation Activity (*check one*):**

- ☐ Submitted at the time of Reaffirmation Orientation
- ☐ Submitted with Compliance Certification for Reaffirmation
- ☐ Submitted with Materials for an On-Site Reaffirmation Review
- ☐ Submitted with Compliance Certification for Fifth-Year Interim Report
- ☐ Submitted with Compliance Certification for Initial Candidacy/Accreditation Review
- ☒ Submitted with Merger/Consolidations/Acquisitions
- ☐ Submitted with Application for Level Change

**Submission date of this completed document:** September 15, 2016

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

### 1. Level of offerings (Check all that apply)

- ☒ Diploma or certificate program(s) requiring less than one year beyond Grade 12
- ☐ Diploma or certificate program(s) of at least two but fewer than four years of work Beyond Grade 12
- ☒ Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the Equivalent designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- ☒ Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the Equivalent not designed for transfer
- ☒ Four or five-year baccalaureate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 120 Semester hours or the equivalent
- ☐ Professional degree program(s)
- ☒ Master's degree program(s)
- ☒ Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (such as Specialist in Education)
- ☐ Doctoral degree program(s)
- ☐ Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Types of Undergraduate Programs (Check all that apply)

- ☒ Occupational certificate or diploma program(s)
- ☒ Occupational degree program(s)
- ☒ Two-year programs designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- ☒ Liberal Arts and General
- ☒ Teacher Preparatory
- ☒ Professional
- ☐ Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## GOVERNANCE CONTROL

*\* If an institution is part of a state system or a corporate structure, a description of the system operation must be submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. See Commission policy "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports" for additional direction."*

<b>INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS</b>
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***Please address the following and attach the information to this form.***

**1. History and Characteristics**

**Provide a brief history of the institution, a description of its current mission, an indication of its geographic service area, and a description of the composition of the student population. Include a description of any unusual or distinctive features of the institution and a description of the admissions policies (open, selective, etc.). If appropriate, indicate those institutions that are considered peers. Please limit this section to one-half page.**

**The Proposed Consolidated Albany State University**

Pending December 2016 SACSCOC approval and subsequent January 2017 approval by its governing board, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG), an expanded Level IV Albany State University (ASU) will be formed by the consolidation of two independent and largely complementary SACSCOC-accredited University System of Georgia member Institutions: Albany State University (ASU) (Level IV) and Darton State College (DSC) (Level II). The expanded Level IV ASU will offer certificates, transfer associate degrees, and career associate degrees, as well as bachelor's, master's, and specialist degrees. Curricular consolidations will be necessary only in the overlapping Core Curriculums and the RN to BSN degree programs of the two institutions. Other active educational programs of ASU and DSC prior to consolidation are largely complementary and will continue to be offered at the new ASU. The three Schools at DSC and the four Colleges at ASU will be consolidated into five Colleges at the new ASU.

The consolidated university's main campus will be ASU's current campus in Albany, GA (Dougherty County), and will be known as ASU East. ASU East will continue to be the home for four of ASU's existing colleges. Those existing four colleges will be renamed as College of Arts and Humanities, College of Business, College of Sciences and Technology, and College of Education. DSC's current campus, 5.3 miles away, and also in Albany, GA (Dougherty County), will be known as ASU West. ASU West will be a full-service satellite campus of the new ASU. Many of the current DSC degree programs will continue to be offered there, and that campus will be the home for the new Darton College of Health Professions of Albany State University. Learning Support (remedial) programs will also continue to be offered at that campus along with core curriculum courses.

The consolidated ASU will continue to offer a small number of degree programs at six other off-campus instructional sites at the Cordele Center (Cordele, GA), East Georgia State College (Swainsboro, GA), South Georgia State College (Waycross, GA), Southern Regional Technical College (Cairo, GA), Oconee Fall Line Technical College

(Thomasville, GA), and the Sandersville, GA site (near Archbold Memorial Hospital). ASU will also continue to offer a consolidated and broad array of online degrees and certificate programs. (See Table on pg. 12)

The consolidated university will serve almost 9,000 traditional and non-traditional students, with seven out of ten being women and minorities. Approximately one-half of the consolidated university's students will be minorities. On-campus student housing at full capacity will total approximately 2361 residents. The consolidated institution will retain ASU's selective standards for freshman admission to baccalaureate programs, but will also incorporate DSC's access standards for freshman admission to the new ASU's certificate and associate degree academic pathways. Admission to some associate degree programs offered at the new Darton College of Health Professions at ASU will continue to be selective.

### **Albany State University (prior to consolidation)**

Albany State University (ASU) is a nationally recognized Historically Black College and University (HBCU), located in Albany, GA, a progressive city with a population of 95,000. ASU has been a catalyst for change in the region from its inception as the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute, to its designation as a University. Founded in 1903 to educate African American youth, the University proudly continues to fulfill its historic mission while also serving the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population. A progressive institution, ASU seeks to foster the growth and development of the region, state and nation, through teaching, research, creative expression, and public service. Through its collaborative efforts, the University responds to the needs of all its constituents and offers educational programs and services to improve the quality of life in southwest Georgia.

The primary mission of ASU is to educate students to become outstanding contributors to society. Offering bachelor's, master's, education specialist degrees, and a variety of non-degree continuing education programs, the University emphasizes the liberal arts as the foundation for all learning by exposing students to the humanities, fine arts, social sciences and the natural sciences. Global learning is fostered through a broad-based curriculum, diverse university activities, and the expanding use of technology. ASU encompasses four colleges: College of Arts and Humanities, College of Business, College of Education, and College of Sciences and Health Professions.

Both traditional and non-traditional students comprise the University's Fall Semester 2015 student population of 3,492 students, with an average undergraduate age of 24 years and 89% of the students identified as Black or African American. Headcount enrollment has been declining in recent years. ASU utilizes a selective admissions process in accordance with the University System of Georgia, Board of Regents' (USGBOR) admissions policies in which prospective students needing learning support (remedial studies) are typically not admitted. Currently, many freshmen who are not eligible for admission to ASU, secure admission to DSC and enter ASU later as transfer students. ASU has off-campus instructional sites in Waycross, GA and Cairo, GA. (See Table on pg. 13)

### **Darton State College (prior to consolidation)**

Darton State College (DSC), formerly Darton College and Albany Junior College, was chartered by the Board of Regents in 1963 as a two-year unit (junior college) of the University System of Georgia. The college first opened its doors in Albany, GA as Albany Junior College in September of 1966, with an enrollment of 620 students. The early focus of the institution was on lower-division transfer to four-year baccalaureate programs, and that emphasis continues today. However, the institution has grown rapidly in enrollment, mission, and degree offerings, especially in career associate degree programs in the health sciences and in online program delivery.

The college has undergone two major identity changes during its existence, leading to changes in enrollment, mission, and degree offerings. The first was in 1987 when the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia dropped the word “junior” from all state two-year schools. A committee of faculty, staff, students and community members chose the name Darton College to replace Albany Junior College as the college’s name. Darton is an Old English word meaning “town or city by the water,” which connotes Albany’s location on the Flint River, which flows through downtown Albany. The second change occurred when the Board of Regents, of the University System of Georgia, approved the college’s mission, and sector change to state college status June 1, 2011, and the school’s name was changed again. This time, Darton College became Darton State College to reflect the school’s change from a two-year institution to a four-year college. The college’s first baccalaureate degree (BSN) was awarded after summer 2013.

Today, Darton State College’s principal mission is to serve as an associate-dominant/limited baccalaureate level, access institution, offering quality educational programs and services targeted to respond to the economic development and workforce needs of the southwest Georgia region. Its access admission standards entail substantial instruction in learning support (remedial) studies. Darton State College seeks to contribute to the quality of life by fostering and maintaining a teaching/learning environment that sustains instructional excellence and a commitment to life-long learning for a diverse body of students.

In Fall Semester 2015, DSC’s enrollment stood at 5,471 students. Headcount enrollment has been declining in recent years. Mean student age is 27 and median age is 23. The predominant ethnicities of students are Caucasian (49%) and African American (45%). Approximately 74% percent of the student population is comprised of women and 26% is comprised of men. DSC has a large population of online students, with 65% taking at least one class online and 35% taking all classes online. Currently, substantially more Darton students transfer to ASU than any other institution in the USG.

DSC encompasses three schools: School of Humanities, Social Science & Business, School of Math, Science, and Computing, and School of Health Professions. Darton State College currently offers a broad array of associate-level degree programs, certificate programs, and most recently, select baccalaureate degree(s).

Between the years 2008 and 2013, DSC constructed six new buildings and renovated two others. The original campus, a 100-acre site with six buildings in west Albany, has grown to more than 180 landscaped acres with sidewalks, paved parking lots, more than 15 academic and administrative buildings, residence halls, athletic facilities, and auxiliary buildings. DSC has off-campus instructional sites in Cordele, Thomasville, Sandersville, and Swainsboro.

## 2. List of Degrees

**List all degrees currently offered (A. S., B.A., B.S., M.A., Ph.D., for examples) and the majors or concentrations within those degrees, as well as all certificates and diplomas. For each credential offered, indicate the number of graduates in the academic year previous to submitting this report. Indicate term dates.**

The USG is in the process of updating their website for degrees and majors for Albany State University and Darton State College. The proposed consolidated listing of active and continuing degree programs for the new ASU is provided below. The numbers of degrees awarded in FY 2015 include the following terms: summer 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015 (per the annual IPEDS submission).

**FY 2015 Terms: summer 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015 (per the annual IPEDS submission)**

CONTINUING CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS			
Active & Continuing Certificate Programs (Post-Consolidation)	Originating Institution	ASU Certificates Awarded Fiscal Year 2015	DSC Certificates Awarded Fiscal Year 2015
Certificate of Less than One Year in Addiction Counseling	DSC		13
Certificate of Less than One Year in Advanced Management	DSC		2
Certificate Less than One Year in Church Music	DSC		1
Certificate Less than One Year in Computed Tomography	DSC		1
Certificate of Less than One Year in Emergency Medical Technician	DSC		7
Certificate of Less Than One Year in Instructional Technology	DSC		2
Certificate Less than One Year in Graphic Arts	DSC		2
Certificate of Less than One Year in Histology	DSC		11
Certificate of Less Than One Year in Management	DSC		2

Certificate of Less than One Year in Medical Coding	DSC		1
Certificate of Less than One Year in Legal Assistant/Paralegal	DSC		2
Certificate of Less than One Year in Phlebotomy Technician	DSC		9
One-Year Certificate in Computer Technology	DSC		0
One-year Certificate in Criminal Justice Management	DSC		2
One-year Certificate in Emergency Medical Service	DSC		8
<b>CONTINUING TRANSFER ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Active and Continuing Degree Programs (Post-Consolidation)</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>ASU Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>DSC Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>
Associate of Arts, Core Curriculum	DSC		57
Associate of Science, Core Curriculum	DSC		355
<b>CONTINUING CAREER ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Active and Continuing Degree Programs (Post-Consolidation)</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>ASU Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>DSC Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>
Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene	DSC		13
Associate of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography	DSC		9
Associate of Science in Emergency Medical Services	DSC		5
Associate of Science in Health Information Technology	DSC		18
Associate of Applied Science in Histologic Technician	DSC		5
Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory Technology	DSC		18
Associate of Science in Nursing	DSC		242
Associate of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant	DSC		26
Associate of Science in Physical Therapy Assistant	DSC		23



Associate of Science in Radiologic Science *New	DSC		5
Associate of Science in Respiratory Therapy	DSC		22
Associate of Applied Science in Legal Assistant/Paralegal	DSC		11
<b>CONTINUING BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Active and Continuing Degree Programs (Post-Consolidation)</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>ASU Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>DSC Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Accounting	ASU	15	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Art	ASU	8	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Biology	ASU	27	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Business Information Systems	ASU	11	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Chemistry	ASU	7	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Computer Science	ASU	15	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Criminal Justice	ASU	61	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Early Childhood Education	ASU	51	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in English	ASU	2	
Bachelor of Science with a major in Supply Chain and Logistics Management	ASU	9	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Forensic Science	ASU	14	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Health and Human Performance	ASU	36	
Bachelor of Science with a major in Health Information Technology *New	DSC		0
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in History	ASU	3	
Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies	ASU	0	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Management	ASU	56	

Bachelor of Science with a Major in Marketing	ASU	16	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Mass Communication	ASU	20	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Mathematics	ASU	12	
Bachelor of Science with a major in Middle Grades Education	ASU	29	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Music	ASU	5	
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	ASU	15	
Bachelor of Science in Nursing, RN to BSN	ASU, DSC	8	48
Bachelor of Science with a major in Organizational Leadership *New (eMajor collaborative)	DSC		0
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Political Science	ASU	16	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Psychology	ASU	30	
Bachelor of Social Work	ASU	34	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Sociology	ASU	21	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Special Education	ASU	11	
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Theatre	ASU	2	
Bachelor of Applied Science with a major in Supply Chain and Logistics Management	ASU	0	
Bachelor of Applied Science with a major in Technology Management	ASU	0	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Teaching Field - Health and Physical Education	ASU	3	
Bachelor of Music Education	ASU	4	
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Teaching Field - Science	ASU	2	
<b>CONTINUING MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Active and Continuing Degree Programs (Post-Consolidation)</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>ASU Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>DSC Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>

Master of Education with a Major in Early Childhood Education	ASU	22	
Master of Education with a Major in Educational Administration and Supervision	ASU	1	
Master of Business Administration	ASU	23	
Master of Public Administration	ASU	28	
Master of Science in Criminal Justice	ASU	25	
Master of Education with a Major in Middle Grades Education	ASU	8	
Master of Science in Nursing	ASU	18	
Master of Education with a Major in School Counseling	ASU	10	
Master of Social Work	ASU	17	
Master of Education with a Major in Special Education	ASU	9	
Master of Education with a Major in Teaching Field - English	ASU	1	
Major of Education with a Major in Teaching Field -Health and Physical Education	ASU	6	
Master of Education with a Major in Teaching Field - Mathematics	ASU	4	
Master of Education with a Major in Teaching Field – Science	ASU	1	
<b>EDUCATION SPECIALISTS CONTINUED</b>			
<b>Active and Continuing Degree Programs (Post-Consolidation)</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>ASU Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>DSC Degrees Awarded Fiscal Year 2015</b>
Education Specialist with a Major in Educational Administration and Supervision	ASU	22	

### **3. Off-Campus Instructional Locations and Branch Campuses**

**List all locations where 50% or more credit hours toward a degree, diploma, or certificate can be obtained primarily through traditional classroom instruction. Report those Locations in accord with the Commission's definitions and the directions as specified below. Off-campus instructional sites—a site located geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers 50 % or more of its credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree. This includes high schools where courses are offered as part of dual enrollment. For each site, provide the information below. The list should include only those sites reported and approved by SACSCOC.**

**Listing unapproved sites below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. In such cases when an institution has initiated an off-campus instructional site as described above without prior approval by SACSCOC, a prospectus for approval should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.**

The main campus of the proposed consolidated institution will be ASU's current location in Albany, GA. The current DSC campus also in Albany, GA (5.3 miles from the main campus) will become a full-service off-campus instructional site of the consolidated and will be known as ASU West. The Darton College of Health Professions of ASU will have home base operations and program delivery on the ASU West Campus. Most of the degree programs offered at the ASU West off-campus instructional site will be programs that originated at DSC. Others will represent consolidated curricula of overlapping programs currently offered by both ASU and DSC. Core curriculum courses will continue to be offered at both the main campus and the Darton Campus. Learning Support will largely be offered on the ASU West campus. The new ASU will continue to offer degree programs at existing ASU and DSC off-campus instructional sites following consolidation.

**Off-Campus Instructional Sites Offering 50% or More of a Degree Program**

<b>Location</b>	<b>SACSCOC Approval Date</b>	<b>Educational Program</b>	<b>50% or &gt; offered at location (Y/N)</b>	<b>Is the site currently active? (Y/N)</b>	<b>Enrolled students and courses offered at any time during past 5 years? (Y/N)</b>
East Georgia State College 131 College Circle Swainsboro, GA 30401	08/12/2014	Associate of Science in Nursing	Y	Y	Y
Cordele Center 134 11 <sup>th</sup> West Ave Cordele, GA 31015	01/06/2005	Associate of Science in Nursing	Y	Y	Y
	01/06/2005	Associate of Arts in Core Curriculum	Y	Y	Y
	01/06/2006	Associate of Science in Core Curriculum	Y	Y	Y
South Georgia State College 2001 South Georgia Parkway Waycross, GA 31503	07/21/2006	Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Educ.	Y	Y	Y
	07/21/2006	Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice	Y	Y	Y
	07/21/2006	Bachelor in Social Work	Y	Y	Y
	07/21/2016	Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education	Y	Y	Y
	07/21/2006	Bachelor of Science in Special Education	Y	Y	Y
Southern Regional	08/29/2012	Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood	Y	Y	Y

Technical College 1515 Highway 84W Cairo, GA 39828		Educ.			
	08/29/2012	Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice	Y	Y	Y
	08/29/2012	Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education	Y	Y	Y
	08/29/2012	Bachelor of Science in Special Education	Y	Y	Y

**Institutions with off-campus instructional sites at which the institution offers 25-49% credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree—including high schools where courses are offered as dual enrollment—are required to notify SACSCOC in advance of initiating the site. For each site, provide the information below.**

**Proposed Institutions Off-Campus Instructional Sites Offering 25%-49% of a Degree Program**

Location	SACSCOC Notification Date	Educational Degree Programs	< 50% of credits offered at location (Y/N)	Is the site currently active? (Y/N)	Enrolled students and courses offered at any time during past 5 years? (Y/N)
Oconee Fall Line Technical College 310 Park Ave. Thomasville, GA 31792	02/23/2013	R.N. to B.S.N	Y	Y	Y
Near Archbold Hospital 1189 Deep Step Road Sandersville, GA 31082	02/23/2013	Associate of Science in Nursing	Y	Y	Y
Southern Regional Technical College 1550 Highway 84 West Cairo, GA 39828	08/29/2012	Bachelor in Social Work	Y	Y	Y

**Branch campus—an instructional site located geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. The list should include only those branch campuses reported and approved by SACSCOC. Listing unapproved branch campuses below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. A prospectus for an**

**unapproved branch campuses should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.**

Not Applicable: The consolidated university will have no branch campuses as defined by the Commission in that none of the off-campus instructional sites will have budgetary and hiring authority. All off-campus instructional sites will be supported by the centralized administrative support services of the main campus.

**4. Distance and Correspondence Education**

**Provide an initial date of approval for your institution to offer distance education. Provide a list of credit-bearing educational programs (degrees, certificates, and diplomas) where 50% or more of the credit hours are delivered through distance education modes. For each educational program, indicate whether the program is delivered using synchronous or asynchronous technology, or both. For each educational program that uses distance education technology to deliver the program at a specific site (e.g., a synchronous program using interactive videoconferencing), indicate the program offered at each location where students receive the transmitted program. Please limit this description to one page, if possible.**

In response to the changing landscape of higher education, both ASU and DSC have embraced a blended instructional model to meet the learning needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners as well as to provide flexible scheduling options for students with other professional or family responsibilities. Some programs are intentionally designed and marketed as fully online programs, with students taking all coursework online as a separate stand-alone cohort. Other degree programs may be available online but are intended to serve as an alternative delivery mode, providing additional options for flexibility and choice, and are considered convenience options. These programs are generally taken in conjunction with on-campus classes and are not intended to be established or tracked as separate cohorts.

ASU was initially approved to offer distance education February 16, 2005, and DSC was approved January 6, 2002. While neither institution offers correspondence education, both do offer both online and hybrid courses and degree programs. Online courses are defined as courses in which 95 percent or more of the course is delivered at a distance, while hybrid courses are defined as courses in which 50-95 percent of the course is delivered at a distance. In addition to courses offered 50 percent or more online, the GeorgiaView Vista and Brightspace by Desire to Learn (D2L) online learning platforms have been used extensively to provide supplemental and technology-enhanced activities and resources within the majority of face-to-face courses. The list of credit-bearing programs where 50 percent or more of the credit hours will be delivered through distance education is provided below:

## Continuing Online Degree Programs

Continuing Online Associate Degree Programs (50% or More Online)		
Continuing Active Programs Taught Via Distance Education Post-Consolidation	Originating Institution	Synchronous, Asynchronous, Or Both
Associate of Arts, Core Curriculum	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science Core Curriculum	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science in Health Information Technology	DSC	Asynchronous
Continuing Online Associate Degree Programs (50% or More Online)		
Continuing Active Programs Taught Via Distance Education Post-Consolidation	Originating Institution	Synchronous, Asynchronous, Or Both
Associate of Applied Science in Histologic Technology	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory Technology	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science in Physical Therapy	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science in Respiratory Therapy	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Applied Science in Paralegal Studies	DSC	Asynchronous
Associate of Science in Nursing	DSC	Asynchronous
Continuing Online Bachelor Degree Programs (50% or More Online)		
Continuing Active Programs Taught Via Distance Education Post-Consolidation	Originating Institution	Synchronous, Asynchronous, Or Both
Bachelor of Science in Nursing, RN to BSN	DSC, ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership (eMajor collaborative)	DSC	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Management	ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Applied Science with a Major in Technology Management	ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Accounting	ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Business Information Systems	ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Science with a Major in Marketing	ASU	Asynchronous
Bachelor of Applied Science with a Major in Supply Chain & Logistics Management	ASU	Asynchronous

Bachelor Of Science in Supply Chain and Logistics.	ASU	Asynchronous
<b>Continuing Online Master Degree Programs (50% or More Online)</b>		
<b>Continuing Active Programs Taught Via Distance Education Post-Consolidation</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>Synchronous. Asynchronous, Or Both</b>
Master of Education with a Major in Early Childhood Education	ASU	Asynchronous
Master of Education with a Major in Special Education	ASU	Asynchronous
Master of Science in Criminal Justice	ASU	Asynchronous
Master of Science in Nursing	ASU	Asynchronous
<b>Continuing Certificate Programs (50% or More Online)</b>		
<b>Continuing Active Programs Taught Via Distance Education Post-Consolidation</b>	<b>Originating Institution</b>	<b>Synchronous. Asynchronous, Or Both</b>
Addiction Counseling Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Management Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Church Music Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Computed Tomography Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Histology Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Instructional Technology Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Advanced Management Certificate	DSC	Synchronous
Medical Coding Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Paralegal Studies Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous
Graphic Arts Certificate	DSC	Asynchronous

## 5. Accreditation

List all agencies that currently accredit the institution and any of its programs, and Indicate date of the last review by each.

- A. If SACS Commission on Colleges is not your primary accreditor for access to USDOE Title IV funding, identify which accrediting agency serves that purpose.
- B. List any USDOE recognized agency (national and programmatic) that has terminated the institution's accreditation (include the date, reason, and copy of the letter termination) or list any agency from which the institution has voluntarily withdrawn Include a copy of the letter the agency from the institution.
- C. Describe any sanctions applied or negative actions taken by any USDOE-recognized accrediting agency (national, programmatic, SACSCOC) during the two years previous to the submission of this report. Include a copy of the letter from the USDOE to the institution.



<b>Accrediting Agency (Acronym)</b>	<b>Accredited Program</b>	<b>ASU or DSC</b>	<b>Year of Last Review</b>	<b>Determination of Accreditation Review</b>	<b>Sanctions or Negative Actions</b>
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)	Institutions	ASU	2008	Reaffirmed	None
		DSC	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	Associate of Science in Nursing	DSC	2015	Reaffirmed	None
ACEN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing, RN to BSN	DSC	2015	Reaffirmed	None
		ASU	2013	Reaffirmed	None
ACEN	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Nursing	ASU	2013	Reaffirmed	None
ACEN	Master of Science in Nursing	ASU	2013	Reaffirmed	None
Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (NCATE/CAEP*)	Master of Education with a Major in English (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Music Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Music (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Education Administration and Supervision	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Education Specialist with a Major in Education Administration and Supervision	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Counseling for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)	ASU	2014 NCATE/CAEP & CACREP	Reaffirmed NCATE/CAEP & CACREP	None NCATE/CAEP & CACREP
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Science (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None

	Science (Teaching Field)				
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Mathematics (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Health and Physical Education (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Health and Physical Education (Teaching Field)	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Early Childhood Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Science with a Major in Early Childhood Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Science With a Major in Middle Grades Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Middle Grades	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Bachelor of Science With a Major in Special Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
NCATE/CAEP*	Master of Education with a Major in Special Education	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC)	Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)	Bachelor of Social Work	ASU	2007	Reaffirmed	None
CSWE	Master of Social Work	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)	Bachelor of Science in Management	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
ACBSP	Bachelor of Applied Science with a Major in Technology Management	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None

ACBSP	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Accounting	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
ACBSP	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Business Information Systems	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
ACBSP	Bachelor of Science With a Major in Marketing	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
ACBSP	Bachelor of Science with a Major in Supply Chain & Logistics Management	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
ACBSP	Master of Business Administration	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Georgia Addiction Counselors Association (GACA)	Addiction Counseling Certificate	DSC	2015	Reaffirmed	None
Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)	Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene	DSC	2012	Reaffirmed	None
Commission on Accreditation of Education (COAEMSP) Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)	Associate of Science in Emergency Medical Services	DSC	2013 COAEMSP & CAAHEP	Reaffirmed COAEMSP & CAAHEP	None COAEMSP & CAAHEP
Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education	Associate of Science in Health Information Technology	DSC	2015	Reaffirmed	None
National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)	Associate of Applied Science in Histologic Technician	DSC	2011	Reaffirmed	None
NAACLS	Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory Technology	DSC	2011	Reaffirmed	None
Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)	Associate of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant	DSC	2011	Reaffirmed	None
Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)	Associate of Science in Physical Therapy	DSC	2011	Reaffirmed	None
Joint Review Committee on Education in	Associate of Science in Radiologic Science	DSC	New Program	Initial	None

Radiologic Technology					
Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (COARC)	Associate of Science in Respiratory Care	DSC	2016 COARC & CAAHEP	Reaffirmed COARC & CAAHEP	None COARC & CAAHEP
Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)					
American Chemical Society (ACS)	Bachelor of Science in Chemistry	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA)	Master of Public Administration	ASU	2014	Reaffirmed	None

\*NCATE and TEAC merged into the new organization referred to as CAEP.

## 6. Relationship to the U.S. Department of Education

**Indicate any limitations, suspensions, or termination by the U.S. Department of Education in regard to student financial aid or other financial aid programs during the previous three years. Report if on reimbursement or any other exceptional status in regard to federal or state financial aid.**

The consolidating institutions, Albany State University and Darton State College, have not had any limitations, suspensions, or terminations by the U.S. Department of Education with regard to student financial aid programs during the previous three years. Both institutions have been subject to reimbursements of over-awarded federal financial aid.

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## **1. Abstract**

Describe the proposed change, the location, the projected date of implementation and factors affecting the final date, and the organizational structure of the current institution. The date of implementation listed in the prospectus shall be the official effective date of change approved by the Commission on Colleges' Board of Trustees. This date should take into consideration the proposed date of approval by the Commission's Board, the date of approval by the institution's governing board, and U.S. Department Education reporting timelines affecting Title IV funding. The date may not exceed 30 days beyond approval by SACSCOC Board of Trustees.

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## **Narrative**

This Substantive Change Prospectus seeks a December 2016 review and approval by the SACS Commission on College's Board of Trustees of the consolidation of Albany State University (ASU) and Darton State College (DSC), creating the new Albany State University on the official effective date of January 5, 2017. Pending SACSCOC approval for the proposed consolidation, the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG) will vote on January 5, 2017 to finalize the consolidation of ASU and DSC as the new Albany State University, effective immediately, in compliance with SACSCOC policy.

The primary reason for proposing this consolidation to have a January rather than a July effective date is to avoid disruptive delays that could occur in the allocation of federal financial aid to the new Albany State University's students. Lessons learned from previous consolidations in the USG and the US Department of Education (USDOE) suggest that the July option would likely lead to federal financial aid not being available to students in August for fall semester 2017 registration. Such federal funding delays are less likely if the USDOE and the consolidated institution have more time between January and August to process the paperwork required to shift accounts and allocate FY 2017-18 financial aid funding to the new Albany State University in a timely and efficient manner. Thus, the January effective date helps ensure a smooth and positive transition for students throughout this consolidation.

Acting within its constitutional authority as the governing board, the BOR of the University System of Georgia approved pursuing the consolidation of Albany State University and Darton State College at its November 10, 2015 meeting. Georgia's weakened economic condition caused by the deep national recession that began in 2008 resulted in substantial operating budget cutbacks and demands for improved efficiency in all state agencies, including the USG. Georgia's public technical college system completed a number of institutional consolidations to conserve resources and improve efficiency and effectiveness of the impacted technical colleges. In 2011, a new chancellor of the USG and the BOR determined that institutional consolidation were also necessary in the USG to achieve improved institutional efficiencies and effectiveness. Toward that end, the first round of institutional consolidations in the USG was instituted in 2012.

Under the BOR's consolidation initiative, the governing board and the chancellor have instructed consolidating institutions to redirect their freed resources from administrative consolidations to strengthen instructional services, expand academic offerings, optimize access to instruction, and concentrate on other USG strategic imperatives. The ASU and DSC consolidation constitutes a fourth round of USG consolidations and follows in the footsteps of six previous successful consolidations.

Albany State University holds state university status in the USG and offers a wide array of bachelor's and master's degree programs in business, education, the arts, humanities, nursing, social sciences, mathematics, and natural and physical sciences. It also offers the Education Specialist degree. ASU has formal recognition as a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). Its fall 2015 headcount enrollment was 3,492 students. In addition to its main campus, Albany State has off-campus instructional sites in Cairo and Waycross, GA, as well as online degree programs.

Darton State College holds state college status in the USG with a predominantly two-year curriculum focus. DSC serves as the allied health work force education hub of southwest Georgia and awards roughly 400 career associate degrees annually in a wide array of health-related specializations including dental hygiene, nursing, respiratory therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, radiologic science, medical laboratory technology, diagnostic medical sonography, histology, health information technology, and emergency medical services. An equal number of transfer associate degrees are awarded in core curriculum to baccalaureate-bound graduates. DSC recently initiated an RN to BSN degree program. Its fall 2015 headcount was 5,471 students. In addition to its campus, DSC has off-campus instructional sites in Cordele, Swainsboro, Thomasville, and Sandersville, GA, as well as online degree offerings.

This proposed consolidation involves two public institutions accredited by SACSCOC. Albany State University is a Level IV institution and Darton State College is a Level II institution. The New Albany State University will continue to be a Level IV institution and offer associate's, bachelor's, master's, and specialist degrees. Curricular consolidation will occur primarily in the undergraduate lower division courses of the two institutions that comprise general education and the prerequisites for a baccalaureate major in the upper division. Only one baccalaureate degree program is duplicative between the two institutions and requires consolidation (i.e., the RN to BSN). There is no duplication of certificate or associate degree programs that requires curricular consolidation. Consequently, no significant loss of degree program offerings is expected from consolidation. No notable reductions in instructional delivery are expected from consolidation at on-campus or off-campus locations, or in online program delivery. As a consolidated institution, the new ASU will add a fifth college to its academic organization to be called the Darton College of Health Professions, through which many of DSC's degree programs will continue to be offered at their current campus location.

Administratively, there is substantial duplication between the two institutions. Duplicative administrative structures will be consolidated in the new ASU, with reassignment of current administrative and support personnel where necessary and

appropriate. Budgetary savings from administrative consolidation will come primarily from economies of scale and discontinuation of positions that are either duplicative, vacant, or become vacant from retirements or resignations in the near future. The design of the organizational structure capitalizes on and advances the complementary strengths of ASU and DSC to support and administer a large comprehensive university of almost 9,000 students that aspires to grow in size, service, and quality. The proposed consolidation of ASU and DSC, two institutions controlled by the same governing board (i.e., the BOR), will not require changes in BOR membership, structure, or policies.

Located in the same southwest Georgia city of Albany, Albany State University and Darton State College are 5.3 miles apart. The main campus address for the new Albany State University will be Albany State University, 504 College Drive, Albany, GA 31705. It will also be known as ASU East. For U.S. Department of Education purposes, the new ASU will use the existing institutional identification number of Albany State University. The current Darton State College campus will be designated a “full service” satellite location of Albany State University, and be known as ASU West. ASU West will not have the budgetary or administrative independence of a “branch campus” by SACSCOC definition. All budgetary and administrative control for all campuses will be consolidated into a single entity of the main campus in the new Albany State University.

Participation in the planning and implementation of the consolidation is wide ranging and highly representative of all who are affected. A University System Consolidation Working Group, composed of key system-level administrators from all functional areas of the University System Office (USO), meet weekly to review consolidation issues and progress from the System perspective. The lead president for this consolidation, Dr. Arthur (Art) K. Dunning of Albany State University, and Dr. Richard Carvajal, Interim President of Darton State College, co-chair the Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC) composed of approximately 40 faculty, staff, and students from both institutions to work through coordination and implementation issues of consolidation. The CIC created 79 Operational Working Groups (OWGs) with co-chairs and representatives from both institutions in all functional areas of institutional operation to facilitate a successful and smooth transition to institutional consolidation of education programs, support services, and administrative operations.

Significant accomplishments of readiness for consolidation that were achieved from November 2015 through September 2016 include:

1. Presidential notification to SACSCOC of the proposed substantive change involving institutional consolidation;
2. Preparation of this prospectus for review and approval by The Commission’s board in December 2016;
3. Notification of the US Department of Education of the intended institutional consolidation, effective for DOE purposes in Summer 2017 between federal fiscal years for financial aid distributions;
4. Agreement of state auditors to produce FY 2016 Full Disclosure Management Audit Reports for ASU and DSC by September 2016 as required by SACSCOC for consolidation prospectus review and approval;

5. BOR approval of the consolidated institution's name—Albany State University, president—Dr. Art Dunning, and expanded mission;
6. Chancellor's approval of the upper-level organizational structure for the consolidated institution;
7. Presidential approval for filling all senior administrative positions in the consolidated institution's organizational structure;
8. Completion of the Commission's Faculty Roster showing all full-time and part-time faculty and their projected Spring 2017 teaching assignments;
9. Official notification of consolidation for all programs nationally accredited, i.e., Nursing, Education, Business, etc.
10. Preparation of a draft first year-year budget for the new Albany State University that takes into account necessary fiscal separation of FY 2016 income and expenditures for the consolidating institutions through the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2016, before a full consolidated annual budget for FY 2017 takes into effect July 1, 2016.
11. Completion of the required business plan for the consolidated institution;
12. Completion of the inventory of library resources to support the consolidated institution;
13. Impact assessment of the consolidation on physical facilities and equipment;
14. Clarification of the consolidated institution's institutional effectiveness processes; and
15. Identification of strategic goals for the new Albany State University.

In addition, a number of key consolidation initiatives were launched prior to submission of this prospectus. Most of these initiatives are expected to be completed by the end of the 2016 calendar year or before the Substantive Change Committee visit in fall 2017, including:

1. Implementation and publication of consolidated faculty governance/curriculum approval processes and associated policy manuals;
2. Curriculum consolidation at the course level for all educational programs, including general education;
3. Consolidation of the BANNER student records system, the PeopleSoft Financial Accounting system (for FY 2017), and the ADP Payroll system (for calendar year 2017);
4. Preparations to implement early registration in April 2017 for fall semester 2017 classes in the newly consolidated curriculum;
5. Online publication of 2017-18 catalog material on admission requirements, consolidated degree program offerings and course requirements, and other pertinent policies and information needed to demonstrate compliance to the visiting Substantive Change Committee;
6. Preparation and BOR approval of the first operating budget for the new ASU for FY 2017; and

The scores of faculty, staff, and students involved in advancing this institutional consolidation initiative have done yeoman's work over the last 10 months. These servant leaders are confident that the accomplishments listed above establish a strong and



sound foundation of readiness to implement the proposed institutional consolidation in January 2017, and respectfully request approval to proceed.

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## **2. Background Information**

Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the institution's mission and goals and provide evidence of the legal authority for the change (if authorization is by the governing board of the state).

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### **Narrative**

#### **Nature and Purpose of Consolidation in the Context of the Governing Board's Strategic Initiatives**

In his September 14, 2011, report to the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR), Chancellor Henry (Hank) Huckaby announced that a study would be conducted to determine if "any campus consolidations would further our teaching, research, and service missions in a more fiscally prudent way." On November 8, 2011, the USG Board of Regents formed a Special Consolidation Committee of board members and approved [six principles for assessing potential institutional consolidations](#):

1. Increase opportunities to raise education attainment levels;
2. Improve accessibility, regional identity, and compatibility;
3. Avoid duplication of academic programs while optimizing access to instruction;
4. Create significant potential for economies of scale and scope;
5. Enhance regional economic development; and
6. Streamline administrative services while maintaining or improving service level and quality.

In January 2012, the USG announced the proposed consolidation of eight of the 35 public institutions in the USG based on the findings from the BOR's 2011 study and the principles for assessing potential consolidations. By December 2012, the prospectuses for all four proposed institutional consolidations were approved by SACSCOC, effective January 2013. By the end of 2013, all four of the newly consolidated institutions had successfully completed their SACSCOC Substantive Change Committee visits and compliance reviews and were operating as fully consolidated institutions. In a second round of consolidations, a fifth institutional consolidation was initiated by the governing board of the USG in 2013 and was approved by the Commission, effective January 2015. In its January 2015 meeting, the BOR approved a resolution consolidating the fifth pair and announced a sixth consolidation, which was approved by the Commission to be effective January 2016.

Following the success of the first five consolidations and anticipating the Commission's approval and BOR's subsequent approval of the sixth consolidation, effective January 2016, Chancellor Huckaby publicly announced a proposed fourth round of consolidations on November 10, 2015, [recommending the consolidation of Albany State University \(ASU\) and Darton State College \(DSC\)](#). [The chancellor's presentation to the](#)

[BOR on November 10, 2015](#), proposing the ASU and DSC consolidation, described the objective of consolidation this way:

The University System of Georgia is preparing students for the 21st century economy and citizenship. Today the System must look internally to ensure that it has a 21<sup>st</sup> century structure, providing a network of institutions offering the proper range of degrees and opportunities in research and service to students and faculty. The purpose of campus consolidation is to increase the system's overall effectiveness in creating a more educated Georgia.

The presentation pointed out that these two University System of Georgia member institutions with largely complementary educational missions and strengths, located 5.3 miles from each other, could capitalize on the following opportunities as a consolidated institution of nearly 9,000 students:

1. **Creates a university of nearly 9,000 students; largest institution of higher education in southwest Georgia.** Synergistically, the two institutions are stronger as one, than they are as separate institutions, and together, will create a brand that respects institutional history and expands a regional and state footprint that will secure a more competitive position in the marketplace. DSC brings an academic program emphasis in health care services that expands the arts and sciences/professional program focus of ASU. The consolidated university of nearly 9,000 students, projected to be the largest educational institution in southwest Georgia, will provide expanded opportunities to students that they might not otherwise have. The consolidation of ASU and DSC will enable cross-college access to the full range of existing, complementary programs and to a more diverse core faculty with a wide range of expertise. Leveraging the strengths, values, and educational resources of the previous institutions will increase access and quality program availability, strengthening the capability to better serve the educational and workforce needs of the community, region, and state.

Streamlining the functions, administrative budgets, and organizational structures and common infrastructure of both institutions, will eliminate duplicate support services and enable the consolidated institution to realign and redirect resources to bolster the mission of instruction, research, and service that is at the core of higher education for an institution like the consolidated ASU;

2. **Builds on Albany State's HBCU mission and DSC's access mission.** DSC brings a predominant two-year mission into the consolidation that complements the four-year/graduate mission of ASU. Historically, ASU and DSC were both founded to respond to the needs and opportunities in the local community. ASU was initially founded to improve the living conditions and educational attainment levels of the area's African American population, and DSC was founded with the intent to provide open access to higher education to all traditional and nontraditional students in the local community (particularly those being denied admission to traditional 4-year colleges).

Both institutions have proudly continued to fulfill their historic missions, while also expanding their roles to serve the educational and workforce needs of an increasingly diverse student and community population. Moving forward with a combined mission to serve a wide diversity of students and meet the needs of the local community, the consolidated ASU will have a greater impact on economic development and the quality of life of the citizens in the community, region, and state.

While the student bodies of ASU and DSC currently reflect diversity in age, gender and race, the student body of the consolidated ASU will become more diverse after consolidation. Both institutions currently have similar gender representation, with approximately 70% of the student populations comprised of females and 30% males. Predominant ethnicities at DSC and ASU are Caucasian (49% DSC and 6% ASU) and African American (45% DSC and 89% ASU). Nontraditional students (> age 25) comprise 52% of DSC's student population, while 24% of ASU's student population is comprised of nontraditional students. After consolidation, 62% of the student population will be comprised of African Americans and approximately 32% of the student population will be Caucasian, with females still comprising approximately 70% of the student population and males comprising approximately 30% of the population. Nontraditional students will represent approximately 38% of the population.

Both ASU and DSC have similar admissions standards, even though DSC practices open admissions and ASU practices selective admissions. Both institutions act as an access institution to some extent. DSC does not require SAT and ACT scores as part of the admissions criterion, but students must present minimum scores on the ACT, SAT or COMPASS Exam to exempt learning support (remedial) courses in math and English. In fall 2015, the number of credit hours in learning support courses was 4,577 or 8% of the total at DSC; at ASU, the number was 117 credit hours or substantially less than 1% of the total. Clearly, the access mission of DSC leads to a much greater commitment to remedial education in math and English than is present at ASU;

**3. Establishes a simpler path for associate-degree students to achieve bachelor's degrees and builds on recent agreements between ASU and DSC in areas like criminal justice, social work, and forensic science.**

With various articulation agreements already in place between ASU and DSC, consolidation will further facilitate seamless progression for all students. Both institutions currently have high enrollments in common programs such as human services, health services, and business. ASU is already the first choice of transfer for approximately 42% of DSC students transferring within the USG. As one university, students wishing to continue four-year baccalaureate studies beyond the first two-years, will be able to do so without formal institutional transfer, potentially increasing enrollments in those 4-year programs and improving retention rates. Likewise, students wishing to change majors from one of the four-year colleges on the main campus to one of the programs in the

Darton College of Health Professions will be able to do so without institutional transfer;

4. **Builds on the education collaborative among the public education organizations in the community.** Building on previous initiatives of both institutions, the consolidated university will maximize the complementary capabilities and proven successes of ASU and DSC to address the critical need for degree completion, which has become increasingly necessary to sustain an educated workforce. Both institutions have numerous partnerships with regional K-12 educational systems. As the consolidated ASU, those partnerships will be strengthened and expanded. Currently, DSC and ASU have experienced significant success collaborating with K-12 systems through dual enrollment (Move on When Ready--MOWR), early college, and multiple summer programs. While DSC is stronger in its dual enrollment numbers than ASU, the institution brings other K-12 collaborative strengths to the table in terms of summer programs such as the Summer Learning Academy for middle school and high school students and its computer programming and science camps for potential STEM majors.

DSC launched a recruiting effort to increase the program's enrollment by 1,000 students for fall of 2016. DSC's dual enrollment program, MOWR, primarily targets students who excel academically, and admission to the program is based on test scores and high school GPA. ASU also participates in MOWR to attract academically accomplished students, but the institution also targets underrepresented populations (black males, first generation college students, students who have social challenges, and students who have test scores that do not align with ability) through its early college program, which was started with seed money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The early college program is more representative of an intervention strategy and does not use GPA as the primary indicator for admission.

ASU also brings strength to the collaborative K-12 partnerships through the institution's multiple teacher preparation programs. ASU teacher education candidates and faculty interact with public school students at various grade levels as part of field experience and student teaching requirements.

As the consolidated ASU, the existing partnerships of each institution will be strengthened and expanded, supporting the new university's completion agenda. The consolidated institution will also continue the former efforts of both institutions in encouraging participation in employment training and development efforts that create a competitive workforce;

5. **Allows the combined institution to focus more sharply on its economic impact in the region and update curriculum to address regional workforce needs -- for example, the recently approved logistics program at ASU.** These two University System of Georgia member institutions with largely complementary educational missions and strengths, when combined, produce a more formidable institution for facilitating economic

development. Economic development is a long-term, community commitment to improving the local economy and quality of life of its citizens. Low educational attainment levels in Albany-Dougherty County significantly contribute to the area's poverty rate, which is below state average. Streamlining, combining the budgets & recruiting efforts of ASU and DSC, and forging a more comprehensive and efficient array of educational programs will strengthen the consolidated institution's influence and impact on regional economic and community development.

In early 2013, the USG launched its [2013-2018 Strategic Plan](#), which begins with the following statement:

The University System of Georgia will create a more educated Georgia that is prepared for the global, knowledge economy by increasing degree completion, ensuring academic excellence, spurring research and creativity, driving business creation, and making effective and efficient use of resources.

To achieve this mission, the USG identified three strategic imperatives:

1. Academic Excellence and Degree Completion;
2. Economic Development and World Class Research; and
3. Accountability, Efficiency, and Innovation.

Each imperative contains action items that, if completed, will result in the achievement of each strategic imperative. Of these, Imperative 3 - Accountability, Efficiency, and Innovation specifically relates to the consolidation of ASU and DSC as follows:

The USG is committed to pursuing operational efficiencies and being a model steward of resources. Institutional consolidation, reducing administrative costs, closer monitoring of degree programs, and improving and expanding the shared services function all contribute to greater resource management.

Historically, Albany State University and Darton State College have upheld distinct missions and served somewhat different student interests. Prior to consolidation, [ASU has been a SACSCOC Level IV institution offering 50 degree programs](#), including one educational specialist, 15 master's, and 34 bachelor's degrees to 3,492 (as of fall 2015) traditional and non-traditional students. [DSC is a SACSCOC Level II institution offering 16 degree programs and 15 certificate programs](#), including 2 bachelor of science degrees, 2 associate degrees, 12 career associate degrees, and 15 certificates to 5,471 (as of fall 2015) traditional and non-traditional students.

### **The Consolidated ASU Institutional Mission**

Albany State University and Darton State College currently have BOR-approved vision and mission statements (noted below). Their respective vision and missions as well as the vision and mission of the consolidated university are aligned with the strategic imperatives identified by the University System of Georgia. One of the first consolidation planning tasks was to engage the Consolidation Implementation

Committee (CIC) with its broad representation from ASU and DSC constituents of faculty, staff, and students in the creation of a new mission and guiding principles statement for the consolidated ASU. The CIC reviewed the current mission statements from both institutions as presented below.

The current mission statement for Albany State University states:

*Albany State University, a historically black institution in Southwest Georgia, has been a catalyst for change in the region from its inception as the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute to its designation as a university. Founded in 1903 to educate African American youths, the University proudly continues to fulfill its historic mission while also serving the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population. A progressive institution, Albany State University seeks to foster the growth and development of the region, state and nation through teaching, research, creative expression and public service. Through its collaborative efforts, the University responds to the needs of all its constituents and offers educational programs and services to improve the quality of life in Southwest Georgia.*

*The primary mission of Albany State University is to educate students to become outstanding contributors to society. Offering Bachelor's, Master's and Education Specialist degrees and a variety of non-degree educational programs, the University emphasizes the liberal arts as the foundation for all learning by exposing students to the humanities, fine arts, social sciences and the sciences. Global learning is fostered through a broad-based curriculum, diverse University activities and the expanding use of technology. A leader in teacher education, nursing, criminal justice, business, public administration and the sciences, Albany State provides a comprehensive educational experience with quality instruction as the hallmark of all its academic programs. The University embraces the concept of "students first" as a core institutional value and is committed to "education on a personal level." The University advocates the total development of students, especially the underserved, and provides a wholesome academic environment in which students can study, learn and develop through their interaction with fellow students, faculty, staff, administrators, visiting scholars and community leaders.*

The current mission statement for Darton State College states:

*Darton, a state college within the University System of Georgia, is focused on providing a wide diversity of constituent's access to certificate, associate, and select baccalaureate programs of study. Dedicated to serving as an access institution, our College will empower students by engaging them in a student-centered, caring and technically advanced environment through innovative delivery systems. Darton is committed to providing exemplary teaching to students in our community, region, and state. As a multi-campus, residential institution, the College pursues traditional and unique mechanisms to deliver education to its richly diverse student body. In service to the community Darton State College will offer cultural enrichment experiences, continuing education, and economic development programs.*

The CIC proposed a consolidated mission statement that retained the major areas of emphasis from each institution's mission, including offering a comprehensive range of professional and career programs (associate's through specialist) and serving traditional and non-traditional students. The mission statement and guiding principles for the consolidated ASU, which were [approved by the Board of Regents](#) of the University System of Georgia at its March 9, 2015 meeting, are:

The new ASU Mission Statement and Guiding Principles that emerged from consolidation planning are as follows:

### **Albany State University Mission Statement**

*Albany State University, a proud member institution of the University System of Georgia, elevates its community and region by offering a broad array of graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs at its main campuses in Albany as well as at strategically-placed branch sites and online. Committed to excellence in teaching and learning, the University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success. ASU respects and builds on the historical roots of its institutional predecessors with its commitment to access and a strong liberal arts heritage that respects diversity in all its forms and gives all students the foundation they need to succeed. Through creative scholarship, research, and public service, the University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators form strategic alliances internally and externally to promote community and economic development, resulting in an improved quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond.*

The new mission statement is guiding the decisions of all 79 Operational Working Groups and the coordinating Consolidation Implementation Committee as they complete assigned consolidation tasks in preparation for SACSCOC approval to consolidate, effective January 2017, and full implementation of consolidated institution operations at the beginning of fall semester 2017, and the required Substantive Change Committee visit at that time. It is important to note that no substantive reduction is expected in the types and delivery locations of existing degree programs or the quality of support services as a result of this consolidation. Any reductions noted in the combined authorized list of degree programs for the new Albany State University result from the deletion of inactive programs or the efficiencies of consolidating two similar or duplicative programs into one. There is an expectation that the institutional consolidation will facilitate the offering of expanded educational opportunities through the new ASU.

### **Albany State University Guiding Principles**

**Aspire to Excellence.** Albany State University will aspire toward excellence in teaching and learning, thus becoming the first-choice institution for students from southwest Georgia and garnering recognition as a premier southern regional university.



**Embrace Diversity.** As a historically black institution and led by a highly-diverse faculty and staff, Albany State University will embrace diversity in all its forms – including age, gender identity, race and ethnicity, country of origin, religion, ability level, sexual orientation, and veteran status – and seek to foster a similar acceptance and celebration of that diversity.

**Expand Access to Higher Education.** As an access institution, Albany State University will promote student success for all by welcoming students from varying levels of academic preparation, keeping costs low, offering flexible class times and instructional modalities, and pairing high student expectations with exceptional mentoring, advising, and tutoring.

**Elevate Historically Underserved Populations.** Albany State University will recognize and address the many challenges that face African Americans and other students of color, adult learners, first generation students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and others from underserved populations, and form strong partnerships with K-12, government agencies, and community outreach organizations to increase access and success rates.

**Promote Economic Development.** As part of its commitment to teaching and learning, Albany State University will promote economic development in Albany and throughout southwest Georgia by engaging in applied research, aligning its resources in support of identified needs, developing and enhancing academic programs to meet evolving needs, forming broad strategic partnerships, supplying a trained workforce, and fostering a sense of entrepreneurship.

The new mission statement and guiding principles provide grounding for the decisions of all 79 Operational Working Groups and the coordinating Consolidation Implementation Committee as they complete assigned tasks in preparation for SACSCOC approval to consolidate, effective January 2017, and full implementation of the consolidated institution operations at the beginning of fall semester 2017, along with the required Substantive Change Committee visit at that time. It is important to note that no substantive reduction is expected in the types of existing degree programs or the quality of academic and student support services as a result of this consolidation. No closures of any of the off-campus instructional sites of the two principal campuses are expected either. Any reductions noted in the combined authorized list of degree programs for the new Albany State University result from the deletion of inactive programs or the efficiencies of consolidating the two similar programs into one. The consolidation of the disciplinary groups of faculty may result in some changes in office and instructional locations between the two principal campuses based on improved organizational efficiencies and space utilization. There is an expectation that the institutional consolidation will facilitate the offering of expanded educational opportunities through the new ASU in the future.

Based on fall 2015 data, joining these two institutions will result in the creation of a comprehensive university, enrolling approximately 9,000 students and employing

approximately 475 full-time faculty and 842 full-time support staff and administrators. Based on FY 2015 data, the consolidated institution is expected to confer more than 1,604 degrees and 65 certificates annually, offer approximately 70 degree programs and 15 certificate programs. When the FY 2016-2017 budgets of the two institutions are combined, the new institution will operate with an annual budget of at least \$108 million.

As a result, the new university will be well positioned to implement the mission and guiding principles of the new ASU.

### **Legal Authority for Institutional Consolidation**

As reflected in the [November 10, 2015 BOR minutes](#), the USG Board of Regents approved the chancellor's recommendation to proceed toward the consolidation of Albany State University (ASU) and Darton State College (DSC). Pending approval of the ASU-DSC Consolidation Prospectus by SACSCOC in December 2016, the BOR will take final action to immediately approve the consolidation of the two institutions in early January of 2017. The Board of Regents is the governing board for the 29 institutions of the University System of Georgia, which includes ASU and DSC. The Board of Regents was created by the Georgia Legislature in 1931 as "Regents of the University System of Georgia" to oversee and manage all state colleges and universities. The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia has the legal authority to consolidate ASU and DSC based on authority vested in them as stated in the [Official Code of Georgia Annotated \(OCGA\), Section 20-3-31](#):

The Board of Regents shall have power:

1. To make such reasonable rules and regulations as are necessary for the performance of its duties;
2. To elect or appoint professors, educators, stewards, or any other officers necessary for all of the schools in the university system, as may be authorized by the General Assembly; to discontinue or remove them as the good of the system or any of its schools or institutions or stations may require; and to fix their compensations;
3. To establish all such schools of learning or art as may be useful to the state and to organize them in the way most likely to attain the ends desired; and
4. To exercise any power usually granted to such corporation, necessary to its usefulness, which is not in conflict with the constitution and laws of this state.

In addition, [Article I, Section 2 of the Board of Regents Bylaws](#) clearly articulates the authority of the Board over its member institutions:

The charter of the Board of Regents consists of the original charter of the Trustees of the University of Georgia embodied in the Act of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia approved January 27, 1785, and modified by a subsequent Act of the General Assembly of Georgia in 1931, as follows: Be it further enacted by the Authority foresaid, that there is hereby set up and constituted a department of the State Government of Georgia, to be known as the "Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia." The name of the

corporation heretofore established and existing under the name and style, “Trustees of the University of Georgia” be and the same is hereby changed to “Regents of the University System of Georgia.”

The government, control, and management of the University System of Georgia and each of its institutions are vested by the people of Georgia exclusively with the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The Board of Regents possesses such other authority as is granted by the Constitution of the State of Georgia and by acts of the General Assembly.

As noted above, the Board of Regents has exercised its legal authority to pursue Consolidation of ASU and DSC. However, as documented, in Section 3 (Assessment of Need) of this prospectus, the governing board delegated substantial responsibility and authority to the chancellor and his staff, who in turn charged the institutions’ presidents, faculty, staff, and administrators to devise and take appropriate actions to implement this institutional consolidation. With this delegated authority, the chancellor expects the implementation of this consolidation to occur in a manner consistent with the Board’s intent, the best interests of the citizens of Georgia, and the policies, requirements, and standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Substantive changes relating to actions required to consolidate these two institutions and form the new ASU have emerged from collaborations among System and campus governance processes and the authorities delegated to the individuals involved in them, with approvals of the governing board where needed.

### **Location of Proposed Degree Programs**

The campus of Albany State University, located at 504 College Drive in Albany, GA, will become ASU East and serve as the mailing address of record for the new ASU. The central administration will reside on the East campus along with 4 of the 5 colleges of the consolidated ASU and their degree programs. The current campus of Darton State College will be designated ASU West to offer specific degree and certificate programs, as well as learning support instruction. It will be home to 1 of ASU’s 5 colleges and their degree programs. (Since the Darton campus will not have its own faculty and upper administration nor have its own budgetary and hiring authority, it cannot be officially labeled a branch campus by SACSCOC definition).

After consolidation, the current ASU campus will be known as ASU East, and the current DSC campus will be known as ASU West. The list of degree programs that will be offered by the new Albany State University at its main campus, satellite campus, and 6 other off-campus instructional sites previously approved by SACSCOC is provided in the Institutional Summary Form accompanying this prospectus.

### **Section 2 Supporting Documentation**

1. [Board of Regents 2011 Six Principles for Consolidation](#)
2. [Board of Regents November 10, 2015 Minutes – Consolidation Approval](#)

3. [Chancellor's ASU/DSC Consolidation Presentation to Board of Regents](#)
4. [Board of Regents 2013 – 2018 Strategic Plan](#)
5. [ASU Degrees and Majors Authorized List](#)
6. [DSC Degrees and Majors Authorized List](#)
7. [BOR Approval of Consolidated ASU Mission and Guiding Principles](#)
8. [Official Code of Georgia Annotated \(20-3-31\) – Legal Authority](#)
9. [Board of Regents Bylaws– Legal Authority](#)

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### **3. Assessment of Need**

Briefly discuss the rationale for the change, including an assessment of need; evidence of inclusion of the change in the institution's ongoing planning and evaluation processes; and documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the change, where appropriate.

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#### **Narrative**

##### **Rationale for Change – Assessment of Need for Institutional Consolidation in the USG**

As with the previous six institutional consolidations in the University System of Georgia (USG) completed in 2016, as well as the proposed ASU-DSC consolidation, the confluence of four major developments led the University System of Georgia's new chancellor and its Board of Regents to conclude in fall 2011 that they needed to seriously consider consolidating multiple USG institutions. Chief among these major developments was the deep economic impact of the national recession that started in 2008. The slow recovery from that recession continues to significantly restrict Georgia's economy and has resulted in a sustained loss of state funding for the USG and its institutions.

The second major development was the repeated calls by Georgia's governor and Legislature for more cost-efficient operations within all state agencies, including the technical college system and the USG. Pressure to increase cost efficiencies was compounded by the state and federal governments' calls for slowing college tuition increases. Consequently, achieving cost efficiencies involved both adapting to restrictions and cuts in annual operating budgets and consolidating a number of public technical colleges and universities in Georgia. Encouraged by the successes of the first six consolidations in the USG, the Board of Regents (BOR) took action to pursue consolidation of Albany State University (ASU) and Darton State College (DSC).

A third development was the projected increase in public demand for higher education opportunities and services throughout the state, which the Regents are mission-bound to support. The reallocation and re-investment of administrative cost savings resulting from the ASU-DSC consolidation into expanded ASU educational programs and support allows the BOR to respond to public demand for more higher education services in ASU's service area.

The fourth development was the emergence in 2009 of the national Complete College America initiative, intended to improve post-secondary degree completion and educational attainment levels in the nation's workforce and meet projected employment demands in 2020. In 2011, Georgia launched its Complete College Georgia (CCG) initiative aligned with the Complete College America initiative. CCG calls for action plans to improve institutional rates of student retention, progression, and graduation. The comprehensiveness of a university is a key factor in ensuring CCG success. The

ASU-DSC consolidation provides the opportunity for the new university to capitalize on its expanded comprehensiveness to address the needs of undergraduate students to produce higher retention, progression, and graduation rates.

In short, there were both public demands for expanded and increased higher education opportunities in Georgia and increasing constrictions in state funding to support those programs and services. Pressures to do more with less had become a common refrain. The chancellor and BOR concluded that business as usual in the USG was not a sustainable long-term solution and had to change if the BOR's vision, mission, and goals were to be realized. Institutional consolidation represented one strategic solution for meeting those challenges, especially since consolidation would lead to strengthening and expanding educational services in areas that might not otherwise be funded.

The [USG's website for Campus Consolidations](#) defines the primary rationale of consolidation as finding better ways for serving students and the state of Georgia. The USG Chancellor kicked off campus consolidation planning with Board of Regents in fall of 2011 with the following statement:

Looking ahead, we must ensure that our System has the appropriate number of campuses around the state. We need to be organized in ways that truly foster service to our students in the most effective way and ensure our faculty are properly deployed and supported. Therefore, I believe it is time for the system to study if campus consolidations are justified and will enhance our ability to serve the people of Georgia at less cost.

At its November 2011 meeting, the Board of Regents adopted "Six Principles for Consolidation" that were then used by University System staff and the BOR's Special Committee on Consolidation to assess whether any campus consolidations would further the USG's teaching, research, and service missions in a more fiscally prudent way. Since then, 14 member institutions ranging from the System's smallest college to two of its research universities have been identified in Phase I through Phase IV as prime candidates for seven institutional consolidations. Phase IV involves the proposed consolidation of ASU and DSC.

Under the Board's current Strategic Plan, adopted in August 2013, increased efficiencies and effectiveness throughout the System to better serve students and the state is a priority. Consequently, the potential for additional consolidations remains as an active policy of the governing board of the USG.

### **Assessed Potential for ASU and DSC Consolidation**

With 35 colleges and universities in the USG in 2011 (29 now after 6 consolidations), a number of which were operating in close proximity to others with substantial overlap in educational services, institutional consolidation emerged as a logical course of action for the BOR to pursue. The main campuses of ASU and DSC are only 5.3 miles apart, and both are located in Albany, GA (Dougherty County). Their educational missions are largely complementary. For undergraduates transferring from DSC, ASU has been the leading receiving institution. Institutional consolidation offers many opportunities not

only for achieving administrative efficiencies, but also for improved academic efficiencies and strengthened educational programming.

Consistent with the USG mission and strategic imperatives and the six guiding principles adopted for consolidation described in Section 2 Background Information, the BOR's decisions to consolidate 12 member institutions into 6 institutions and now to consolidate ASU and DSC are intended to:

1. Increase institutional and, therefore, System efficiency through economies of scale, reductions in duplicative programs, and streamlined administrative services;
2. Leverage the existing resources of partner System institutions to expand and enhance their collective programs and services to the citizens of Georgia in the future;
3. Combine complementary institutional strengths to enhance regional economic development and undergraduate education to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century students; and
4. Create a more educated Georgia by raising educational attainment levels.

At the November 2015 meeting of the Board of Regents, Shelley Nickel, Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs & Planning of the USG, [presented the following opportunities and challenges](#) that would likely result from the consolidation of ASU and DSC:

#### Opportunities

1. Creates a university of nearly 9,000 students; largest institution of higher education in southwest Georgia
2. Builds on Albany State's HBCU mission and DSC's access mission
3. Creates a larger university that serves the needs of the community and region with a range of degrees
4. Builds on the education collaborative among the public education organizations in the community
5. Allows one institution to focus economic impact in the region and update curriculum to address regional workforce needs
6. Establishes a simpler path for associate-degree students to achieve bachelor's degrees
7. Builds on recent agreements between ASU and Darton in areas like criminal justice, forensic science, and music education
8. Responds to enrollment challenges by concentrating recruitment and retention resources in a single institution
9. Reinvests savings from administrative efficiencies in programs to support student Success

#### Challenges

1. Blending of institutional missions and cultures
2. Declining enrollment and financial resources on each campus
3. Modernizing academic offerings and administrative processes



Following the BOR's approval to proceed, Chancellor Huckaby assigned Shelley Nickel to lead the ASU-DSC consolidation coordination efforts at the System level. The University System Office (USO) Consolidation Implementation Team was subsequently formed and is composed of all lead functional area System administrators and other key USO individuals, led by Shelley Nickel.

### **Evidence of the Consolidation's Inclusion in the Institution's Ongoing Planning and Evaluation Processes**

The consolidation of ASU and DSC is included in ongoing planning and evaluation processes at multiple levels, including the governing board, the University System Office, and the institution. As discussed previously in this section and in Section 2, the decision by the USG Board of Regents to consolidate ASU and DSC links directly to the Strategic Plan and its strategic imperatives of the University System of Georgia. The Board's consolidation decisions were influenced by long-term and ongoing environmental scanning of past, current, and prospective economic and governmental conditions as well as state-level and national concerns about key issues such as degree completion rates, educational attainment levels of the workforce, public demand for higher education opportunities, tuition costs, cutbacks in governmental expenditures, and increased governmental efficiency.

Institutional data on students, faculty, staff, academic programs, finances, and facilities are submitted on a regular ongoing basis by institutions to the System Office and were considered in the Board's consolidation decisions. The establishment of a Special Consolidation Committee of the Board to oversee and participate in the advancement of this new initiative and advise the Board in its related decision-making is additional evidence of BOR involvement in ongoing planning and evaluation processes.

Following the [November 2015 vote by the Board of Regents to pursue consolidation of ASU and DSC](#), the chancellor immediately took action to incorporate consolidation preparations into the ongoing planning and evaluation processes of the USG System Office and its counterpart processes at the institutional level. Having learned lessons from the previous six consolidations of 12 institutions, several decisions were made at the time of the initial action of the Board on the proposed ASU-DSC consolidation to facilitate implementation efforts, including the identification of:

1. A president who will lead the consolidated institution (ASU President Art Dunning);
2. The name of the consolidated institution (Albany State University); and
3. The identification of the consolidated institution's colors and mascot (ASU's current colors and mascot).

In the USG's initial round of four consolidations, these three issues were resolved much later during the process of preparing to consolidate each pair of institutions. Unfortunately, contentiousness arose among various constituencies of the consolidating institutions on these issues, which detracted from the complex work of preparing for effective and smooth consolidations. By resolving these issues up front, the ASU-DSC



consolidation has not been distracted by such matters and has progressed much further and faster than the first four consolidations.

As in the first six USG consolidations, Chancellor Huckaby assigned Shelley Nickel, now Vice Chancellor Fiscal Affairs and Planning, to lead the ASU-DSC consolidation coordination efforts. The USO (University System Office) Consolidation Implementation Team was subsequently formed and is composed of all lead functional area System administrators and other key USO individuals, led by Shelley Nickel. That working group meets weekly to review consolidation preparation progress and make plans for resolving consolidation problems and issues that require System level attention. That group was also responsible for creating the Consolidation Tracker spreadsheet, which contains over 384 specific functional tasks that must be completed by the institutions to implement their consolidation in a comprehensive and effective manner.

Examples of this USO group's key activities include:

1. Coordinating with the U.S. Department of Education for seamless transfer of financial aid accounts to the newly consolidated institutions in the period between the DOE's financial aid fiscal years based on the consolidation schedule;
2. Arranging for September 2016 completions of required financial audit reports for FY 2016;
3. Negotiating with Banner, PeopleSoft, and ADP vendors for assistance in consolidating institutional student, financial, personnel, and payroll databases on those systems; and
4. Coordinating BOR and USO reviews and approvals of institutional mission changes, re-organization plans, institutional budget allocations, etc.

Concurrent with the planning and evaluation efforts of the BOR and the USG, consolidation preparations have been comprehensively incorporated into the planning and evaluation processes at the institutional level. The consolidation implementation process has included broad participation across all academic and administrative areas by faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders at both institutions.

Following the consolidation announcement from the BOR, the presidents of ASU and DSC worked to establish the [Consolidation Implementation Committee \(CIC\)](#), a 40 member team of administrators, faculty, staff, and students (20 from ASU and 20 from DSC), who would work together to provide coordination and collaborative leadership as the new Albany State University was constructed. In an effort to help the CIC navigate the complex process of consolidation, [79 operational working groups \(OWGs\)](#) were established to address how the new university would handle consolidation of all of its programs, services, and support functions. Each of the 900 consolidation tasks identified by the System Office staff and others identified by ASU and DSC were assigned to the appropriate OWG.

The CIC completed its work on a recommended new mission and guiding principles statement for the consolidated institution and the upper-level administrative organization during the first four months of 2016. On March 9, 2016, the [Board of Regents approved](#) the new mission statement for the consolidated ASU. On April 20,

2016, the [senior administrative structure](#) for post-consolidation ASU was released to the campus community and published on [www.consolidation.asurams.edu](http://www.consolidation.asurams.edu).

As the record of [published meeting agendas and notes reflects](#), the CIC has convened regularly since December 2015 to conduct its work in coordinating the OWGs and reviewing and refining their recommendations as consolidation plans unfold. The CIC work is expected to continue into 2017. A running account of [approved CIC recommendations](#) is posted on the ASU-DSC Consolidation website. Some OWGs, such as those involved in course-level curricular issues of consolidation, will continue their work into 2017 in preparation for early registration and the full implementation of the consolidated curriculum in fall semester 2017.

### **Broad-based Involvement in Review and Approval of Consolidation Initiatives**

The involvement of constituents from both ASU and DSC campuses and communities in consolidation planning and approvals has been extensive and broad-based. The 79 operational working groups were co-chaired by ASU and DSC personnel who were selected based on their areas of expertise relating to the focus of each OWG. These co-chairs then selected OWG members from both campuses who had expertise relating to the tasks assigned to each OWG. The membership, final report, and recommendations of each OWG are published on the publicly accessible ASU-DSC Consolidation website, as evidenced by this [example from OWG 7](#).

The 79 OWGs were organized into 22 areas. Each was headed by an area coordinator who sits on the 43-person Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC). Some area coordinators coordinated more than one area.

The OWGs formulated consolidation plans, monthly status reports, and recommendations. The OWG co-chairs forwarded their plans and recommendations to the consolidation coordinator. Before sending the recommendations to the CIC for approval, the master tracker coordinator distributed recommendations for review and comment to leaders of functional areas, including academic affairs, operations, legal affairs, student success, Presidents Dunning and Carvajal and the University System Office. This step assured consistency with the plans and recommendations of other OWGs and governing policies. Recommendations were then distributed to the CIC for review, discussion, and decision. Some plans and recommendations required BOR approval and were forwarded to the BOR for approval. In cases where disagreement existed at the CIC level, the new university's president called for OWG reconsideration and reserved the right to make the final decision.

This approach to organizing the hands-on work of the consolidation process resulted in broad participation from more than 200 individuals across the two institutions. The consolidation committee structure allowed for processes, procedures, decisions, and recommendations to be discussed by individuals with the most knowledge and experience who do the daily work on the complex topics required for consolidation. In addition, in the interest of keeping all members of the campus community and others fully informed on the progress of consolidation planning and approvals, a public ASU-

DSC [Consolidation website](#) is maintained where all pertinent developments, updates, decisions, and materials are posted. The [structure of the consolidation committees](#), has facilitated a flow of communication up and down the levels of review and increased the dissemination of information among internal and external members of the university community.

Finally, in adherence to the commitment both campuses have to share governance, decisions such as curricular changes are going through the shared governance processes on each campus or within a special combined governance group as appropriate.

### **Section 3 Supporting Documentation**

1. [USG Campus Consolidations Webpage](#)
2. [Consolidation Implementation Committee List](#)
3. [Operational Working Group List](#)
4. [Board of Regents Approval of New ASU Mission March 9 2016 Minutes](#)
5. [Consolidated ASU Mission Statement](#)
6. [Senior Administrative Structure Announcement](#)
7. [Meeting Schedule with Agendas](#)
8. [Approved CIC Recommendations](#)
9. [OWG 7 Final Report and Recommendations Website](#)
10. [ASU-DSC Consolidation Website](#)
11. [Structure of Consolidation Committees](#)

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#### **4. Description of the Change**

Provide a description of the proposed change, including any change in degree-granting authority. Provide an organizational chart for the proposed change. Describe the current governing board and the new governing board, listing the rosters for both. The current governing board and the new governing board, listing the rosters for both. The roster should provide titles, board members' occupations and affiliations as well as current term. Describe the current and proposed authority of the Board and address committee of the Board. Explain the role of current owners/board members in the proposed change. Provide the current and proposed conflict of interest and board dismissal statements. Describe any difference in administrative oversight of programs or services.

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#### **Narrative**

The proposed change consists of the institutional consolidation of Level IV Albany State University (Albany, GA) and Level II Darton State College (Albany, GA) in southwest Georgia to create a new Albany State University. No change in Level IV status of the new institution is associated with the consolidation. The main campus of Albany State University (ASU), located at 504 College Drive in Albany, Georgia, will become the main campus of the new ASU. It will be known as ASU-East Campus. The central administration will reside on the main campus along with four (4) of the five (5) colleges of the consolidated ASU. Those four colleges include the: 1) College of Arts & Humanities; 2) College of Business; 3) College of Education; and 4) College of Science & Technology. As previously noted, the current campus of Darton State College (DSC), will become a full-service off-campus instructional site of ASU along with seven other off-campus instructional sites previously approved by SACSCOC to offer specific degree and certificate programs. The current DSC campus will be known as ASU-West Campus, and the fifth college of the new ASU that will be housed there has been named the Darton College of Health Professions.

As a Level IV institution, ASU is authorized to grant baccalaureate, masters, and education specialist degrees. DSC is authorized to offer certificates, associate's, and baccalaureate degrees. The new ASU as a Level IV institution will offer certificates, associate's, baccalaureate, master's, and education specialist degrees. The consolidated list of authorized degree programs for the new ASU is comprised of the degree programs currently offered by the two institutions, after consolidating overlapping degree programs and removing inactive or deactivated programs from the separate lists of the two institutions. More details on the new ASU's degree-granting authority are presented below.

The obvious substantive change is the consolidation of duplicative administrative structures and staffing for two complementary institutions into one organizational structure that will support a larger institution, the new ASU. Changes for much of the new organization's administrative structure will go into effect in January 2017, following

the approved effective date of consolidation. Cost savings from these changes will be redirected to funding other priorities of the new ASU. Organizational changes in the administrative oversight of ASU's programs and services are presented in greater detail below.

### **Changes in Degree-Granting Authority**

ASU and DSC currently have degree-granting authority through the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG). Their institutional consolidation will be approved by the BOR of the USG, with all degree-granting authority transferred to the new ASU. The degree programs and certificates listed in the Institutional Summary Form for the new ASU comprise the educational programs that are expected to continue in the consolidated institution. These are the continuing certificates and degree programs that the new ASU will be authorized to award by its governing board.

### **Organizational Structure for the Consolidated Institution and Changes in Administrative Oversight of Programs and Services**

One of the first orders of business to be tackled by the ASU-DSC Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC) after generating a mission statement for the new ASU was to review and approve the senior-level administrative structure for the consolidated institution, including the academic organization of the colleges. That proposed upper level administrative organization was subsequently recommended by President Dunning to the Chancellor's staff and approved. The [organizational structure](#) proposed is below:

1. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
2. Executive Vice President for Administration
3. Vice President for Institutional Advancement
4. Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation
5. Director of Athletics
6. Chief Legal Affairs Officer
7. Director of Title III

Prior to consolidation, ASU had nine administrative direct reports, and DSC had six, totaling 15 direct reports to two presidents. The new Albany State University will have six direct reports to the president, thereby achieving one of the consolidation's chief objectives – a streamlining and reduction of central administrative positions so that budgetary savings from administrative consolidation can be redirected to other priorities of the new ASU.

Prior to consolidation, DSC's academic structure was organized into three schools and ASU had four colleges, all headed by deans. In May 2016, the two presidents announced an [academic organizational structure of five colleges](#) for the new ASU as follows:

The DSC Health Sciences Division is noted for its 50-year history of providing diverse and comprehensive curricula, which support the healthcare learning needs of students. Programs include nursing, dental hygiene, emergency medical services and health information technology. Albany State University has a long history of preparing nurses and nurse practitioners for careers. Combining the two entities to form the Darton College of Health Professions supports the new

university's desire to offer excellence in teaching and learning, thus becoming the first-choice institution for students, according to Dunning.

"The new college capitalizes on the existing reputation of the Darton name which has been synonymous with excellence in health sciences education in Southwest Georgia," said DSC Interim President Richard Carvajal. "Health professions will continue to be in demand throughout Southwest Georgia and the nation. We look forward to growing the programs as a part of the new university to help with the healthcare needs in the communities we serve."

Through the effective and efficient allocation of resources from ASU and DSC, the new Albany State University will become the premier university for health professionals in Southwest Georgia, according to Dunning.

As the consolidation continues, more detailed information will be released about the Darton College of Health Professions. The names of three colleges will not change under the new university. However, the College of Sciences and Technology is a name change to more strategically align its identity with its academic offerings that lead to degrees in mathematics, computer science and natural and forensic sciences.

The College of Business has academic offerings that lead to degrees in accounting, business information systems, fire services, administration, management, marketing, and supply chain and logistics management.

The College of Arts and Humanities has academic offerings that lead to degrees in criminal justice, psychology and sociology; English, modern languages and mass communication; the fine arts; history and political science; public administration; and social work.

The College of Education has academic offerings that lead to degrees in teacher education, school counseling and educational leadership.

Dr. Art Dunning was Interim President of ASU when the BOR announced its plans to consolidate ASU and DSC in November 2015 and made him permanent president of ASU at that time. The BOR also announced at that time that Dr. Dunning would become the president of the consolidated institution. Consequently, Dr. Dunning not only led the charge to form a new upper level administrative structure for the new ASU, but has been centrally involved in selecting and appointing his new administrative team. As part of that process, new leadership was sought from outside both institutions to fill the key leadership roles of Provost/VP for Academic Affairs and Senior Vice President for Fiscal Affairs, as well as the Director of Athletics. Those three positions were filled this summer, although the Provost's position is filled on an Interim basis pending the outcome of a national search that should conclude soon. The appointments of the five deans have been deferred until the new Provost can be involved in those decisions. Likewise, departmental structures and chair/director appointments will be finalized later in 2016 once the new leaders in academic and fiscal affairs have had an

opportunity for sufficient input into that process. All of the lower organizational structures and administrative appointments for the new ASU are expected to be resolved by the end of 2016 and go into effect in January 2017.

### **Description of Governing Board for the Consolidated Institution**

The governing board of Albany State University and Darton State College is the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG). The Board of Regents will also be the governing board of the consolidated institution, Albany State University. No substantive changes in the governing board's membership, bylaws, or policies will occur because of this consolidation.

[Article I, Subsection 3 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents](#) describes the membership of the BOR. The Board consists of one member from each of 14 congressional districts and five additional members from the state at-large for a total of 19 Board members. Additionally, the [Constitution of the State of Georgia, Article VIII, Section IV, Paragraph 1](#), and the Official Code of Georgia ([OCGA 20-3-21](#)) mandate this policy.

### **Board Roster**

Table 4 reflects the names, titles, occupations, affiliations, and terms of the 19 members of the Board of Regents who will be in office at the time of the consolidation in January 2017. The membership of the Board of Regents changes slightly each year, as reflected in the [FY 2016 membership list](#).

**TABLE 4. Roster of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia for 2016-2017**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Term</b>
C. Dean Alford, P. E.	Regent	President and CEO Allied Energy Services	4 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2012-2019
W. Paul Bowers	Regent	Chairman, President, and CEO Georgia Power	At-large	2014-2020
Larry R. Ellis	Regent	CEO of ESSE	5 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2013-2017
Rutledge Griffin, Jr.	Regent	CEO of Griffin LLC	8 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2011-2018
Thomas Hopkins, Jr., MD	Regent and Vice Chair of BOR	Physician	3 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2010-2017
James M. Hull	Regent	Member Manager of Hull Property Group, LLC	At-large	2016-2023
Donald M. Leebern, Jr.	Regent	Chairman of Georgia Crown, Alabama Crown, and Tennessee Crown Distributing Companies	At-large	2012-2019
Laura Marsh	Regent	Member of law firm Taulbee, Rushing, Snipes, Marsh & Hodgins, LLC	12 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2016-2020
Doreen Stiles Poitevint	Regent	Partner in Stiles Apartments and A.B. Stiles Enterprises	2 <sup>nd</sup> Congressional District	2011-2018
Neil L. Pruitt, Jr.	Regent	CEO of PruittHealth, Inc.	11 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2013-2017
Sachin Shailendra	Regent	President of SG Contracting, Inc	13 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2014-2021



E. Scott Smith	Regent	Board member and secretary of NW Services Corp, board member of Catoosa County Economic Development Authority	14 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2013-2020
Kessel Stelling, Jr.	Regent and Chairman, BOR	Chairman, CEO of Synovus	6 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2015-2022
Ben J. Tarbutton III	Regent	President of Sandersville Railroad Company	10 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2013-2020
Richard L. Tucker	Regent	Managing Partner of Arlington Capital, LLC	7 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2012-2019
Thomas Rogers Wade	Regent	Chairman, Board of Trustees of Georgia Public Policy Foundation and senior partner of Capitolink Inc.	At-large	2013-2020
Larry Walker	Regent	Attorney	At-large	2016-2013
Don L. Waters	Regent	Chairman, President and CEO of Brasseler USA, Inc.	1 <sup>st</sup> Congressional District	2013-2018
Philip A. Wilheit, Sr.	Regent	President of Wilheit Packaging and Marketing Images	9 <sup>th</sup> Congressional District	2015-2022

### **Authority of Board**

The governance, control, and management of the University System of Georgia and each of its institutions are exclusively controlled by the Board of Regents as authorized by the Constitution of the State of Georgia and acts of the General Assembly. That authority was detailed and documented in Section 2 (Background) of this prospectus. This institutional consolidation has no substantive change on the BOR's authority.

### **Committees of the Board**

The committees of the BOR are listed below. A Special Committee on Consolidation was created by the BOR in November 2011 to identify candidate institutions for consolidation and to oversee consolidation processes once approved by the Board. No substantive change in the BOR has been made as a result of the ASU/DSC consolidation into the new ASU.

Standing Committees of the BOR are:

1. Executive and Compensation;
2. Academic Affairs;
3. Organization and Law;
4. Economic Development;
5. Finance and Business Operations;
6. Intercollegiate Athletics;
7. Internal Audit, Risk, and Compliance; and
8. Real Estate and Facilities.

Special Committees of the BOR are:

1. Personnel & Benefits;
2. State Archives;



3. Graduate Medical Education;
4. Consolidation;
5. Searches;
6. Regents Public Library Advisory;
7. Georgia Regents Health System Committee (Private Corporation); and
8. University System of Georgia Foundation, Inc.

### **Roles of Board Members in the Proposed Change**

The roles of the BOR and its Committee on Consolidation were explained in Sections 2 and 3 of this prospectus. Since approving a proposal to consolidate ASU and DSC in November 2015, the BOR has maintained active oversight of the University System Office and its management of institutional preparations for consolidation implementation. The BOR has also been engaged in granting appropriate approvals for key consolidation actions of the new institution such as the new institution's name, presidential appointment, and mission. In 2017, following SACSCOC approval for the consolidation in December 2016, the BOR will grant its final approval for the ASU-DSC consolidation, effective immediately in January, determine tuition and fees for 2017-18 in April, and approve the first consolidated budget of FY 2017-18 for the new ASU in June, effective July 1, 2017.

### **Conflict of Interest and Dismissal Statements**

The Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG) [Policy Manual, Section 12.1](#) states that “The Board of Regents is unalterably opposed to political interference or domination of any kind or character in the affairs of any institution in the USG” (USG, 2011, ¶1).

The Regents undergo annual ethics training as required by Board policy. The training certificates are available for review in the Office of Internal Audit and Compliance. The state of Georgia and the BOR have a set of laws and policies that govern conflict of interest by Board members and their dismissal, as illustrated in Table 5.

**Table 5. Georgia Law and BOR Bylaws Prohibiting Conflicts of Interest by Members of the Board of Regents**

<b>Citation</b>	<b>Focus of Citation</b>
OCGA 45-10-20	Definitions of “an person” and “public official” apply to appoint members of the BOR
OCGA 45-10-21	All public officials must be independent, impartial, and free of conflicts of interest
OCGA 45-10-22	Avoidance of conflicts of interest involving business transactions with the state
OCGA 45-10-24	Part-time public officials are not permitted to do personal business with the state
OCGA 45-10-26	Distinguishes between public officials and employees, but calls for full disclosure from both concerning business interests
OCGA 45-10-28	Members who violate the Code of Ethics may, in addition to facing criminal penalties, be removed by a court of competent jurisdiction in an action brought by the Attorney General
OCGA 45-10-40	Specific reference to BOR members and conflicts of business interest
OCGA 45-10-41	Penalties for BOR member infractions involving conflict of interest
BOR Bylaws II 2	BOR members cannot accept gifts or compensation
BOR Bylaws V 2	BOR members cannot recommend persons for USG employment

## Dismissal Statements

The *BOR Policy Manual* contains the USG Ethics Policy, which includes a [Statement of Core Values and a Code of Conduct](#) that all members of the USG community, including members of the Board of Regents, must follow. The policy manual further states that violations of the USG Ethics Policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal or termination.

Although no member of the BOR has ever been dismissed as of the date of this prospectus, state laws and BOR bylaws are in place to address the dismissal of Board members should that situation arise. The state of [Georgia's constitution](#) specifies that the "qualifications, compensation, and removal from office of the members of the board of regents shall be as provided by law" (Georgia constitution, 2013, p.60).

In addition, two sections of the Georgia State Code deal with dismissal. One section specifies that Board members may be removed by the BOR chair for repeated absences for non-participation in BOR meetings ([OCGA 20-3-26](#)). A second relevant section, "Public Officers and Employees," addresses the removal of any public official in the state of Georgia as well as the conditions precipitating removal, due process, and possible recourse ([OCGA 45-5-1](#)).

Additionally, [BOR Bylaw I.3 states](#), "Members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. In the event of a vacancy on the Board by death, resignation, removal, or any reason other than the expiration of a member's term, the Governor shall fill such vacancy and the person so appointed shall serve until confirmed by the Senate and, upon confirmation, shall serve for the unexpired term of office." [BOR Bylaw I.4](#) reiterates that Board members may be dismissed for unexcused absences. No substantive changes in these state laws or BOR policies and bylaws involving conflicts of interest, ethics, conduct, or dismissal will occur as a result of this consolidation.

## Section 4 Supporting Documentation

1. [Organizational Structure for Senior Level Administration](#)
2. [Academic Organizational Structure](#)
3. [Article I, Subsection 3 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents](#)
4. [Constitution of the State of Georgia, Article VIII, Section IV, Paragraph 1](#)
5. [Official Code of Georgia Annotated \(OCGA\) 20-3-21](#)
6. [Board of Regents Membership for FY2016](#)
7. [BOR Policy Manual, Section 12.1](#)
8. [BOR Ethics Policy - Statement of Core Values and a Code of Conduct](#)
9. [OCGA 20-3-26](#)
10. [OCGA 45-5-1](#)
11. [BOR Bylaw I.4](#)

## References

University System of Georgia (2011). *Board of Regents Policy Manual* Section 12.1 Political Interference. Retrieved August 3, 2014 from:  
<http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section12/policy/C1764>

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## 5. Faculty

As appropriate to the change, provide a complete roster (using the Faculty Roster form at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org) under “Substantive Changes” of those faculty employed to teach in the program(s), including a description of those faculty members’ academic qualifications and other experiences relevant to the courses to be taught in the program in question; the course load and teaching policies. Provide a narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support programs and describe the impact of the new initiative on faculty and faculty workload.

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### **Narrative**

#### **Faculty Roster**

As of September 15, 2016, and as a result of the planned consolidations of the faculties at Albany State University and Darton State College for operation of the new Albany State University beginning Spring 2017, the new Albany State University will have approximately 276 full-time faculty employed and 154 part-time faculty eligible to teach as needed. Current students will early register for the Spring Semester 2017 during the Fall Semester 2016. The registration will take place before the Commission can approve the institutional consolidation. Therefore, the new ASU will continue to offer existing curricula from both ASU and DSC at current locations to ensure a smooth and seamless transition for students. The consolidated curriculum changes will take effect in Fall 2017, for which early registration will occur during late Spring Semester 2017 after consolidation takes effect. Consequently, the faculty are separated into two Faculty Rosters, an [ASU-East Faculty Roster \(ASU\)](#) and an [ASU-West Faculty Roster \(DSC\)](#). Each roster organizes the faculty by their assigned academic discipline areas with their projected teaching assignments for Spring Semester 2017, the first semester following consolidation.

#### **Faculty Qualifications**

The faculty rosters submitted with this prospectus attest to the expected continued compliance of the new university with the Commission’s standards and guidelines for teaching faculty credentials. Accordingly, a faculty member assigned to teach graduate courses will be expected to have a terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline unless other appropriate credentials can justify the teaching assignment. A faculty member assigned to teach baccalaureate courses or associate degree courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree (including general education courses) will be expected to have at least a master’s degree in the teaching discipline, or a master’s degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, or other appropriate credentials that justify competence in the content of the course being taught. A faculty member assigned to teach associate degree courses that are not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree will be expected to have a bachelor’s degree in the teaching discipline or an associate’s degree and demonstrated competencies in the teaching discipline. A faculty member assigned to teach a learning

support (developmental) course will be expected to have a bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline.

### **Impact of Consolidation on Faculty Workloads**

Faculty workloads, particularly teaching loads, are currently different between ASU and DSC because of the differences in the mission categories of the two institutions in the University System of Georgia. Albany State University is a level IV institution focused on baccalaureate and graduate education, with an expected mission in research and service as well. ASU supports a teaching load of 9 to 12 credit hours per semester, which is typical of a four-year university at its level. The variability in teaching loads at ASU is largely attributable to the extent of a faculty member's teaching responsibilities at the graduate level and the corresponding expectations for greater scholarship and research productivity at that level. Some scholarship and research activity is also expected of faculty teaching at ASU's baccalaureate level since the institution's mission includes a commitment to research. Darton State College, on the other hand, is primarily focused on an access educational mission and offering primarily two-year associate degrees, with no substantial institutional commitment to research. Consequently, DSC supports a higher faculty teaching load of 15 credit hours per semester, which is typical of a largely two-year college.

The faculty loads for the new Albany State University beginning Spring 2017 will follow existing load policies and previously negotiated 2016-17 academic year faculty workload assignments for Albany State University and Darton State College. No substantive changes in faculty loads are expected to take effect for Spring 2017 because consolidation is expected to occur mid-year, with teaching and other load assignments not changing until the 2017-18 academic year.

An Operational Working Group comprised of faculty, evenly distributed from both institutions, is currently working on a proposed faculty load and teaching load policy that best complements the mission of the new Albany State University. These deliberations will likely continue into the 2016-17 academic year, with the expectation that a new load policy will be available for implementation in Fall Semester 2017. However, it is likely that teaching loads in the new ASU policy will continue to range from 9-15 credit hours per semester, depending on the extent of a faculty member's involvement in graduate, baccalaureate, and associate-level instruction and in the research mission of the university.

### **Sufficient Number of Faculty to Support Educational Programs**

The new Albany State University will have a sufficient number of full-time faculty to support the new university's educational mission. Modest reductions in curricular offerings and faculty staffing related to declining enrollment are expected from the 2015-16 academic year to the 2016-17 academic year. Further reductions in curricular offerings and faculty staffing may be necessary in 2017-18 if enrollment in the consolidated institution continues to decline. Nevertheless, as the analysis of the faculty presented below indicates, current faculty staffing levels are sufficiently strong relative to enrollments to absorb expected modest reductions in the number of faculty employed without much negative effect on the adequacy of faculty staffing for curricular support.

If class sizes and student/faculty ratios were to rise as a result of staffing reductions, they are not likely to return to the higher levels reached in earlier years.

ASU and DSC use several measures to determine the adequacy of full-time faculty to support the educational mission of the new university:

1. Comparison of full-time faculty to part-time faculty, to total enrollment;
2. Class size trends;
3. Student-to-faculty ratio as compared to ASU's and DSC's USG peer comparators and aspirant comparators; and
4. Number of full-time faculty by academic program areas.

#### Comparison of Full-Time Faculty, Part-Time Faculty to Total Enrollment

Once consolidated, the new Albany State University will be the largest institution of higher education in southwest Georgia with approximately 9,000 students. Table 1 illustrates that both institutions have adjusted and maintained an adequate number of full-time faculty to support their educational missions. Up until 2015, the number of full-time faculty at ASU and DSC increased notably, despite declining enrollment trends. In Fall 2015, the reduction of full-time faculty employed at DSC was greater than ASU's reduction, but the opposite is expected to be the case in Fall 2016. In both cases, the 25% drop in enrollment from Fall 2011 to Fall 2015 for ASU and the 14% drop from Fall 2012 to Fall 2015 for DSC warrant reasonable faculty staffing reductions.

**Table 1. Comparison of Full-Time Faculty, Part-Time Faculty to Total Enrollment**

Fall Semester	Total Full-Time Faculty		Total Part-Time Faculty		Total Enrollment	
	ASU	DSC	ASU	DSC	ASU	DSC
2011	141	120	27	154	4,663	6,097
2012	148	125	30	119	4,275	6,396
2013	147	130	28	127	4,260	6,195
2014	156	159	23	117	3,910	5,623
2015	151	113	18	136	3,492	5,471
% Change	7%	-6%	-33%	-11%	-25%	-10%

Source: Office of IR, IPEDS, USG website, DSC Banner

#### Class Size Trends

ASU and DSC work to provide a supportive education environment. Class size trends are one regularly examined factor used to determine if the institution has adequate faculty to provide instruction in appropriately sized environments. That appears to be the case as Tables 2 and 3 illustrate. Over 9 out of every 10 course sections taught at ASU and DSC consistently enroll fewer than 36 students each fall semester. The average class size at ASU last fall was 16 and at DSC was 21, both of which are adequate class sizes to provide a supportive educational environment.

**Table 2. Fall Course Sections and Class Size Trends for ASU**

Fall Semester	# of Course Sections	Course Section and Class Size								Average Class Size
		<19		19-35		36-99		> 99		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
2011	989	488	49%	389	39%	111	11%	1	0%	20
2012	1000	503	50%	396	40%	100	10%	1	0%	19
2013	982	482	49%	400	41%	100	10%	0	0%	19
2014	1003	540	54%	378	38%	85	8%	0	0%	18
2015	985	559	57%	375	38%	51	5%	0	0%	16

Source: Office of IR, \*Includes Undergraduate and Graduate Level Courses

**Table 3. Fall Course Sections and Class Size Trends for DSC**

Fall Semester	# of Course Sections	Course Section and Class Size								Average Class Size
		<19		19-35		36-99		> 99		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
2011	1076	537	50%	469	44%	68	6%	2	0%	19
2012	1097	494	45%	508	46%	84	9%	2	0%	20
2013	1032	482	47%	465	45%	78	8%	7	1%	21
2014	928	385	43%	460	50%	67	7%	6	1%	21
2015	909	385	42%	468	51%	59	7%	1	0%	21

Source: DSC Banner

### Student to Faculty Ratios

Each fall semester, the ratio of full-time equivalent students to full-time instructional faculty is calculated for the IPEDS report. Trends in those ratios for ASU and DSC along with their peers in the USG are presented in Tables 4 and 5. ASU's ratio for Fall 2014 (the most recent available published IPEDS data) was 16:1 which was lower than the ratios at 8 of the 9 peer state universities in the University System of Georgia. DSC's ratio for Fall 2014 was 22:1 which is more in line with the majority of its peer state colleges in the University System of Georgia.

**Table 4. IPEDS Student to Faculty Ratio for ASU and USG State Universities**

Institutional Name	IPEDS Student to Faculty Ratios				
	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Albany State University	16	20	21	21	21
Armstrong State University	17	18	19	19	19
Clayton State University	18	18	18	18	18
Columbus State University	17	17	17	18	19
Fort Valley State University	17	20	20	23	20
Georgia College and State University	18	17	16	17	17
Georgia Southwestern State University	16	17	18	19	20
Middle Georgia State University	21	20	-	-	-
Savannah State University	20	23	23	23	21
University of North Georgia	21	22	-	-	-

**Table 5. IPEDS Student to Faculty Ratio for DSC and USG State Colleges**

Institutional Name	IPEDS Student to Faculty Ratios				
	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Darton State College	22	22	25	23	21
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	22	22	26	20	29
Atlanta Metropolitan State College	20	27	27	24	23
Bainbridge State College	19	16	22	22	25
College of Coastal Georgia	18	18	19	21	23
Dalton State College	29	23	21	20	23
East Georgia State College	28	28	32	30	29
Georgia Gwinnett College	19	19	18	17	19
Georgia Highlands College	21	22	23	23	22
Georgia Perimeter College	19	20	22	21	24
Gordon State College	21	21	21	24	27
South Georgia State College	28	27	-	-	-

**Disaggregation of Full-Time Faculty by Academic Program Areas**

Disaggregation of the total full-time faculty into academic program areas for the new ASU reveals adequate support of full-time faculty for each program area. The table below presents data for full-time faculty by academic program.

Academic Program Area	Programs Supported in New ASU	Number of Full-Time Faculty
Accounting	BS, part of MBA	3
Art	BA, Cert, part of Gen Ed	6
Biology	BS, part of Gen Ed, part of Science Ed	24
Business Administration	MBA (+ support from other areas)	6
Business Information Systems	BS, part of MBA	2
Chemistry	BS, part of Gen Ed, part of Science Ed	11
Communication/Mass Comm	BA, part of Gen Ed	8
Computer Science/Technology	BS, Cert	8
Criminal Justice	MS, BS, Cert	8
Dental Hygiene	AS	3
Early Childhood Education	MEd, BS (+ support from other education faculty)	2
Economics	Part of Gen Ed, part of business programs	6
Educational Administration	EdS, MEd (+ support from other education faculty)	5
Emergency Medical	AS, Cert	2
English & English Education	MEd, BA, part of Gen Ed, part of learning sp, ESOL	25
Foreign Language	Part of Gen Ed	3
Forensic Science	BS	3
Geography	Part of Gen Ed	1
Health Information Technology	AS, Cert	2
Health & Physical Education	MEd, BS (+ support from education faculty)	7
Histology	AAS, Cert	3



History	BA, part of Gen Ed	7
Human Services/Addiction	Cert	1
Instructional Technology	Cert	1
Management	BS, Cert, part of MBA	6
Marketing	BS, part of MBA	2
Mathematics & Math Education	MEd, BS, part of Gen Ed, part of learning sp	21
Medical Lab Technology	AS	3
Middle Grades Education	MEd, BS (+ support from other education faculty)	2
Music & Music Education	MEd, BME, BA, Cert, part of gen ed	11
Occupational Therapy	AS	2
Organizational Leadership	BS	6
Nursing	MSN, BSN, RN to BSN, ASN	28
Paralegal	AAS, Cert	1
Phlebotomy	Cert	3
Physical Therapy	AS	3
Physics	Part of Gen Ed, part of Science Ed	4
Political Science	BA, part of Gen Ed	6
Psychology	BA, part of Gen Ed	6
Public Administration	MPA	5
Radiology	AS	2
Respiratory Therapy	AS	3
School Counseling	MEd	3
Science & Science Education	MEd, BS (+ support from other areas)	2
Special Education	MEd, BS (+ support from other education faculty)	2
Social Work	MSW, BSW	9
Sociology	BA, part of Gen Ed	4
Sonography/Tomography	AS, Cert	2
Supply Chain & Logistics	BS, BAS	1
Theatre/Dance	BA, part of Gen Ed	5
General Education/Core Curriculum	Transfer Associate Degrees (AS, AA)	Supported by faculty in various disciplines
Interdisciplinary Studies	BIS	Supported by faculty in various disciplines

## Section 5 Supporting Documentation

1. [ASU East Faculty Roster \(ASU\)](#)
2. [ASU West Faculty Roster \(DSC\)](#)



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## **6. Library and Learning Resources**

As appropriate to the change, describe library and information resources-general as well as specific to the program-and staffing and services that are in place to support the initiative. If reliant upon others libraries, describe those collections and their relevance to the proposed programs(s) and include a copy of formal agreements in the appendix. Relative to electronic resources, describe how students and faculty will access information, training for faculty and students in the use of online resources, and staffing and services available to students and faculty. If you are citing electronic databases access through consortia or statewide groups, please describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the consortium (such as GALILEO).

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### **Narrative**

#### **Overview of the Impact of Consolidation on Libraries and Learning Resources**

No substantive changes in library collections, services and learning resources that are currently available to the students, faculty, and staff of the two institutions are expected in association with the consolidation of Albany State University (ASU) and Darton State College (DSC). Instead, the impact of consolidation is expected to be limited to the administrative organization of the ASU and DSC libraries as they are joined to become component parts of a single library system of the new ASU under a single director. The “Better Together” theme of the ASU-DSC consolidation applies to the new ASU’s library system, especially in regard to expected improvements in administrative efficiencies and expansion of library resources readily available for all students, faculty and staff in the new ASU.

Refinement of the Library’s mission has emerged from consolidation implementation planning. The proposed mission statement for the consolidated libraries of Albany State University is:

The mission of the Albany State University Library System is to provide comprehensive information resources and services that support academic achievement and foster intellectual and stimulating educational activities to the diverse multi-campus community in southwest Georgia and beyond. The library will maintain a positive campus climate that is conducive to providing instruction for users in the most effective methods locating, evaluating, and effectively using information in all formats and provide easy access to library resources and services for online and extended campus classes. The library will maintain current technology for the ongoing provision of quality services to the University community and the community-at-large.

Following consolidation both Albany East and Albany West campuses will continue to have on site full-service libraries, online training on services and resources, and active agreements to provide access to electronic databases and print collections through consortial arrangements such as [GALILEO](#) and [GIL](#).

The libraries of the consolidated university are 5.3 miles apart and located off a major east-west corridor accessible by state highway, county bus transportation, as well as personal vehicle. The James Pendergrast Memorial Library on the current ASU campus will continue to operate as is, providing support for the wide array of continuing undergraduate, graduate degree programs in the arts, business, education, health professions, human services, humanities, social sciences, sciences, and mathematics. The Harold B. Wetherbee Library on the current DSC campus in Albany will continue to operate largely as is, providing support for an extensive array of continuing undergraduate degree programs in nursing and allied health professions as well as the wide array of disciplinary studies that make up the general education curriculum at the lower division level.

The new university's library information, learning services, and programs will be defined on a single library website and accessed electronically through the [GIL portal](#). Associated policies, procedures, workflow and assessment will be consolidated to ensure that educational and research needs continue to be delivered appropriately without interruption and meet the needs and expectations of students and faculty.

### **Library Facilities, Collections and Resources**

The James Pendergrast Memorial Library is centrally located on the Albany State University campus, sitting on the parallel between the old and new campuses. It is an automated facility offering a variety of informational resources and services to the university community and to the citizens of Southwest Georgia. Housed in a modern three-story building comprising 73,197 square feet, the university library has a collection of 205,123 volumes, including bound volumes, periodicals, government documents and microform. The library, which seats 375 patrons, has garnered accolades for its attractive architectural design. The general book collection is housed in open stacks and arranged by the Library of Congress Classification System.

During the summer of 2014, the first and second floors of the Pendergrast Library underwent a renovation project that created a new store front entrance of the foyer for the Pendergrast Library. The new entrance created an open and inviting atmosphere to the Circulation Desk. A linoleum floor was placed on the first floor to accommodate the eating area created on the lower level. These improvements have been well-received by students and faculty. A renovation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the library is forthcoming.

The Pendergrast Library offers space for group/individual study, meetings, University archives, library equipment such as 45 workstations, copiers and printers that are conveniently located in the building. Students have access to wireless, a 24/hour computer lab, Libguides mobile access and resources for current technologies, group presentations and four study rooms. These services will be available to all students and faculty of the consolidated university.

The Harold B. Wetherbee Library, located in the heart of the Darton State College campus, is a 29,500 square foot two story building which faces the center of the campus with a seating capacity of 350. The physical presence in the library is 68 hours per week with a 24 hour online research portal. The library opened in 1970 and has not had

major renovations. The only addition since the library was built has been the addition of a classroom for approximately 30 students in 1987. This classroom was added at the rear of the building. It was the first electronic classroom on campus and was used for GSAMS and televised classes on Channel 19.

The Wetherbee Library offers space for group/individual study, meetings, Library equipment such as 34 workstations, two copiers and printers that are conveniently located in the building. Students have access to wireless, a computer lab, Libguides mobile access and resources for current technologies, group presentations and four study rooms. These services will be available to all students and faculty of the consolidated university.

Each library currently provides learning and information resources that are consistent with the needs of academic programs offered at each degree level, thereby ensuring adequate support of the consolidated university's mission for teaching, research, and public service. Students, faculty, and staff will continue to have access to information resources in a variety of formats such as audiovisual, print, microform, electronic, and data sets. Examples of key cost-sharing databases and journals available at the ASU East and ASU West libraries include the following:

1. **[ABI/INFORM Archive \(at ProQuest\)](#)** This collection contains a complete run of key business and management journals, providing a unique historical perspective on hundreds of topics, including corporate strategies, management techniques, marketing, product development and industry conditions worldwide, available in cover-to-cover full images, complete with illustrations and advertisements.
2. **[Academic Search Complete](#)** Coverage Dates: 1911 - present (full text); 1887 - present (abstracting and indexing), Update Frequency: Daily, Audience: General, student, research. This multi-disciplinary database contains more than 6,100 full-text periodicals, including more than 5,100 peer-reviewed journals. In addition to full text, this database offers indexing and abstracts for more than 10,100 journals and a total of 10,600 publications including monographs, reports, conference proceedings, etc. The database is updated daily and features PDF content going back as far as 1887, with the majority of full-text titles in native (searchable) PDF format. Searchable cited references are provided for nearly 1,000 journals. This scholarly collection offers full-text coverage of information in many areas of academic study, including archaeology, area studies, astronomy, biology, chemistry, civil engineering, electrical engineering, ethnic and multicultural studies, food science and technology, general science, geography, geology, law, mathematics, mechanical engineering, music, physics, psychology, religion and theology, women's studies, and other fields. Express
3. **[Accounting and Tax Database \(ProQuest\)](#)** This collection provides centralized access to top journals, reference reports, proceedings, dissertations and more, including over 2,300 publications with hundreds in full-text. ProQuest Accounting & Tax includes: highly ranked global and scholarly journals,

including all journals from the American Accounting Association; Accounting, tax management, and auditing trade publications from top publishers such as CCH, Aspen, Thompson Professional and Regulatory Services, Source Media, Tax Management Inc., and Euromoney; AICPA publications; tax law and financial law publications from notable sources such as the American Bar Association and American Law Institute; Global accounting and tax journals from the UK, Canada, Australia, France, Spain, Ireland and more; Financial advising, governance, and risk management publications from Incisive Media, CFA Institute, and Association for Financial Counseling and Planning; over 1,500 accounting dissertations; More than 7,800 Working Papers from SSRN (Social Science Research Network) and select conference proceedings for accounting.

4. **[Census Data \(U.S. Census Bureau\)](#)** This offers the most comprehensive demographic data for the United States. The site includes information and statistics on the nation's population, housing, business and manufacturing activity, international trade, farming, and state and local governments.
5. **[Films on Demand](#)** This collection consists of 15,500 video titles (77,000 segments) in Humanities & Social Sciences, Business & Economics, Health, and Science. Also included is the new collection of United Newsreels which includes an additional 260 titles (1,250 segments). USG institutions currently have access via GALILEO to the Films on Demand Master Academic Collection.
6. **[Gateway to the Classics by Author \(Encyclopædia Britannica\)](#)** Coverage Dates: Current edition, Update Frequency: Ongoing. This provides an introduction to significant works of Western history, literature, philosophy, and science. Full-text of short stories, plays, essays, letters, and extracts are searchable and browseable by author or subject.
7. **[PsycARTICLES](#)** Coverage Dates: 1894 – present, Audience: Research, student. PsycARTICLES, from the American Psychological Association (APA), includes full-text, peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific articles in general psychology and specialized basic, applied, clinical, and theoretical research in psychology. The database contains more than 137,000 articles from 66 journals published by the APA, its imprint the Educational Publishing Foundation (EPF), and from allied organizations including the Canadian Psychological Association and the Hogrefe Publishing Group. It includes all journal articles, book reviews, letters to the editor, and errata from each journal. Coverage spans 1894 to present; nearly all APA journals go back to Volume 1, Issue 1. PsycARTICLES is indexed with controlled vocabulary from APA's *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms*.
8. **[Research Library \(at ProQuest\)](#)** Coverage Dates: 1971 to present. Research Library provides one-stop access to a wide range of popular academic subjects and includes full-text access for thousands of titles, including scholarly journals, trade publications, magazines, and newspapers.

As members of the University System of Georgia's (USG) GALILEO Interconnected Libraries (GIL), the Pendergrast and Wetherbee Libraries also provide access to the holdings of other academic and public libraries in the state of Georgia through the statewide library network and through Universal Borrowing among the colleges and universities in the university system.

Students, faculty, and staff at the consolidated university will have access to and borrowing privileges from the collections of other college and university libraries in the state of Georgia. [GIL](#) alone includes all 29 state colleges and universities in the University System of Georgia and has over 13 million bibliographic records in its USG Union Catalog, including the resources of the state's top research universities as well as the libraries of the *Atlanta History Center* and the *Georgia Department of Archives and History*. GALILEO provides anywhere/anytime electronic access to over 200 databases, indexing thousands of periodicals, newspapers, and scholarly journals with more than 10,000 journals titles provided in full-text. GALILEO serves USG institutions, technical colleges, public K-12, and some private universities and K-12 schools.

The consolidated university will continue to benefit from these statewide library resources and services. These resources are funded by the state of Georgia and supported centrally by the USG Office of Information and Instructional Technology. Access to and use of the rich array of GIL and GALILEO resources will not change or be negatively affected in any way by this consolidation.

Because the Pendergrast and Wetherbee libraries are participating members of GALILEO, the consolidated university will have more than adequate resources to support current and planned degree programs and areas of study. Library resources in the consolidated university will include access to the combined collections of the state's most comprehensive research universities and the state's most valued special-focus collections. Examples of online discipline-specific databases available through GALILEO relevant to the consolidated institution's instructional, research, and service mission are:

1. All disciplines: Research Library at ProQuest;
2. Business Administration: ABI/Inform;
3. Education: ERIC;
4. Health professions: MedLine and OVID; and
5. Annotated Bibliography Sciences: Social Science Citation Index, CQ Research and Lexi-Nexis

In addition to GALILEO, the Library has several databases that have been selected and acquired for in depth research for distance learners. These databases include:

1. American Chemical Society
2. CINHAL Full-Text
3. Communication and Mass Media
4. EBSCO HOST Full-Text Journals
5. Ebrary, EBSCO eBooks
6. EconLit Full-Text

7. Education Source
8. Encyclopedia Britannica Online Edition
9. Humanities Source
10. Humanities International Index w/Full Text
11. InfoBase
12. JSTOR Arts and Sciences I, II, and Business
13. LLW (Nursing @ OVID)
14. Mergent Online
15. ProQuest
16. PsycArticles
17. Resources for College Libraries
18. Social Work Abstracts

Please see a full listing of ASU's Galileo site [here](#).

The Pendergrast and Wetherbee Libraries are also participants in the ExLibris Voyager statewide automated circulation system. The Circulation Departments are fully automated. Both libraries' collections are searchable through Voyager and its common USG interface to individual library holdings available to students regardless of their location – on campus or off campus and face-to-face or online.

The consolidated libraries will continue to participate in a number of collaborative organizations and consortia that enhance the availability of print and electronic resources for students and faculty, regardless of their physical locations. Regional, national, and international resource sharing memberships facilitate resource sharing and consortia purchasing discounts. Examples of current and continuing resource sharing and purchasing consortial groups are described below.

1. [Digital Library of Georgia](#) - Patrons can also access the Digital Library of Georgia.  
The Digital Library of Georgia is a continuous growing gateway to Georgia's history and culture. It is composed of digitalized books, manuscripts, photographs, government documents, newspapers, maps, audio, video and resources about the history of Albany State. The Digital Library of Georgia is an initiative of Galileo. Currently work is being collected and digitized on the Albany Civil Rights Movements. This collection will provide a rich research collection on Albany's cultural history.
2. Through collaboration and resource sharing , **GeorgiaA Llibrary LEarning Online GALILEO**, the University System of Georgia's premier collection of over 100 electronic databases, some of which are full-text journal articles, are available from any remote site through the **GALILEO** password. **GALILEO** stands for Georgia Library Learning Online. It is an initiative of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. It is a world wide web-based virtual library. Galileo provides access to multiple information resources, including secured access to licensed databases and products. Participating institutions may access over 100 databases indexing thousands of periodicals and scholarly journals. There are over 2,000 journal titles provided in full-text for the distance learner.



3. **GALILEO Interconnected Library (GIL) Universal Catalog** is a joint catalog for all University System of Georgia colleges and universities. Students can use the universal catalog by logging on to [GIL EXPRESS](https://giluc.usg.edu) @ <https://giluc.usg.edu>. Students can request books owned at any UGA library through GIL Express. This service is also available from any remote site. The password is available via our online catalog. Go to <http://gil.asurams.edu>, select “Your Account”, “patron barcode”, enter your “RamID”, your “last name”, and select “OK”. Once logged on to your account, select “Request” from the menu bar. At this point, your only option will be “Passwords”, and then select “OK”. The password for the current term will appear in the text box.
4. **EBSCO eBooks** - Students also have access to EBSCO eBooks, a collection of electronic books. EBSCO eBooks is an e-book service accessible to Albany State University students, faculty and staff through Galileo. It provides access to more than 741,688 electronic books.
5. **EBSCOHost A to Z Listing** - The library provides a subject guide called the, listing all of the full-text journals that Albany State University’s Library owns in its Serials Collection.
6. **EBSCO Subscription Services** - The library offers even more serial and journal titles through the library’s EBSCO Subscription Service. Additional periodicals, scholarly journals, electronic journals are all available to library patrons for research purposes. Through interlibrary loan, universal borrowing a strong collaboration of resource sharing exists among the educational institutions that participate in Galileo.
7. **HBCU Library Alliance** – The Library Director is a member of the HBCU Library Alliance which is a consortium that supports the collaboration of information professionals dedicated to providing an array of resources designed to strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their constituents. Approximately 100 libraries, 89 4-year institutions, 2-year institutions and 22 states are a part of the consortium.
8. **InfoBase** - The InfoBase eBook platform offers access to 250 titles in World and United States history. These titles are easily accessible from any computer with an internet connection and allow for 24/7 unlimited simultaneous use.
9. **LYRASIS** – Both Pendergrast Library and Wetherbee Library are members of LYRASIS (formally known as SOLINET: Southeastern Library Network), a national and international bibliographic cooperative in library resources management. LYRASIS uses its large library membership to secure discounted purchasing prices and licensing fees for a wide variety of eResources and eContent materials. Upon consideration, membership for the consolidated libraries will be retained under the ASU name.
10. **RAM Scholar Repository** - The Ram Scholar, the name determined by the Albany State participants, is a repository created to preserve and honor the scholarly history of the faculty, staff and students of Albany State University in a digital environment. The digital repository, Ram Scholar, will also serve as a digital collection of undergraduate and faculty research, and the historically important events in the history of the institution.
11. **Resources for College Libraries (RCL)** – The RCL is a premier list of core print and electronic resources for academic libraries, featuring over 85,000 titles in 117 subjects. Brought to you by ACRL's Choice and Bowker, RCL covers the entire two-

year and four-year college curriculum and provides a list of core titles that are essential for undergraduate study. Developed by an editorial team of more than 400 subject editors, bibliographers, and referees the RCL database content is continuously updated and now features improved functionality and

- a. a new improved user-friendly interface
- b. trustworthy content compiled by subject matter experts
- c. time-saving collection analysis and development tool
- d. enhanced discovery options for students, researchers and librarians.

12. [WorldShare](#) - Collection evaluation that provides quick and efficient access to information about the library's collection.

### **Administration and Staffing of the Libraries**

The Pendergrast Library and Wetherbee Library employ qualified faculty and staff who assist and support faculty and students regardless of their program, research area, or location. As the [proposed organizational chart](#) reflects, administrative oversight of all library operations will be the responsibility of the Director of Library Services. The Pendergrast and Wetherbee libraries are managed by professional librarians who will be physically located at both campuses. Librarians will also be engaged with students and faculty at any of the university's instructional sites, including those in online courses and programs through technologies such as chat, email, and telephone.

Both libraries adhere to the Association of College and Research Libraries standards, which requires a master's degree in library and information science from an institution accredited by the American Library Association for any person employed as a professional academic librarian. Presently, seven full-time librarians hold an ALA-accredited master's degree in library science or its equivalent. Two librarians hold an additional master's degree, and one holds a doctoral degree. In total, the consolidated libraries will also employ eight support staff and 35 student assistants. Additionally, the library director along with one of the librarians serves as the assessment lead, collecting and analyzing service and performance data for continuous improvement of services and programs.

The budgets and administrative organizations of the existing libraries will be consolidated under the direction of the Director of Library Services who will work toward efficiencies in operational and management areas. Initially, some change in overall library funding and staffing is anticipated as a result of the consolidation. The FY2017 operating budget for the two libraries, once consolidated, will be approximately \$1,558,151 as shown in Table 1. For the first half of FY 2017, both libraries will operate as separate entities. Following consolidation in January 2017, the FY 2017 resources will be combined, and the new administrative structure will take effect.

**Table 1. Current Separate FY 2017 Library Budgets and the FY 2017 Combined Budget for the Consolidated Libraries**

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>ASU</b>	<b>DSC</b>	<b>Consolidated Libraries</b>
Personnel Services	725,990	399,892	1,125,882
Travel	500	1,000	1,500



Operating Supplies and Expenses	99,905	30,264	130,169
Equipment Capital Outlay	200,600	100,000	300,600
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,026,995</b>	<b>531,156</b>	<b>1,558,151</b>

Some of the projected administrative efficiencies resulting from the ASU and DSC consolidation are:

1. Librarians with advanced credentials serving the consolidated university's faculty, students, staff and public;
2. Centralized library staff for:
  - a. management of all databases.
  - b. book and journal ordering;
  - c. Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery Office services; and
  - d. library assessment.
3. Consolidated staffing to oversee services such as:
  - a. the ASU Libraries' website – primary link to virtual services;
  - b. 24/7 chat and online reference service;
  - c. cataloging and processing;
  - d. budgeting, supply ordering, and financial processes;
  - e. facilities management; and
  - f. Study Room booking service.

Annual institutional funding of the libraries will also be supplemented by Title III grants, proposals for which are written by the ASU library director to assist in expanding and enhancing learning through library instruction. All of the grant project goals and objectives are related to the curriculum of the university.

### **Student and Faculty Access and Training**

Access to all library staff, resources, and services is available for students and faculty, no matter their location or need, whether that is at clinical or internship sites, at off-campus locations, and via distance learning technologies.

To ensure that the university community has access to its library resources, the Pendergrast Library is open a total of 80.5 hours each week, and the Wetherbee Library is open 68 hours per week, during regular sessions. The libraries have extended hours during finals. During holidays and between semesters, limited hours are scheduled to accommodate faculty and students. Electronic access to library resources is available 24/7. The library also provides courier services for GIL Express/Universal Borrowing and Interlibrary Loan requests for books. All of this access to library resources is expected to continue post-consolidation.

The Pendergrast and Wetherbee libraries publish their operating schedules for in-person/walk-in access and service and adjust these to accommodate the need for increased access, such as during exam periods. Online library services are accessible via individual user login authentication all day, every day. Online and distance education students also benefit from ubiquitous access to high-quality information resources. For

example, each library offers orientation sessions and instruction for accessing on-site and virtual resources, use of borrowing and loan programs, archives and special collections, research assistance, use of library facilities for study groups and meetings.

Library staff are available to all users by a variety of means, both virtually and in person. In collaboration with the Office of Student Development, the libraries will continue to meet the needs of patrons with disabilities. Facilities are ADA compliant and specific needs are met as outlined below:

1. Assistive software is used to access online library resources such as JAWS screen reading software and E-Text Reader for persons with visual disabilities and learning disorders;
2. Subtitled videos, audio and other alternative formats are available for students and faculty;
3. Furnishings are modified for wheelchair access; and
4. Librarians and library staff retrieve items from stacks, shelves, and resource areas.

Library faculty deliver instruction in the use of information resources through group and individual sessions as well as workshops. The librarians also provide online tutorials, user guides and reference assistance. Library staff who serve as liaisons to program faculty collaborate with those faculty and students to develop learning resources associated with program curricula and research. Librarians also collaborate with faculty to develop effective search strategies; assist with critical literature reviews for research proposals; introduce information resources at faculty meetings; and produce scholarly publications and presentations through the Embedded Librarian Program.

The Interlibrary Loan service also augments the library's resources, allowing students and faculty to borrow resources from almost anywhere in the world. The Interlibrary Loan services were also enhanced with the implementation of the Ariel Document Delivery System which sends scanned documents via the Internet using the borrowing university's IP address. Ariel Document Delivery System increased the efficiency of Interlibrary Loan program. GIL Express/Universal Borrowing has also been implemented to borrow books from other universities. If a book is not available through GIL Express, then it will be requested through interlibrary loan.

To assist library users in locating bibliographic information and other learning resources, the library offers a variety of general and technical orientation programs. The library staff makes available specialized references, including catalogs, indexes, bibliographies, maps, pamphlets, government documents and manuscripts that treat topics of special interest. The library provides other user services to faculty members who teach Freshman Orientation, English courses or other introductory courses and schedules entire classes for instruction in research methods. After consultation with the instructor, the library staff conducts a general orientation on how to use the library, including a demonstration of specialized references, online services and the computerized catalog. Faculty may also schedule times for the library staff to teach students or classes how to conduct research or assist students in compiling specialized

bibliographies. To improve and facilitate user services, the library staff is consolidating the library websites for both campuses.

Bibliographic Instruction is provided to all Freshman Classes, and a library test is administered by the instructor to insure that students are fully aware of how to use the library resources. The Bibliographic Instruction session is delivered as a power point presentation of tour classes. Individual tours are provided and hands-on demonstrations of how to use the library resources is also offered to students. A Library Orientation Post Survey is given to students after each session.

The library staff is also available to provide point-of-use instruction and assistance in Reference, Circulation, Serials, Government Documents and Interlibrary Loan. Individuals who are unfamiliar with databases, microform, microfiche or other library resources or who have difficulty locating or using resources are assisted by staff in accessing Galileo, ERIC databases, microfilm and microfiche to retrieve information. Several departments have databases specifically geared to their disciplines. Electronic Database Training Sessions are scheduled each semester to offer instruction to navigate the Internet in searching the library's electronic databases. Post-training Surveys are administered to patrons to assess the effectiveness of the session.

The James Pendergrast Memorial Library has responded to the challenge of supporting graduate and off-campus learners in a number of ways. Some of these include remote access to online databases, virtual reference services, online public access catalog, Ariel document delivery system, Galileo and Galileo Interconnected Libraries (GIL), and the Library's website. Students enrolled in an off-campus ASU distance learning course have several library tools, materials, and services to aid in obtaining information resources to support their coursework.

The unified online library catalog for the university is called [GIL RAMCAT](#). It contains computerized records of books, periodicals, electronic journals, and government documents in the Library. Students can utilize the GIL RAMCAT from any remote site at: [gil.asurams.edu](http://gil.asurams.edu). Students may renew books from any remote site by accessing the GIL Online Catalog.

General technology training resources is provided by the consolidated university's department of Information Technology Services (ITS). The ITS department serves as a primary point of contact to students and faculty for network access, campus applications, and productivity software and tools. The university's learning management system, Brightspace by Desire2Learn (D2L), is serviced by the ITS department. A Library Learning Community with power point presentations, help sheets and Library Orientation are included in D2L with the virtual library resources. All D2L training and service support is provided by the Academic Online Instruction Department.

### **The Department of Archives and Special Collection**

The ASU Library Archives for the new university will comprise the services and operations of both ASU and DSC. The Library Director will continue to be a direct

report to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. No substantive changes are projected with regard to services, collections, and educational resources available to the new university's students, faculty and staff as well as the broader community as a result of the consolidation of ASU and DSC. The primary difference in oversight and operations is that ASUs archives and special collections are currently under the direction of the Pendergrast Library, while DSC's division is separate from the Pendergrast Library. Therefore, DSC's archives and special collections will be consolidated under the current ASU archives.

Unique in Southwest Georgia, ASU East has an extensive African-American history collection which contains numerous volumes on microfilm including the celebrated Schomburg Collection, African Repository & Colonial Journal 1825-1982, Slavery Source Materials ~ Books & Pamphlets written before the Civil War by and about the Negro and about slavery and anti-slavery, The Negro: Emancipation to World War I ~ Books & Pamphlets written between 1863 and 1914 by and about the Negro, Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life ~ Volumes 1-18 ~ 1923-1940, American Colonization Society Annual Report, and American Anti-Slavery Annual Report ~ Volumes 1-8 & Volumes 8-21 (never published), Papers of the NAACP ~ Selected Branch Files ~ 1913-1939, Papers of the NAACP ~ Selected Branch Files ~ 1940-1955, Papers of the NAACP ~ Selected Branch Files ~ 1956-1965, The Claude A. Barnett Papers: The Associated Negro Press ~ 1918-1967, and Records of The Freedman's Hospital (correspondence & memoranda) ~ 1872-1910. Patrons can also access the [Digital Library of Georgia](#).

In addition, records management for the consolidated university will be managed by the current ASU Records Management Department. Table 2 details the services offered by each university at this time.

**Table 2. ASU and DSC – Archives, Special Collections and Other Operations**

<b>ASU Archives, and Special Collection and Rare Books</b>	<b>DSC Archives, and Special Collections Department</b>
Archives; yearbooks, undergraduate catalogs,	Yearbooks
ASU photo collection within the library; not stand-alone museum	None
Special/Rare Books Collection	None
Records Management Library staff	None

As DSC does not have an equivalent to the Archives at ASU or a Rare Book Collection, DSC's future archival documents will be combined with ASU's Archives. In addition, DSC does not have a centralized records management unit; hence, ASU's Records Management unit will expand its operations and services to the ASU campus as a part of the consolidation. These are two more ways in which consolidation actually improves services for the partner libraries and their patrons.

## **Section 6 Supporting Documentation**

1. [Galileo](#)
2. [GIL](#)
3. [ABI Inform ProQuest](#)

4. [Academic Search Complete](#)
5. [Accounting Tax Banking Proquest](#)
6. [Census Bureau](#)
7. [Films On Demand](#)
8. [Gateway to Classics Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
9. [PsycArticles](#)
10. [Research Library](#)
11. [Georgia Digital Libray](#)
12. [Ebooks Ebsco Host](#)
13. [HBCU Library Alliance](#)
14. [InfoBase GilFind](#)
15. [RAMScholar](#)
16. [WorldShare](#)
17. [Organizational Chart](#)

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## **7. Student Support Services**

Provide a description of student support programs, services, and activities-general as well as specific to the change-in place to support this initiative.

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### **Narrative**

The consolidation of Albany State University (ASU) and Darton State College (DSC) into the new Albany State University will involve the combining, refining, and continuation of student support services that have proven effective at ASU and DSC. In one example of expected gains from consolidation, Albany State University had a 10% retention increase Fall 2014 to Fall 2015. This increase was the result of work in both Student and Academic Affairs to improve the overall student experience and to facilitate retention, progression and graduation. Such work will continue and become more enhanced at the new and larger ASU after consolidation. These efforts will be facilitated by organizational, technological, analytic, and reporting changes designed to expand and improve student support services and student success across the new institution. The significant expansions and changes that will occur in each area of student support are detailed below.

### **Support Services in the Division of Student Affairs**

In order to provide all students with an impactful, nurturing, and transformational co-curricular experience at the new ASU, similar services and programs on the East and West campuses will be organizationally aligned and administered by the Associate Provost of Student Affairs and Success. Resulting changes to program/service delivery include:

1. Unified electronic records systems: Admissions, Enrollment & Records-Banner; Financial Aid-Banner; Student Health Services -PyraMED, Counseling & Psychological Services- PyraMED, Disability Services-AMAC, Judicial Affairs (Maxient), and Housing (StarRez);
2. Unified service delivery operating procedures across East and West campuses, and satellite sites: disability services, student health services, counseling, student fees (activity fee & student center fee), student conduct, behavioral intervention;
3. Consolidated handbooks: student handbook, student organization handbook, housing guide, student government constitution;
4. Unified student policies; Student Code of Conduct, Sexual Misconduct Policy, Academic Honesty Policy, Behavioral Intervention Team, Housing and Residence Life Policies;
5. Standardized year-round new student orientation programs, parent programs, and campus tours (in collaboration with Office of Enrollment Management);
6. Unified Housing and Residence Life: the North, South, East, & "Hill" Districts comprised of nine residential facilities (East Campus), and the West District comprised of two residence halls (West Campus); and

7. Single student government, Royal Court, and Student Activities Advisory Board with representation/involvement opportunities for students on both campuses.

The Division of Student Affairs and Success will continue to provide innovative, high quality programs, services and environments to facilitate student success, learning, global acumen, and campus engagement at both Albany State University locations. The Division will also continue to foster an enriching environment that encourages cross-cultural interaction, an appreciation for diversity, and critical thinking skills. Through advisement, social action, service learning, counseling, wellness promotion, leadership training, and recreation and intramurals, the new ASU will develop well-rounded scholars and citizens.

The new ASU Division of Student Affairs and Success will include:

1. Student Life and Engagement
  - a. Judicial Affairs
  - b. Housing and Residence Life
  - c. Student Life and Engagement
  - d. Campus Recreation
2. Student Development
  - a. Veterans Office for Institutional and Community Engagement
  - b. Student Health Services
  - c. Counseling and Psychological Services
  - d. Disability and Access Services
  - e. Center for the African-American Male
3. Student Success and Retention
  - a. Academic Advising & Retention Center
  - b. Academic Integration & Transitional Services
  - c. Career Center
4. Enterprise Development
  - a. Student Centers
  - b. Marketing, Technology, & Communications

### **Student Support Services in Academic Affairs**

A major focus after consolidation will be to implement and expand proven academic support initiatives already in use on both the ASU and DSC campuses, in order to support the retention, progression and graduation of all Albany State University students. To effectively implement these initiatives across the East and West campuses and ASU's other off-campus instructional sites, academic support offices will have dual reporting responsibilities to the Associate Provost for Student Affairs and Success and the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. This structural change will help to coordinate other important adaptations of consolidation including:

1. A common system of record keeping enabling student support personnel across multiple campuses to track students and communicate relevant academic information through all appropriate offices (i.e., Banner);
2. Common tools and training including a platform that enables the use of predictive analytics based on academic data to target student support, facilitate academic progression and improve student outcomes (i.e. EAB Student Success Collaborative);
3. Common metrics and assessment methods in order to evaluate the effectiveness of academic outreach and support (i.e. EAB Student Success Collaborative, Student Satisfaction Survey, Complete College Georgia Plan); and
4. The development of common strategic academic interventions based on data at all Albany State University locations. These academic interventions will include various forms of delivery to support a diverse student enrollment with multiple learning styles to ensure all students, both face to face and online, have access to the programs and resources needed to enhance student learning. These academic interventions will include various forms of delivery to support a diverse student enrollment with multiple learning styles to ensure all students, both face to face and online, have access to the programs and resources needed to enhance student learning.

A newly restructured academic advising model will be utilized to provide an improved academic advising experience for all students in the new ASU. The consolidated Albany State will implement an intrusive advising model where professional advisors will be assigned to and operate out of the new ASU's college's. This model will allow academic units to have quality and efficient lower level advising that will promote retention and progression. This model also allows faculty to be more involved with providing feedback and consultation to the professional advisors on programs of study, career pathways, course offerings, etc. This model further provides support services in a centralized location for lower level students who are undeclared, or considering a change of major. This team of professional advisors will offer strategies and opportunities for undeclared students to remain academically engaged, and progress toward successfully entering into a chosen major.

Technology will also be utilized to further enhance the retention and progression efforts of students at the new Albany State University. In order to effectively utilize this technology to benefit students, the consolidated ASU will implement a model of academic advisement that tracks every student for retention, progression and graduation. The consolidated ASU, utilizing the EAB Student Success Collaborative, will fully integrate grades and progression information from Darton State College in order to support all undergraduates and enable the University to build a better bridge between associate and baccalaureate academic pathways for students. Additionally, a newly formed department, Academic Integration and Transitional Services, will provide the support needed to assist special populations, and at-risk students in need of dedicated and specialized support.



Albany State University will integrate advisement with other academic support units in order to proactively address student needs to promote retention and progression. Academic student support offices at Albany State University include:

1. Academic Advising & Retention Center;
2. Academic Integration & Transitional Services;
3. Academic Services and Registrar;
4. Honors Program;
5. Center for Teaching, Learning, & Scholarship;
6. Academic Success Unit (Learning Support);
7. Center for Undergraduate Research;
8. Writing Labs; and
9. Library.

### **Student Support Services and Programs Available to Distance Education Students**

Albany State University's focus for online programs is to assist students with developing and gaining marketable leadership skills in a collegiate environment. Online degree programs are offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels in a variety of disciplines. Albany State University will offer distance education students a wide array of support services, which are specific and distinctly relevant to their needs. Distance education students will have access to online and telephone advisement and access to various student support products. In addition, students taking courses online will have access to library resources, tech support, disability services, online tutoring, and both on-site and electronic proctored testing.

### **Student Activities and Organizations**

Following the consolidation of ASU and DSC, the new Albany State University will provide a rich array of student activities including 100 registered student organizations. These organizations offer students a broad range of involvement and leadership opportunities related to their interests in academic, cultural, community service, environmental, health, performing arts, political, recreational and religious activities. The Student Government Association serves as the official voice for students by representing student interests to the university and working to improve the student experience by contributing to policies and procedures that have a campus-wide impact.

The Student Activities Advisory Board (SAAB), the university-sponsored, student-driven programming board, coordinates social, cultural, educational and entertainment programs on a university-wide basis ranging from concerts, movies and distinguished speakers to novelty events as well as annual Homecoming and Spring Bling Week events. SGA will expand its representation to include executive level positions within its organizational structure representing our expanded commuter student and adult populations; particularly within the new Darton College of Health Professions. Additionally, the student activities advisory board will include representatives from the new Darton College of Health Professions in order to, more directly, meet the needs of these students.

Albany State University is home to numerous Greek lettered organizations, ranging from traditional fraternities and sororities, to music and fine arts fraternities, to honor societies. The consolidated ASU will have a student demographic that will present more diversity to the campus. Therefore, efforts will be made to assist students with chartering Greek lettered organizations from various existing Fraternal Councils, to create a more robust Greek life program on campus.

### **Intercollegiate Athletics**

When the USG announced its plans to consolidate Albany State University and Darton State College in the fall 2015, both institution's athletic departments immediately began working to consolidate their intercollegiate athletics offerings. This early, swift action was necessary to protect the interests of the players, their families, and the coaches who are adhering to NCAA and NJCAA rules. At the time of the consolidation announcement, DSC offered six intercollegiate sports programs. They were baseball, women's softball, women's basketball, men's golf, and men's and women's soccer. Of these six sports, baseball, women's softball, and women's basketball were discontinued because it is against NCAA and NJCAA regulations for an institution to offer duplicative sports within in two separate conferences. Men's golf and women's soccer were added to the roster of intercollegiate sports offered by the new ASU. DSC already committed to discontinuing men's soccer prior to the consolidation announcement and therefore was not considered. The presidents of ASU and DSC committed to accommodating the student athletes of DSC's discontinued sports by guaranteeing their scholarships (if eligible for renewal) and roster spots on the new ASU's parallel teams.

Early in 2016, the [presidents announced a restructuring of the coaching positions](#) with DSC's baseball, women's softball, and women's soccer coaches retaining their positions at the new ASU. In addition, a national search for an Athletic Director was launched and recently concluded with the announcement of the new AD beginning September 1. There was little impact to the current roster of ASU coaches as many of them coached two sports. Solidifying the coaching ranks early has ensured smooth transition in recruitment, planning, and athletic facilities management. Beginning with the fall 2016 semester, DSC coaches and student athletes have been participating in ASU's athletics programming.

The new ASU Athletics will continue to offer the previous 11 sport offerings of football, softball, baseball, women's tennis, and women's volleyball; in addition to men's and women's basketball, cross country and track/field. Beginning Fall 2016, ASU Athletics will add men's golf. In the Spring of 2017, ASU Athletics will also add women's soccer. Thus, in Fall 2017, the consolidated ASU Athletics will have 13 sport offerings competing in the NCAA Division II level within the SIAC conference with the exception of women's soccer. The SIAC conference does not support women's soccer at this time, therefore, the sport will be independent.

### **Student Support Services, Programs, Activities and Athletics Available to Students at Off-Campus Instructional Sites**

The consolidated ASU will offer all of the aforementioned Student Support Services and Programs for students at the East and West campuses in Albany and as much as possible at other off-campus instructional sites. While academic advisement, academic support and other services will be coordinated centrally, they will be delivered on every campus at the place of student need, via the ASU off-campus liaisons. These student support professionals will ensure that the same standards of excellence, consistency, assessment and revision take place at every off-campus site. Other student services offered on all DSC and ASU campuses prior to the consolidation (e.g., disability services, counseling and testing, health and recreational services) will continue to be offered, but will be coordinated centrally.

Post consolidation, each DSC and ASU off-campus site will maintain existing student activities functions that will continue to be provided by staff and faculty at each site, but coordinated through the main Albany campus. Finally, funding for all student activities and student organizations at each site will continue to be allocated from student activity fee monies that are collected, based upon both fee structure and enrollment at the site. However, a single set of guidelines for the new ASU will determine university-wide funding criteria.

### **Section 7 Supporting Documentation**

1. [New ASU Athletics Coaches](#)

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## **8. Physical Resources**

Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support this initiative. Assess the impact that the proposed change will have on physical resources, facilities, and equipment.

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### **Narrative**

#### **Existing Physical Facilities and Equipment Available to Support Institutional Consolidation**

Albany State University (ASU) is situated in Albany, GA (population 75,000), across the Flint River and just east of downtown Albany. The campus is bordered by Oglethorpe Boulevard to the north, the Flint River to the west, and Sands Road to the east. Radium Springs Road bisects the campus and curves to form the southern boundary of the campus. The ASU campus sits on 206 acres of land and has 33 major campus buildings that are currently in use providing a total of 1,329,913 usable GSF. ASU's current campus footprint includes seven residence halls and a dining hall that can house and support up to 1900 on-campus student residents.

Darton State College (DSC) is situated on the west side of Albany, 5.3 miles west of the ASU campus off Gillionville Rd (a relatively direct and uncomplicated 12 minute commute away). The DSC campus sits on 180 acres of land and has 16 major campus buildings that are currently in use providing a total of 687,765 usable GSF. DSC's current campus footprint includes 2 residence halls and a dining hall that can house and support up to 461 on-campus student residents.

The updated campus master plans and building inventories for ASU and DSC are linked to this response. The [ASU campus master plan](#) indicates that nine buildings are currently located in the flood plain of the Flint River. These structures include three residence halls, four academic building, the Plant Operations Building, and Reese Student Union. Following a disastrous flood in 1994, these buildings were renovated, however, they are slated for future demolition. Between 1996 and 2009, ten new buildings were constructed along the campus Ridge and five on the Upper Campus to replace the facilities that had been flooded. These structures remain in excellent condition today. The new structures include Student Services, a Dining Hall, Pendergrast Library, seven dormitories, an Academic Building, a Health, Physical Education and Recreation Building, the Central Energy Plant, and Early Learning Center. Additionally, the ASU campus is currently engaged in a capital campaign for a new Fine Arts Building which will also house academic faculty and staff. Once the Fine Arts Building and another new academic building providing approximately 50,000 GSF are added to the facilities inventory, the 70,356 GSF needed to relocate resources from buildings marked for demolition and to address undersupplied program uses will be accommodated according to the Master Plan.

The [master plan assessment for the DSC campus](#) confirmed that the institution has adequate instructional, support, and administration facilities to meet its approved mission. However, the plan revealed a slight deficit in specialized allied health lab space and a need to expand library and media facilities. In analyzing classroom usage, the West campus utilized the Sasaki estimated space needs and the USG space template guidelines. The analysis revealed that classroom space was being used at near optimum levels during the 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (70%) with a significant drop in usage between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. The facilities at DSC were constructed from 1966 to 2012, have been well maintained and renovated as needed, and are in good to excellent condition.

Both ASU and DSC offer traditional face-to-face or hybrid instruction at off-campus instructional sites. The nature, ownership, and condition of facilities and equipment at those off-campus sites are summarized as follows:

1. ASU in Waycross, GA at South Georgia State College's facilities (112 miles away). ASU offers bachelor's degree programs there in education, social work and criminal justice. Facilities and equipment used there include classroom/office space, and office and classroom technology owned and maintained by South Georgia State College. Their condition for program support is access to bachelor degree programs for SGTC students. There is no cost to ASU for use of these facilities.
2. ASU in Cairo, GA at Southern Regional Technical College (54 miles away). ASU offers bachelor's degree programs there in education and criminal justice. Facilities and equipment used there include classroom/office space, and office and classroom technology owned and maintained by Southern Regional Technical College. Their condition for program support is access to bachelor degree programs for SRTC students. There is no cost to ASU for use of these facilities.
3. DSC in Cordele, GA at the Cordele Center (40 miles away). DSC offers the associate of science in nursing, associate of arts in core curriculum, and associate of science in core curriculum. The Cordele Center is a full-service campus location comprised of office and classroom space with office and classroom technology supported by DSC main campus facilities and IT staff. The Cordele Center is supported by DSC and its operating budget.
4. DSC in Swainsboro, GA at East Georgia State College (160 miles away). DSC offers the associate of science in nursing. Facilities and equipment used there include classroom/office space, and office and classroom technology owned and maintained by East Georgia State College. Their condition for program support is access to DSC's ASN for EGSC students. There is no cost to DSC for use of these facilities.
5. DSC in Sandersville, GA at Oconee Fall Line Technical College (170 miles away). Facilities and equipment used there include classroom/office space, and office and classroom technology owned and maintained by Oconee Fall Line

Technical College. Their condition for program support is access to DSC's Professional Healthcare Bridge program for OFLTC students. There is no cost to DSC for use of these facilities.

6. DSC in Thomasville, GA at a house near Archbold Hospital (65 miles away). Facilities and equipment used there include classroom/office space, office and classroom technology owned and maintained by Darton State College, and access to Archbold Hospital as a clinical site. The condition for program support is access to Archbold Hospital as a clinical site for DSC's ASN program students in Thomasville. There is no financial agreement between DSC and Archbold Hospital in Thomasville.

Both ASU and DSC offer a variety of degree programs online as listed in the Information Summary Form. The nature and condition of the physical facilities, equipment, and technology infrastructure available at ASU and DSC to support online program development and delivery are described as follows:

1. Physical Resources Supporting ASU's Online Program Delivery include a state of the art learning management system (LMS), Brightspace by D2L, to host its distance education programs and course deliveries. Within this environment, the university has also integrated many other software and technological solutions to further enhance learning, such as Collaborate (for face-to-face interaction), Class Climate (for surveying), Films-on-Demand (for video streaming delivery), Galileo (for database research), Kaltura (for video production and delivery), Respondus (for online proctoring and assessment building), Turnitin (for plagiarism detection), and a number of publisher integrations (for textbook supplements).

Additionally, ASU has a department dedicated to online program development and delivery, the Office of Academic Online Instruction. This office supports faculty, staff, students, and community users. Within the department, there are system admins, a director, an online enrollment coordinator, an IT systems and support coordinator, and an instructional designer. Further, the department provides access to A/V and computer labs to assist faculty members in the creation of accessible content. Network space is also provided for the storage of projects. Separate orientation and training sessions to the LMS and ASU's online programs are offered to both faculty members and students, some in a self-paced online format through the LMS and available on the Internet and others in live webinar and face-to-face sessions interaction. ASU's Helpdesk is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM and 24-hour support is available through the BOR's Help Center. All technical support numbers and resources are located on the learning management's log-in screen and published on ASU's website.

2. Physical Resources Supporting DSC's Online Program Delivery include a state of the art learning management system (LMS) to hosts its distance education programs. Within this environment, the college has also integrated many other software and technological solutions to further enhance learning such as

Collaborate (for face-to-face interaction), Study Mate (which allows instructors to create study aids), ReadSpeaker (text-to-audio), proctoring and plagiarism detection software, and where applicable the integration of publisher materials and learning aids. Additionally, the online learning division provides an A/V and computer lab to assist faculty members in the creation of accessible content. Network space is provided for the storage of in-work projects and completed projects are housed on a designated network server for streaming through the LMS. Separate orientation and training sessions to the LMS and DSC's online programs are offered to both faculty members and students some in a self-paced online format through the LMS and available on the Internet and others in live webinar and face-to-face sessions. DSC's Helpdesk is open Monday through Friday from 8AM to 8PM and 24 hour support is available through the BOR's Help Center. Additionally, DSC provides all distance learners with a dedicated online support specialist specialized by major who provides technical, academic, and student support via distance technologies such as Collaborate and SKYPE as well as via phone and email. All technical support numbers and resources are located on the learning management's log-in screen and published on DSC's website.

The technology infrastructure of DSC's server network is sufficient for the needs of the institution's distance education program. The college has upgraded (within the past four years) all fiber optic cables on campus to support 10G fiber optic connections and all core devices have been updated to the 10G speeds. The college also has adequate bandwidth to and from the Internet, including three separate connections; a connection for server and administrative processes to provide services to students off site, a connection for administrative and research between other USG institutions, and a connection to support wireless and student housing (50mb, 50mb, 40mb). The college also operates a 1200 sq. ft. server room that supports the online student body by providing streaming media services, in addition to the LMS administered by the USG. The college does an annual risk assessment that identifies when individual units of the technology infrastructure need upgrading. There is also a standing infrastructure upgrade plan that projects upgrades for the next two to three years.

Adequate technology resources are not only vital for distance learning operations, but are also critical components of institutional operations campus-wide. The nature and condition of technology facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to support the overall operations of ASU and DSC are summarized as follows:

1. Technology Resources Available for Campus-wide Support of ASU include enterprise-wide technical architecture, field and service desk support, computer-based testing, general-purpose and program specific computer labs and classrooms, and Peachnet internet and wireless networking. Field and service desk support provide local field technicians for classroom and office support, along with a centralized service desk with customer access by phone, email, walk-up, and web, Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. The ASU

Testing Center supports 11 seats for access to proctored computer-based testing. General-purpose and program specific computer labs and classrooms supply 68 technology-enhanced classrooms, 11 general purpose labs and classrooms with 182 workstations, 33 program specific labs and classrooms with 468 workstations, 9 housing labs with 60 workstations, and 1 SGA lab with 6 workstations. Locations may include the integration of SMART or Crestron technology. Student computers run Microsoft Windows 7 operating system and are equipped with software such as Microsoft Office Suite 2013, select Adobe software, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, VLC Video player and more. Macintosh computers are available to students in select locations. Faculty members have access to both individual and group network drives which allow documents and content to be shared across the network. Campus network management supplies the shared state network Peachnet internet provider with 300/300 for campus and wireless networking supplied from Cisco wireless, multiple SSID, and active directory.

2. Technology Resources Available for Campus-wide Support of DSC includes 92 technology enhanced instructional spaces which include 9 video conferencing equipped classrooms. Student computers run Microsoft Windows 7 operating system and are equipped with software such as Microsoft Office Suite 2013, select Adobe software, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, VLC Video player and Skype. Macintosh computers are available to students in select locations. Faculty members have access to both individual and group network drives which allow documents and content to be shared across the network. Faculty and Staff also have access to the full Adobe Creative Suite for document creation, image creation and video editing. Classroom technologies for face-to-face instruction is paired with a support shell through the learning management system to further enhance technology integration and access to course components. Students may access course content and participate in face-to-face instruction using personal devices as well. DSC provides wireless access via 227 access points (Cisco Wireless controller). Students are provided with 1 terabyte of network storage space for course documents, an email through Office 365, and granted free access to the Office 365 online suite of software. DSC maintains 2 open access computer labs for students that house a total of 96 computers with both Windows and MAC operating systems available. The computer labs are open weekdays from 8am-10pm and on Sundays from 1pm-9pm for student access and live support is available during these times. DSC also maintains 29 closed computer labs designated for specialty course work and classes, these 29 computer labs house a total of 617 computers with both Windows and MAC operating systems.

DSC hosts a 1200 sq. ft. data center which was constructed in 2009 that provides a redundant raised floor cooling system and a 200kv generator. DSC's network consists of two Microsoft Hypervisor Datacenters with two primary Dell storage arrays, both with Cisco Nexus data center network infrastructure, which support DSC's data center, core, housing, and campus networks. Cable television services are supported through BlonderTongue network infrastructure. The college has all



fiber optic cables on campus to support 10G fiber optic connections and all core devices operate at 10G speeds. The college has adequate bandwidth to and from the Internet, including three separate connections; a connection for server and administrative processes to provide services to students off site, a connection for administrative and research between other USG institutions, and a connection to support wireless and student housing (100mb, 100mb, 20mb).

Automated information systems software and databases are other forms of vital physical resources for institutional operation. The University System of Georgia supports standardized institutional use of several of those key software systems. As a result, both ASU and DSC rely on current versions of Banner software for the support of their student information and financial aid systems, current versions of PeopleSoft software for the support of their budgeting, accounting and personnel information systems, and ADP for payroll processing.

To sum up, the physical resources of the two institutions proposed for consolidation are extensive, strong, and more than adequate to support the new ASU. The fact that so many of ASU's and DSC's degree programs have earned various national accreditations as listed in the Institutional Summary Form stands as additional evidence of the appropriateness, adequacy, and quality of facilities and equipment supporting educational program delivery at ASU and DSC.

### **Impact of Consolidation on Physical Facilities and Equipment**

Once the consolidation becomes effective in January 2017, the main campus address for the new ASU will be 504 College Drive, Albany, GA 31705, ASU's East Campus location. The [ASU East Campus](#) will continue to support instructional delivery and related services for most of ASU's existing educational programs, including general education. The programs based on the East Campus will be those associated with four of the five colleges at the new ASU, namely: the College of Business, the College of Arts and Humanities, the College of Sciences and Technology, and the College of Education. The research mission of the new ASU, which is driven largely by the faculty in those four colleges, will continue to be supported largely by faculty on the East Campus. After consolidation, the Darton State College campus will become the [ASU West Campus](#). It will be a full-service satellite campus of ASU and an off-campus instructional site in SACSCOC terms. Because a majority of the degree programs in the health professions that the new ASU will continue to offer are already set up and operating on the DSC campus, the home base for the consolidated set of degree programs in the health professions will be the ASU West Campus. Consequently, the West Campus will house the faculty, staff, and support services of ASU's fifth and newest college, namely the Darton College of Health Professions.

The general education components for the health professions programs as well as the learning support courses currently available at DSC are presently expected to continue to be delivered on the West Campus for the convenience of those students there and for efficient space utilization. Furthermore, many of the Core Curriculum's required and elective courses that currently support DSC's transfer associate degree programs are expected to continue to be offered on the West Campus for students enrolled in those

associate degree programs of the new ASU and for efficient space utilization purposes. As a result of consolidation, DSC faculty teaching in the Core Curriculum/general education discipline areas will become members of the appropriate academic departments and colleges that are home-based on the East Campus. However, membership in those academic departments that are based at the East Campus will not preclude faculty who teach predominantly on the West campus from having faculty offices on the West Campus, especially if space utilization efficiencies are achieved by such office assignments.

Current duplicative administrative and support service departments operating at DSC and ASU will be reconfigured into single administrative and support service departments as a function of consolidation. The home bases for all of those consolidated departments are not yet determined and are contingent on space utilization studies currently underway for the East and West Campuses. The offices of the president and most upper level administrators of the new ASU will likely remain on the East Campus. The offices of the president and upper level administrators at DSC will likely be reassigned to other administrative functions associated with managing West Campus, operations, the new Darton College of Health Professions, and other functions of the consolidated ASU.

In cases where delivery of support services is expected on both campuses for the convenience of students and faculty, a consolidated department will have some of its staff and supervisory personnel assigned to offices on the East as well as the West Campuses. This will be especially true immediately after the consolidation takes place for logistical reasons. A good example of a long-term presence on both campuses is the expected continuing operation of the existing libraries on the East and West Campuses, even though the staff of both library facilities will report to a single director of the ASU libraries after consolidation becomes effective. Support service departments that have daily or regular contact with students, faculty, and staff on both campuses are the ones that will likely have some of their staff and supervisors housed on each campus well into the future. Others, like the Admissions staff for example, can at some point be housed together in a single location. For Admissions, there would be an advantage to having its operations housed at the campus location that provides an attractive and convenient “front door” to the university that would be appealing to prospective students. Other departments whose work is largely behind the scenes, can ultimately be housed together, and it will not matter which campus is their home base of operation—it could even be in an off-campus location if necessary from a functional and room utilization standpoint.

Decisions on the home bases for the consolidated administrative and support units are expected to be decided early in 2017. However, even when a particular question of space assignment for a consolidated administrative department is resolved, it is unlikely that the physical relocations required will occur immediately or quickly. Others occupying the space in question may have to be moved out first, renovations may need to be completed before move-ins can be scheduled, double moves may be required by a domino effect involving other departmental relocations, and wait lists may need to be worked through. Availability of funding to accomplish all of that could also delay

progress. Clearly, patience will be essential during the coming year(s) of consolidation implementation involving space reassignments and relocations.

Since the existing on-campus, off-campus, and online programs and services of both ASU and DSC will be continuing in the new ASU, the necessary equipment and technology infrastructure currently in place will continue to be used, and enhanced or upgraded where necessary. The organization of facilities management will be consolidated and serve the East and West Campuses. The management of equipment inventories will be consolidated and include equipment on both campuses. And, the technology infrastructure for the East and West Campuses will become fully integrated in the process of consolidation implementation. Technology support for online course and program delivery will be consolidated.

Automated information systems are invaluable resources for efficient and effective institutional operations. Consolidations of the automated information systems for student records, financial aid records, accounting records, personnel records, and payroll records constitute major and particularly difficult tasks. Completion of those tasks is being facilitated in several ways. Fortunately, ASU and DSC rely on the same software vendors to support those vital information systems as do others in the USG, and that lessens the challenge of system conversion significantly. It is also fortunate that professional colleagues in the technology division of the University System Office have substantial experience with software vendors and end users from the previous six institutional consolidations. The aid and direction of the technology experts in the University System Office are and will continue to be invaluable for achieving success in the consolidations of all of these enterprise systems. In addition, technology professionals from previously consolidated sister institutions in the System are assisting ASU and DSC personnel in the resolution of technology consolidation issues. Clearly, lessons learned from the previous institutional consolidations in the USG are being applied in ASU's and DSC's consolidation and will help ensure successful systems integration.

The impact of consolidation on the Campus Master Plan is described in Section 10 of the Prospectus. However, it is worth noting here that some of the issues of space deficiency mentioned above and in ASU's and DSC's current campus master plans will be reassessed in the context the combined facilities inventory and space utilization statistics of the new ASU. It is possible that some of the previously identified needs for additional facilities will be diminished as a function of combining the resources of both institutions and achieving greater space utilization of existing facilities. An overarching goal for consolidating the physical resources of ASU and DSC is to manage the related consolidation implementation processes in ways that avoid unnecessary disruption of ongoing operations as much as possible and facilitate a smooth and seamless experience for students, faculty and staff. Every reasonable effort will be made to achieve that goal.

## **Section 8 Supporting Documentation**

1. [ASU Campus Master Plan](#)
2. [DSC Campus Master Plan](#)
3. [ASU East Campus Map](#)
4. [ASU West Campus Map](#)

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## **9. Financial Resources**

Provide a business plan that includes all of the following:

- a. A description of financial resources to support the change, including a budget for the first year
- b. Projected revenues and expenditure and cash flow
- c. The amount of resources going to institution or organizations for contractual or support services
- d. The operational, management, and physical resources available for the change

Provide contingency plans in case required resources do not materialize.

As part of the prospectus, the institution is required to submit financial audit reports and management letters for the two most recent fiscal years, and include its most recent financial aid audit. The most recent year is defined as the fiscal year ending immediately prior to submission of this prospectus. In instances of consolidations, mergers, change of ownership, or acquisitions, the other participating institution or entity is also required to include a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets attributable to operation for the most recent year.

Include a copy of the institution's Pre-Acquisition submitted to the US Department of Education, if appropriate for the change, and all documents/correspondence from the institution to the USDOE and from the USDOE to the institution as pertain to the reporting of this change.

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### **Narrative**

The "Better Together" theme of the proposed consolidation is particularly applicable to the strained financial conditions of ASU and DSC. The financial resources for the new Albany State University will be substantially greater and more comprehensive than the resources of either of the two independent institutions alone, positioning the consolidated institution to achieve higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the future. The combined financial resources of the two institutions and the efficiencies and savings gained from administrative consolidation will strengthen the financial position of the new ASU, enabling better fiscal accommodation of current declining enrollment trends. More importantly, the new Albany State University is expected to have the capital resources to move the new institution to greater levels of educational achievement, especially in its consolidation and elevation of ASU's and DSC's health professions programs into a college-level organizational structure that will be positioned well to respond to growing state needs for the preparation of healthcare professionals.

Both Albany State University and Darton State College maintain comprehensive and parallel networks of internal controls to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local requirements. Both institutions have procedures in place to assess risk, deter non-compliance, and detect violations at the earliest opportunity. Key institutional

components involved in controlling institutional finances and monitoring compliance include the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and the University System of Georgia Internal Audit function, as well as internal auditors. The [BOR Policy Manual Section 7](#) and the [BOR Business Procedures Manual](#) mandate these functions. Therefore, such functions will remain in place for the new Albany State University.

### **Financial Resources to Support the Change**

The University System's chancellor has indicated that the financial savings that will result from the institutional consolidation of duplicative administrative functions will be retained by the new ASU for redirection within the consolidated institution to meet pressing needs. Redirection of such savings should be very beneficial for reducing points of stress in annual operating budgets.

The two principal revenue sources for Education and General Operations at ASU and DSC are state appropriations and student tuition and fees. Tables 1 and 2 present the changes that have occurred in those revenue streams from FY 2011 through FY 2015 for both institutions. State appropriations have fluctuated in response to the Georgia economy and changes in institutional enrollment. However, appropriations for FY 2015 rebounded considerably from previous lows, especially for DSC.

**Table 1. Trends in E&G State Appropriation Funding**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>ASU State Funding</b>	<b>DSC State Funding</b>
2011	\$ 18,872,952.00	\$ 14,022,845.00
2012	\$ 17,390,429.00	\$ 13,279,661.00
2013	\$ 18,637,434.00	\$ 12,359,784.00
2014	\$ 18,539,883.00	\$ 14,948,189.00
2015	\$ 19,326,043.00	\$ 17,012,706.00
2016 (draft)	\$ 19,454,105.00	\$ 15,752,515.00
Five Year % Change	3.08%	12.33%

As Table 2 documents, tuition and fee revenues at ASU have fluctuated from FY 2011 to FY 2016, decreasing 20.20 percent overall. Similarly, tuition and fee revenues at DSC have fluxuated as well, but decreased overall by 16.57 percent from FY 2011 to FY 2016. Enrollment declines have taken a toll on these revenues at both institutions in recent years. Tuition and fee increases have offset some losses of revenue from enrollment decline, but that will not be the case in FY 2017 because of the BOR's decision not to raise tuition rates this year.

**Table 2. Trends in E&G Tuition & Fee Revenues**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>ASU E&amp;G Tuition and Fees Revenues</b>	<b>DSC E&amp;G Tuition and Fee Revenues</b>
2011	\$ 24,231,416.00	\$ 16,892,309.00
2012	\$ 24,875,903.00	\$ 19,434,612.00
2013	\$ 23,655,962.00	\$ 20,771,847.00
2014	\$ 21,869,563.00	\$ 19,838,165.00
2015	\$ 22,135,590.00	\$ 18,191,415.00
2016 (draft)	\$ 19,337,156.00	\$ 14,092,980.00
Five Year % Change	-20.20%	-16.57%

Annual grants and contracts generate a notable revenue stream for ASU and DSC. As Table 3 reveals, grant and contract revenues have been steady at both institutions in recent years and are expected to total approximately \$11 million for the consolidated university. The collaboration generated from the consolidation of the two institutions is expected to boost these revenues in future years.

**Table 3. Trends in Grants and Contracts Revenues**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>ASU E&amp;G Grants &amp; Contracts Revenues</b>	<b>DSC E&amp;G Grants &amp; Contracts Revenues</b>
2011	\$ 10,118,867.00	\$ 2,671,440.00
2012	\$ 11,350,445.00	\$ 2,298,011.00
2013	\$ 9,955,087.00	\$ 2,327,814.00
2014	\$ 9,421,772.00	\$ 2,776,316.00
2015	\$ 8,601,048.00	\$ 2,147,689.00
2016 (draft)	\$ 8,918,723.00	\$ 2,082,907.00
Five Year % Change	-11.86%	-22.03%

A full suite of auxiliary services will be in place at the new Albany State University, including bookstore operations and technology purchasing, student dining and campus catering, student housing, parking, transportation, card services, copy services, health services, and vending. In addition, a broad array of student programs and activities will also be available at the consolidated institution such as intercollegiate athletics, student recreation, intramural athletics services, registered student organizations, and Greek life organizations. Tables 4 and 5 show healthy trends in auxiliary services and student athletics/activities revenues.

**Table 4. Trends in Auxiliary Services Revenues**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>ASU Auxiliaries Revenues</b>	<b>DSC Auxiliaries Revenues</b>
2011	\$ 13,038,020.00	\$ 2,490,485.00
2012	\$ 16,264,255.00	\$ 5,458,294.00
2013	\$ 14,256,512.00	\$ 6,009,220.00
2014	\$ 14,452,252.00	\$ 5,774,064.00
2015	\$ 14,330,080.00	\$ 5,749,422.00
2016 (draft)	\$ 13,159,044.00	\$ 6,149,199.00
Five Year % Change	0.93%	146.91%

**Table 5. Trends in Athletics & Student Activities Revenues**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>ASU E&amp;G Tuition and Fees Revenues</b>	<b>DSC E&amp;G Tuition and Fee Revenues</b>
2011	\$ 3,643,100.00	\$ 2,879,885.00
2012	\$ 3,533,611.00	\$ 3,022,312.00
2013	\$ 2,934,257.00	\$ 4,132,690.00
2014	\$ 2,782,405.00	\$ 3,728,634.00
2015	\$ 2,598,940.00	\$ 3,384,862.00
2016 (draft)	\$ 2,957,182.00	\$ 3,295,542.00
Five Year % Change	-18.83%	14.43%

Both institutions have an institutional advancement office charged with seeking philanthropic support through fundraising events, annual or special solicitation mailings, and individual solicitations of major and planned gifts. This important



revenue generating work will continue in the consolidated Office of Institutional Advancement at the new Albany State University.

### **First Year Budget Projected Revenues, Expenditures, and Cash Flow**

According to Georgia law ([O.C.G.A. 36-81-3](#)), all units of local government, including state offices such as the Board of Regents and the 29 institutions under its legal authority, must adopt and operate under an annual balanced budget. The separate BOR-approved budgets for both institutions and the separate federal financial aid budgets will remain in effect until July 1, 2017. Financially, the institution will merge the two accounting systems into the consolidated accounting system beginning July 1, 2017, with the first completely consolidated budget for the new ASU in FY 2018. Subsequently, the new ASU will undergo its first state audit as a consolidated institution for FY18. Financial aid accounts with the USDOE will be consolidated in summer 2017 as well.

The effective date of the proposed consolidation in early January 2017 will fall in the middle of the University System of Georgia's current fiscal year 2017, which runs from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. Although many aspects of the consolidation will go into effect at that time, each of the partner institutions will complete FY 2017 accounting separately and stand for a state audit thereafter. The two sets of financial statements will be combined for presentation purposes at the end of the fiscal year. Budgetary adjustments will be made in both sets of expenditure accounts to accommodate a new administrative structure that will be implemented in January 2017. In addition, budget management oversight for the second half of FY 2017 will be coordinated centrally under the chief fiscal affairs officer of the new ASU.

The proposed consolidation will occur when ASU and DSC are midway through the current fiscal year. Thus, the first-year budget for the consolidated institution will become, for all intents and purposes, the combined FY 2017 operating budgets of the two partner institutions, effective in January 2017. The combined FY 2017 budget for the new ASU also becomes the baseline on which the FY 2018 budget for the new ASU is built and approved by the governing board in June 2017. That budget is expected to be operational by the time the Substantive Change Committee for consolidation visits the campuses in Fall 2017.

The FY 2018 budget for the new ASU is purely speculative at this point and depends on a variety of factors that will not be clarified until March or April of 2017. Those currently indeterminable factors include: a) the extent to which the Georgia Legislature will fund the USG enrollment driven formula for state appropriations in FY 2018; b) the extent to which additional funding is provided by the Legislature for salary and fringe benefit increases in FY 2018; c) the extent to which tuition and fees are increased by the BOR for FY 2018; and d) the extent to which enrollment in FY 2017 has changed over FY 2016 and how those changes affect reasonable projected enrollments for the new ASU in FY 2018.

As tables 6 and 7 below illustrate, the budgets for ASU and DSC as well as the new ASU in FY 2017 are balanced, as required by BOR policy, with no net cash flow indicated. The

major assumptions upon which the projected FY 2017 budget will be realized include the following: (a) enrollment generated tuition and fees revenues will materialize as projected (ASU projected a 8% drop in enrollment and DSC projected a 20% drop in enrollment; there are no BOR-authorized tuition increases for FY 2017 to offset enrollment declines in FY 2017; consequently, declines from FY 2016 tuition and fee levels are built into the FY 2017 budgets); (b) staffing levels and their associated wage and fringe benefit costs are appropriately “sized” to maintain a positive balance of revenues to expenditures by year-end; (c) sufficient administrative cost savings from consolidation of duplicative administrative overhead will be realized during the second half of FY 2017 once the consolidation becomes effective mid-year to cover transitional costs and other necessary expenses of consolidation in FY 2017; and (d) no unexpected cuts in state appropriated funding will be forthcoming in FY 2017.

### **Contingency Plans if Resources Do Not Materialize**

Contingency plans are in place for any unexpected revenue loss due to state funding cuts or less-than-projected-enrollment. Contingency measures and resources include the following: (a) projected enrollments for the operating budgets were estimated on a conservative basis to reduce the negative impact of less-than-projected-enrollment outcomes in FY 2017; (b) a position-by-position job and staffing analysis was conducted for all support and administrative positions at ASU and DSC in 2016, which led to a substantial reduction in force, effective in September 2016, in an effort to “right-size” current staffing levels in preparation for consolidation; (c) the upper level administrative structure for the new ASU will be reduced and streamlined substantially from the existing overhead levels of the two institutions combined; key administrative leadership positions are being recruited and filled in 2016 in preparation for further consolidation and continued streamlining of administrative support units in the new ASU; (d) additional reductions in force will be considered if necessary to maintain a balanced budget in FY 2017 or FY 2018; (e) hiring freezes, delayed fills of vacant positions, cutbacks in travel reimbursements, and deferrals of equipment purchases are a few additional tactics that could be employed as contingency plans if necessary. However, every effort is being made to avoid having to resort to contingency plans with negative consequences for individual employees. Capitalizing on normal personnel turnover, retirements, and resignations will go a long way to facilitating a smooth consolidation with minimal negative impact on continuing personnel.



**Table 6. E & G Funds Budget for new ASU**

Education and General Funds			
Combined Revenues, Expenditures and Net Cash Flow			
Category	Darton State College FY 2017 Original Budget	Albany State University FY 2017 Original Budget	New Albany State University FY 2017 Projected Budget
<b>Revenues:</b>			
State Appropriation	\$ 15,275,154.00	\$ 19,231,404.00	\$ 34,506,558.00
Tuition	\$ 10,500,000.00	\$ 15,626,645.00	\$ 26,126,645.00
Other General Revenue	\$ 2,274,900.00	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 4,774,900.00
Indirect Cost Recovery	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
Technology Fee	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 1,150,000.00
Sponsored	\$ 19,100,396.00	\$ 22,000,000.00	\$ 41,100,396.00
DSS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 385,000.00	\$ 405,000.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 47,970,450.00</b>	<b>\$ 60,593,049.00</b>	<b>\$ 108,563,499.00</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
Instruction	\$ 15,585,413.00	\$ 22,785,197.00	\$ 38,370,610.00
Research	\$ -	\$ 715,154.00	\$ 715,154.00
Public Service	\$ 1,746,730.00	\$ 677,412.00	\$ 2,424,142.00
Academic Support	\$ 3,147,536.00	\$ 4,268,235.00	\$ 7,415,771.00
Student Services	\$ 2,951,190.00	\$ 3,010,955.00	\$ 5,962,145.00
Institutional Support	\$ 4,383,016.00	\$ 11,864,720.00	\$ 16,247,736.00
Plant	\$ 3,469,910.00	\$ 4,623,393.00	\$ 8,093,303.00
Scholarships	\$ 16,686,655.00	\$ 12,647,983.00	\$ 29,334,638.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 47,970,450.00</b>	<b>\$ 60,593,049.00</b>	<b>\$ 108,563,499.00</b>
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	<b>\$ -</b>		

**Table 7. Combined Auxiliary Services Budget for New ASU**

<b>Auxiliary, Student Activity, and Capital Funds Combined Revenues, Expenditures and Net Cash Flow</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>2017 Original Budget</b>		<b>2017 Projected Budget</b>
	<b>DSC</b>	<b>ASU</b>	<b>ASU</b>
<b>Revenues:</b>			
Auxiliary Services	\$ 3,015,087.00	\$ 7,962,534.00	\$ 10,977,621.00
Auxiliary Services Food Services	\$ 1,504,500.00	\$ 4,110,670.00	\$ 5,615,170.00
Auxiliary Services Stores and Shops	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 160,000.00	\$ 310,000.00
Auxiliary Services Health Services	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 492,800.00	\$ 692,800.00
Auxiliary Services Transportation Parking	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 210,000.00	\$ 235,000.00
Auxiliary Services Other	\$ 322,600.00	\$ 252,000.00	\$ 574,600.00
Athletics	\$ 1,043,209.00	\$ 1,559,700.00	\$ 2,602,909.00
Student Activities	\$ 1,939,228.00	\$ 2,189,322.00	\$ 4,128,550.00
Capital	\$ 1,220,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 1,270,000.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 9,419,624.00</b>	<b>\$ 16,987,026.00</b>	<b>\$ 26,406,650.00</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
Auxiliary Services: Housing	\$ 3,015,087.00	\$ 7,962,534.00	\$ 10,977,621.00
Auxiliary Services: Food Services	\$ 1,504,500.00	\$ 4,110,670.00	\$ 5,615,170.00
Auxiliary Services: Stores and Shops	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 160,000.00	\$ 310,000.00
Auxiliary Services: Health Services	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 492,800.00	\$ 692,800.00
Auxiliary Services: Transportation Parking	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 210,000.00	\$ 235,000.00
Auxiliary Services: Other	\$ 322,600.00	\$ 252,000.00	\$ 574,600.00
Athletics	\$ 1,043,209.00	\$ 1,559,700.00	\$ 2,602,909.00
Student Activities	\$ 1,939,228.00	\$ 2,189,322.00	\$ 4,128,550.00
Capital	\$ 1,220,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 1,270,000.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 9,419,624.00</b>	<b>\$ 16,987,026.00</b>	<b>\$ 26,406,650.00</b>
<b>Net Cash flow</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

### **Statement of Financial Position of Unrestricted Net Assets**

Unrestricted net assets represent resources derived from state appropriations, student tuition and fees, indirect cost recoveries, and sales and services of educational departments. The statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations from FY2015 for ASU and DSC.

Total unrestricted net assets for ASU were (\$25.3 million) for period ending June 30, 2016, which represents a decrease of approximately \$900,000 from the prior year. Darton State College had total unrestricted net assets of (\$13.0 million) as of June 30, 2016, which represents an increase of approximately \$100,000 from the prior year.

### **Support Available Through Public-Private Ventures**

Because the state of Georgia does not allow agencies of the state to directly borrow from third parties, most USG institutions have entered into arrangements with certain qualifying affiliated entities whereby the affiliated entity – usually a university foundation – actually borrows from third parties. The foundation typically purchases or constructs a capital asset for the university. When the asset is ready for use by the university, the university and the foundation normally enter into a one-year lease for the use of the asset. The lease between the university and the foundation contains a series of renewals that matches the maturity of the debt held by the foundation, which the university exercises annually. When the final payment of the last renewal period has been made, full title to the asset passes from the foundation to the university. These arrangements are known as “public-private ventures” (PPVs) within the USG.

While no lease arrangement is technically or legally for more than one year, for generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), it is recognized that it would be extremely unlikely that a university would refuse to continue the renewals through the end of the debt payment period, both because of the nature of the relationship between a university and its foundation and because the asset often has been constructed on land that belongs to the university. As such, these one-year leases are recognized as debt/capital leases on the financial statements of each USG institution that utilizes this type of arrangement.

The USG Board of Regents requires a calculation annually for each PPV, called the “self-liquidating ratio,” which is often called the project’s “debt ratio.” This is defined by the BOR as the project’s net operating income before lease expense divided by the total lease payment. A ratio of 1.0 means that the operating income equals the lease expense, with no margin remaining. The BOR prefers to see a ratio that is greater than 1.0, indicating that the project is on sound financial footing.

The debt and capital leases for Albany State University and Darton State College are detailed as follows:

Albany State University is a party to capital leases that are generally payable in installments ranging from monthly to annually and have terms expiring in various years between 2014 and 2040. Expenditures for fiscal year 2015 were \$5,429,983 of which

\$3,542,325 represented interest and \$358,042 represented executory costs. Total principal paid on capital leases was \$1,529,616 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015. Interest rates range from 3.25 percent to 5.50 percent. The following is a summary of the carrying values of assets held under capital lease at June 30, 2015:

Albany State University had three capital leases with related entities in the current fiscal year. In August 2006, Albany State University entered into a Student Housing Phase I capital lease of \$32,195,312 at 3.25 percent to 5.50 percent with the Albany State Foundation Inc., a discretely component unit, whereby the University leases a building for a twenty-nine year period that began August 2006 and expires July 2034. The outstanding principal balance as of June 2015 is \$31,148,295.

In July 2010, Albany State University entered into a Student Center capital lease of \$17,572,962 at 4.75 percent with the Albany State Foundation Inc., a discretely component unit, whereby the University leases a building for a thirty year period that began July 2010 2006 and expires July 2040. The outstanding principal balance as of June 2015 is \$17,560,153.

In July 2010, Albany State University entered into a Student Housing Phase II capital lease of \$25,581,599 at 4.75 percent with the Albany State Foundation Inc., a discretely component unit, whereby the University leases a building for a thirty year period that began July 2010 2006 and expires July 2040. The outstanding principal balance as of June 2015 is \$25,540,221.

Darton State College is a party to capital leases that have terms expiring in various years between 2040 and 2041. Payments for fiscal year 2015 were \$3,026,662 of which \$2,645,981 represented interest. Total principal reduction on capital leases for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 was \$1,640,836, which is attributable to a gain on debt refunding of \$1,260,155 and principal paid on capital leases of \$380,681. Interest rates range from 5.78 percent to 5.93 percent.

In July 2010 the College entered into a capital lease with GHEFA whereby the College leases a Student Center building for a thirty year period that expires June 2040. The liability for the capital lease for the student center was \$20,173,433 at June 30, 2015, and the interest rate on the bond is 5.87%.

In December 2010 the College entered into a capital lease with the Darton Boosters Inc. to lease the Darton Commons student housing building. The lease is for thirty years and will expire in December 2041. The lease carries an interest rate of 5.78%, and the outstanding balance at June 30, 2015 was \$10,180,773.

In July 2011 the College entered into a second capital lease with the Darton Boosters Inc. to lease the Darton Village South student housing building. The lease is for thirty years and will expire in June 2041. The lease carries an interest rate of 5.93% and the outstanding balance at June 30, 2015 was \$12,716,442.

## Resources for Contractual or Support Services

Contractual and support services are an important delivery strategy for both ASU and DSC and will continue to be important for the new Albany State University. Resources for contractual or support services that are out-sourced are listed below in Table 8. ASU and DSC officials are currently working to identify which vendor's services will be retained to support the new Albany State University beginning Fall 2017.

**Table 8. Out-sourced Contractual or Support Services**

Name	Amount (FY16)	Description	ASU	DSC	New ASU
Knox Pest Control	\$ 16,844.00	Pest Control for Main Campus		X	TBD
UniFirst Corporation	\$ 24,999.99	Uniform Rental		X	TBD
Bank of America Leasing & Capital, LLC	\$ 65,385.42	Cisco Smartnet Service and Maintenance, Year 1 of 3-year Lease		X	TBD
Follet Higher Education Group		Bookstore Management Services	X	X	TBD
Buffalo Rock Company, Inc.		Vending Machines	X	X	TBD
Sodexo	\$ 98,201.00	College Dining Services		X	TBD
Advanced Disposal	\$ 60,000.00	Solid Waste Removal		X	TBD
ASI Campus Laundry Solutions	\$ 15,814.08	Commercial Washers/Dryers at Housing, Rental		X	TBD
Quality Mechanical Solutions, Inc.	\$ 19,650.00	Preventative Maintenance of A/C Equipment		X	TBD
Dunnwell (Cintas Corp.)	\$ 9,150.00	Clean Exhaust Hoods in Dining Hall and Kitchen		X	TBD
National Termite & Pest Control	\$ 380.00	Pest Control for Cordele Campus		X	TBD
Aultman Landscaping & Tractor Services	\$ 3,900.00	Lawncare Services for Cordele Campus		X	TBD
Albany Elevator Service	\$30,240.00	Elevator Service	X		TBD
College Cable Services	\$49,520.28	Cable Services	X		TBD
Ricoh	\$245,839.00	Copier Maintenance	X		TBD
Cook's Pest Control	\$24,996.00	Pest Control for Main Campus	X		TBD
Coca Cola	-	Vending Machines	X		TBD
Aramark	-	College Dining Services	X		TBD
Advanced Disposal	\$69,728.00	Solid Waste Removal	X		TBD
Preferred Heating Cooling-Halls 1-6	\$188,028.00	Preventative Maintenance of A/C Equipment	X		TBD
Johnson Controls	\$245,000.04				

## Operational, Management, and Physical Resources Available for Change

Business and financial functions for the new Albany State University will be centralized under the Executive Vice President for Administration who will report directly to the President. The Executive Vice President will oversee a leadership team of professionals with extensive experience managing and planning university finances including an Associate Vice President for Fiscal Affairs, Executive Director of Student Financial Services, Controller, and Bursar. Position savings will be realized as a function of

consolidating and right sizing the financial services operations for the new Albany State University.

### **State Financial Compliance Audits**

Albany State University and Darton State College undergo financial audits as required by federal and state regulations, which require that states undergo an annual audit in accordance with the [Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996](#) and the [US Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Circular A-133](#). As public institution of higher education, ASU and DSC are organizational units of the Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia for financial reporting purposes. Therefore, ASU and DSC are included in the annual financial audit of the BOR by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts (DOAA).

The state of Georgia Single Audit Reports for FY 2015 and FY 2016 are provided below and show deficiencies for ASU and DSC.

For [ASU, the FY 2015 audit](#) found the following Financial Statement and Financial Aid deficiencies:

1. FS 2015-001 – Deficiencies in Controls over Financial Reporting
2. FA 2015-001 – Overpayment of Student Financial Assistance
3. FA 2015-002 - Undocumented Cost of Attendance Budgets
4. FA 2015-003 - Reports Not Reconciled
5. FA 2015-004 - Verification Process
6. FA 2015-005 - Return of Title IV Funds
7. FA 2015-006 - Inadequate Control Procedures over Unofficial Withdrawals
8. FA 2015-007 - Failure to Reconcile the Federal Direct Loan Program

Albany State University's [FY 2016 audit](#) identified no Financial Statement findings but did note the following Financial Aid deficiencies:

1. FA 2016-001 – Undocumented Cost of Attendance Budgets
2. FA 2016-002 – Return of Title IV Funds
3. FA 2016-003 – Failure to Reconcile the Federal Direct Loan Program

For [DSC, the FY 2015](#) audit found the following deficiencies:

1. FA 2015-001 - Overpayment of Student Financial Assistance

Darton State College's [FY 2016 audit](#) identified the following Financial Aid Deficiencies:

1. FA 2016-001 – Weaknesses in Logical Access IT General Controls
2. FA 2016-001 – Overpayment of Student Financial Assistance
3. FA 2016-003 – Return of Title IV Funds

Both institutions have acknowledged and addressed each deficiency with corrective actions detailed in the attached FY 15 and FY 16 ASU and DSC DOAA audits. In

addition, to the corrective actions illustrated in the DOAA audit reports, ASU and DSC have implemented broader sweeping corrective actions aimed at changing and improving the respective financial affairs cultures. These broad sweeping actions are:

1. A new Chief Financial Officer with extensive higher education experience leading and managing fiscal affairs units was hired in early 2016.
2. Reorganized fiscal affairs personnel through a reduction in force to better streamline fiscal efficiency and right size the department.
3. A new financial aid director with extensive higher education financial aid experience was hired in early 2015.
4. Implemented a reduction in force in DSC and ASU in August-September 2016 to right size both ASU and DSC.

### **State Financial Aid Audits**

The financial aid programs at ASU and DSC are subject to Georgia State Scholarship and Grant Programs Compliance Reviews by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) at least once every three years. A GSFC compliance review was last conducted for ASU in January 2016 and for DSC in April 2015.

For [ASU, the final report from the GSFC compliance manager](#) identified 4 findings:

1. Academic Transcript Missing
2. Exceeds Hours
3. Incorrect Reporting of Data
4. Over Award

For [DSC, the final report from the GSFC compliance manager](#) identified 5 findings:

1. Grade Point Average
2. Incorrect Invoicing
3. Incorrect Program of Study
4. Over Award
5. Seven-Year Limit

The recent audits revealed significant over-awards of federal financial aid, resulting from poor administrative practices. Repayments for those errors in financial aid administration compound the financial stress under which both institutions are operating. Partner institutions in the previous consolidations did not have financial aid challenges as great as these. Here too, staffing changes have been made, corrective actions taken in financial aid administration practices and procedures, and resolution of audit findings is underway.

### **Federal Financial Aid Audits**

At both institutions, the student financial aid offices provide guidance and assistance to help ease the financial burdens associated with students' education. Both offices are in compliance with all state and federal regulations pertaining to the awarding of financial aid to students.

Approximately 81 percent of ASU students and 64 percent of DSC students received financial aid from federal, state, institutional, or outside sources in FY 2015, totaling nearly \$23,635,979 million for ASU aid awarded and \$19,202,556 million awarded by DSC. As indicated in Table 10, the financial aid departments awarded and paid \$42,371,580, a combined amount in Title IV Federal Aid in FY 15.

**Table 10. Financial Aid Awarded in 2014-2015**

Financial Aid Program	ASU		DSC		Combined	
	Total Paid	Total Recipients	Total Paid	Total Recipients	Total Paid	Total Recipients
Pell Grant	6,041,935	2,425	6,418,959	3,248	12,460,894	5,673
Sup. Opportunity Grant	77,664	287	82,000	168	159,664	455
Work Study	866,846	121	73,554	55	940,400	176
Federal Parent Loans	1,575,530	300	270,481	86	1,846,011	386
Federal Loans	13,128,899	2,786	11,081,696	3,188	24,210,595	5,974
State Aid	1,042,433	555	805,175	969	1,847,608	1,524
Institutional Aid	400,292	192	184,094	155	584,386	347
Other Sources of Aid	35,425	33	286,597	95	322,022	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,169,024</b>	<b>*3,126</b>	<b>19,202,556</b>	<b>*3,507</b>	<b>42,838,535</b>	<b>*6,633</b>

Source: Office of Institutional Research

\*Number represents the total unduplicated recipients of any financial award in Fall 2014.

Both ASU and DSC meet the audit requirements for Title IV administration in accordance with their current US Department of Education Program Participation Agreements ([ASU](#) & [DSC](#)) and the US Department of Education Eligibility and Certification Approval Reports ([ASU](#) & [DSC](#)). The Office of Financial Aid at ASU and DSC has not received any limitation, suspensions, or termination by the US Department of Education in regard to student financial aid or other financial aid programs during the previous 3 years.

### **Pre-Acquisition Application submitted to the US Department of Education**

Contact with the U.S. Department of Education regarding the proposed consolidation of Albany State University and Darton State College has been coordinated by the University System Office staff. As noted in the previous six USG consolidations, correspondence from the U.S. Department of Education confirms that the U.S. DOE does not require consolidating institutions to provide a Pre-Acquisition Application as part of a merger review/approval process. However, their Program Participation Agreement must be current when they file the new eApp in January 2017. Both the ASU and DSC Program Participation Agreements are active through 2016 and 2017, respectively. Once consolidated in January 2017, ASU officials will notify the USDOE



and begin the process to switch over financial aid funding to the new Albany State University beginning summer 2017.

### **Section 9 Supporting Documentation**

1. [BOR Policy Manual Section 7](#)
2. [BOR Business Procedures Manual](#)
3. [OCGA 36-81-3 Georgia Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996](#)
4. [OMB Circular A-133](#)
5. [ASU DOAA Audit Report FY 2015](#)
6. [ASU DOAA Audit Report FY 2016](#)
7. [DSC DOAA Audit Report FY 2015](#)
8. [DSC DOAA Audit Report FY 2016](#)
9. [DSC MGT Letter FY 2015](#)
10. [ASU GSFC FA Audit Report 2016](#)
11. [DSC GSFC FA Audit Report 2015](#)
12. [ASU DOE PPA 2016](#)
13. [ASU DOE ECAR 2016](#)
14. [DSC DOE PPA 2016](#)
15. [DSC DOE ECAR 2016](#)

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## **10. Evaluation and Assessment**

Describe how the institution assesses overall institutional effectiveness as well as the means used to monitor and ensure the quality of the changes. Summarize procedures for systematic evaluation of instructional results, including the process for monitoring and evaluating program as well as using the results of evaluation to improve institutional programs, services, and operations. Explain how this change has affected your institution's strategic planning including the development of annual campus master plans.

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### **Narrative**

#### **Special Challenges to the Achievement of a Successful Consolidation of Albany State University and Darton State College Relating to Institutional Effectiveness**

While there are weaknesses in the operations and institutional effectiveness of Albany State University and Darton State College as separate institutions, there is great promise for a resolution of those weaknesses through an effective institutional consolidation that builds on each institution's strengths to create a new, more efficient, and more effective institution. The consolidation's slogan of "Better Together" could not be more genuine and hopeful. The named president of the new Albany State University, Dr. Art Dunning, and the new leadership team he is recruiting are confident that these two public institutions in Albany Georgia will be better together and can be stronger than ever. The governing board members and university system leadership are committed to that objective as well. Support for this institutional consolidation from the SACSCOC Board of Trustees is vital to realizing that potential for success of a new Albany State University.

In keeping with the Principle of Integrity 1.1, this section of the Prospectus will identify existing weaknesses in the institutional effectiveness of ASU and DSC that pose special challenges to be resolved for a successful consolidation. While they are challenges, they are not insurmountable. Campus and system leaders are working diligently together to resolve them and are making great progress. Those leaders will readily agree that the ASU-DSC consolidation has been the most challenging to complete of the seven institutional consolidations that have been pursued by the Board of Regents since 2012. The special challenges relating to weaknesses in institutional effectiveness for this proposed consolidation include the following:

1. **Declining Enrollment.** Precipitous declines in student enrollment in recent years threaten the stability of both institutions, especially Albany State University. DSC's enrollment has declined annually from its peak in Fall 2012 of nearly 6,400 students to under 5,500 students in Fall 2015—a total drop of 14% in three years. ASU's enrollment has declined annually from its peak in Fall 2011 of under 4,700 students to almost 3,500 students in Fall 2015—a total drop of 25% in four years. Demographic studies of southwest Georgia suggest that these

enrollment declines could continue. Institutions in earlier consolidations were not experiencing enrollment declines like these. Consequently, it is more important than ever that these two institutions look for ways to economize and explore new avenues for attracting college students. Clearly, institutional consolidation offers potential savings in administrative overhead. Furthermore, the new ASU's ability to quickly expand DSC's popular associate-level health professions programs to baccalaureate and graduate levels under ASU's Level IV status holds substantial promise in the near future for stemming enrollment declines. The proposed creation of the Darton College of Health Professions in the new ASU is a major first step in that direction toward enrollment recovery.

2. **Financial Stress.** Precipitous enrollment drops have resulted in declining operating revenues, especially at ASU and DSC where state appropriations and tuition revenues are central to financial stability and are driven by enrollment. Whereas previous institutional consolidations produced cost savings in the administrative ranks that could be redirected to strengthen the educational mission of the new institutions, the new ASU will devote the bulk of its administrative cost savings from consolidation to balancing strained operating budgets, making it hard for the new institution to invest in needed educational program improvements and new initiatives. Rising to that challenge, a new CFO was hired early in 2016, and soon after the start of FY 2017, the ASU and DSC presidents jointly announced significant budget cuts and staffing reductions aimed at relieving current financial imbalances and "right-sizing" the institutions in light of their declining enrollments in preparation for consolidation.
3. **Problems in Financial Aid Administration.** Recent audits at ASU and DSC revealed significant over-awards of federal financial aid, resulting from poor administrative practices. Repayments for those errors in financial aid administration compound the financial stress under which both institutions are operating. Necessary staffing changes have been made in the financial aid offices, corrective actions are being taken in financial aid administration practices and procedures, and resolution of audit findings is underway. Both institutions have received substantial support and helpful direction from financial affairs officials in the University System Office as well as from professionals at sister institutions. Considerable progress has been achieved in recent months.
4. **Instability and Turn-over in Leadership Positions.** In recent years, there has been leadership changes at both institutions, especially in the positions of the President, Provost, and Chief Fiscal Officer, but also extending down into the middle-management ranks. Such high turnover in key leadership positions has resulted in a lack of administrative stability and a shortage of seasoned administrative talent to address institutional problems effectively. ASU's new president, Dr. Art Dunning, who is a highly experienced university administrator, recognized this weakness and lack of "bench strength" early in his administration. With the assistance of University System leadership, Dr.

Dunning has been working diligently throughout 2016 to recruit a new and talented administrative team for the new ASU. The key positions of CFO and CAO (interim) are now filled with highly experienced and proven professionals. The lead presidents of the previous institutional consolidations did not face a leadership challenge as great as this one.

5. **Bridging the Cultural Divisions of the Partner Institutions.** This is the first of seven USG consolidations that has involved bringing together a four-year Historically Black College and University (HBCU) state university with a two-year non-HBCU state college. The challenges of bridging the different academic cultures of four-year and two-year institutions have been addressed successfully in several previous consolidations and should be here too. However, none of those consolidations involved bridging the cultural divisions related to race. Frankly, the strength of those cultural divisions between the campuses and in the community was initially underestimated. While there is some resistance to the consolidation, the percentages of Black and White students at DSC are basically equal, and most of ASU's undergraduate transfer students routinely come from DSC. President Dunning and his team are devoting substantial time and energy to building bridges across the cultural divides that exist between the two campus communities and in the region.
6. **Weakened Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Processes.** The lack of stability and repeated turnover in the top ranks of institutional administration and in the ranks of those serving as directors of institutional effectiveness and accreditation liaisons at both ASU and DSC have resulted in weakened processes in the ongoing assessment of institutional effectiveness. The consolidation's required in-depth examination and evaluation of all institutional policies and procedures has produced many meaningful assessments of effective and ineffective practices at ASU and DSC, and those evaluation results are leading to improvements for the operation of the new ASU. As part of consolidation planning, a new mission statement and guiding principles for the consolidated ASU have been formulated and approved, and interim strategic goals for the 2017 and 2018 transitional years of consolidation implementation have been identified. As a consolidated institution the new ASU will integrate that clarified strategic direction into a comprehensive and coherent set of ongoing assessment practices for continuing improvement, both at the institutional level and the unit level. Detailed institutional effectiveness processes to accomplish that for the new ASU are outlined below, and proven leadership has been identified to lead and coordinate that charge.
7. **True Creation of a New Institution.** The intent of all USG consolidations has been to create "new" institutions—building something new and synergistic out of the combination of the strengths of each partner institution. The concept of institutional mergers, where one institution remains largely unchanged and takes over the functions of the partner institution, has not been emphasized. In the case of ASU and DSC, consolidation into something new and dynamic is a

priority. “Better Together” is a consolidation theme with promise of creating a new and stronger institution of higher learning in southwest Georgia.

### **Clarifying the Institutional Mission and Strategic Priorities of the New Albany State University**

One of the first actions taken by the ASU/DSC Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC) early in 2016 was to create the Foundational Documents which included the description, history, vision, mission and guiding principles for the new Albany State University. The CIC engaged in dialogue and planning over the course of several months and produced the Foundational Documents presented verbatim below. The Mission Statement was approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia at its March 9, 2016 meeting.

The creation of the new Albany State University mission statement was relatively easy to accomplish as both institutions share many of the same educational values that are identified in the Foundational Documents. Both Albany State University and Darton State College are committed to access, diversity, and a strong liberal arts foundation. In addition, excellence in teaching and learning, preparing students to be effective contributors to a global society, and improving the quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond are key tenants. Both institutions have a large number of traditional and residential students as well as many non-traditional students. Both are located only 5.3 miles apart in the city of Albany, GA and are members of the University System of Georgia.

The Foundational Documents are key roadmaps for identifying the strategic goals and priorities of the new ASU, which are vital to assessing overall institutional effectiveness. They read verbatim as follows:

### **About Albany State University**

On November 10, 2015, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia voted unanimously to begin the process of consolidating Albany State University and Darton State College. The new Albany State University unifies the distinction, values, and missions of the two institutions. To lead the two institutions through the complex process of consolidating, the USG appointed Dr. Arthur N. Dunning as the ninth president of Albany State University and Dr. Richard Carvajal as the interim president of Darton State College.

The new Albany State University continues a combined legacy of more than 100 years of providing leadership in southwest Georgia in access to education, academic excellence, social change, and economic impact. A nationally top-ranked HBCU, it serves an increasingly diverse student body and community by offering the region a uniquely comprehensive array of programs, from associate to graduate degrees.

## **Albany State University History**

Inspired by W.E.B. DuBois' writings about the persecutions and triumphs of African Americans living in Georgia and aided in his mission by private and religious organizations, Joseph Winthrop Holley founded the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute in 1903, and he served as its president for the next 40 years. The new school was successful in its mission to provide religious and basic education, as well as teacher training, to the local black population. In 1917, the state of Georgia began providing financial support to the school, granting it two-year status. Responding to the needs of the state, the school added training in agriculture and was renamed the Georgia Normal and Agricultural College.

With the creation of the Board of Regents in 1932, the institution joined the newly formed University System of Georgia and, in 1943, was granted four-year status. Concentrating on teacher education and home economics, the school was again renamed, this time as Albany State College. Over the next few years, the College added majors in the humanities and social sciences. In 1954, it began adding degrees in secondary education and, in 1961, nursing, adding health care to its tradition of serving the region.

During the middle decades of the 20th century, the people of Albany State extended the college's mission of education and uplift to include political action. In 1961, Albany State College's students joined with Martin Luther King, Jr., the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and other local black organizations in eight months of protest. Despite warnings from the college's president, William Dennis, many students participated in protests, marches, and an organized effort to test the state mandated desegregation of Albany's bus station. As a result of the protests and the arrest of several students, 40 students were expelled from the college. In May of 2011, 50 years after the events, 32 of these students were finally able to attend graduation as Albany State University awarded them honorary degrees.

With the passage of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the federal government formally recognized and began funding historically black colleges and universities, including Albany State College.

In the 1970s, the college worked with other institutions to offer graduate degrees in a variety of education fields and in business administration. In 1981, after increasing the number of faculty with doctorate degrees by more than fifty percent, Albany State College began offering graduate degrees designed and delivered solely by faculty and staff of the college.

In 1994, the school earned its nickname, "unsinkable." Tropical storm Alberto, which had submerged almost a half million acres of Georgia farmland, raised the Flint River to 44 feet, flooding most of the college. Under the leadership of president Billy C. Black, students and faculty banded together to carry on the college's mission, and, with the support of Governor Zell Miller and a \$153 million recovery fund, rebuilt, renovated, and expanded the campus. During the rebuilding process, on the strength of the school's

growing graduate programs, the Board of Regents in 1996 approved the renaming of the institution: Albany State University. In the following two decades, the university added residence halls, a student center, a stadium, and a fine arts center.

In the 21st century, Albany State University continued to strengthen its mission, attracting nationally renowned scholars and researchers to its faculty and preparing students for leadership in the region and beyond. Between 2000 and 2016, the University produced over 7,500 undergraduates and over 2,700 students with master's and educational specialist degrees and received almost 160 million dollars in research grants.

### **Darton State College History**

Since its founding in 1963, Darton State College has maintained and built upon its mission of providing access to higher education to potential students with a variety of educational needs from Albany, the region, and beyond.

In 1958, as part of a statewide effort to increase the number of Georgians with college degrees, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Junior College Act in an effort to spur the creation of local, two-year colleges. While the state would provide operating funds, the law stipulated that local authorities would need to finance capital construction. In response to local support, the Dougherty County School Board authorized a bond issue of 1.6 million dollars with which to finance the purchase and development of 100 acres of land and the construction of the first five buildings of the college.

In 1965, the Board of Regents appointed Dr. B. R. Tilley to serve as the college's first president, and he would remain in the office until 1989. When doors officially opened in 1966, 620 students enrolled in the new Albany Junior College.

In the following years, the College grew quickly and succeeded in serving both of its primary student populations. Students transferring to four-year institutions typically saw an increase in their grade point averages, and career-program students required to take a licensing exam consistently earned among the highest pass rates in the state.

In 1987, the USG removed the word junior from all of its two-year institutions. A committee made up of people from the faculty, staff, student body, and community drew upon an Old English word meaning "town by the water" and created the new name, Darton College.

Continuity forms an important part of Darton's history. In 1989, the USG appointed Dr. Peter Sireno to replace the retiring Dr. Tilley. Like his predecessor, Dr. Sireno served the institution for more than twenty years, overseeing a period of intense growth.

As part of its mission to serve its students and the region, Darton College committed to expanding its programs in nursing and the health sciences, expanding to 13 programs. As a result of this and other initiatives, such as the expansion of online programs, enrollment more than doubled after the year 2000. In this period, the campus facilities

also grew, including the addition of a 427-seat theater and a massive physical education complex, among other improvements.

In the last decades, Darton developed a thriving campus culture. In response to increased enrollment and interest, the College broke ground on two residence halls. Sports played a major role in student life, drawing students from across the country and around the globe. Between 1998 and 2016, Darton won 48 regional and nine national championships.

In its first 50 years, Darton College evolved to support the needs of a community that was changing in its demography and in its values. The college's first class, in 1966, included no minorities. In its last decade as Darton College, approximately half of the more than 6,000 graduates was minority.

In 2012, upon USG approval of the College's first four-year program, in nursing, the institution's name was again changed, to Darton State College.

### **The new Albany State University**

In the years before the two institutions consolidated, the missions of Albany State University and Darton State College had converged.

Both campuses committed to delivering world-class education with investments in faculty and instructional technology. Each reached out to students local and distant through the creation of online learning platforms. Both emphasized nursing and the health sciences in response to the needs of the population of southwest Georgia. Both schools recognized the needs of non-traditional students and responded with expanded programs and flexible course schedules at the graduate, bachelor, associate, and certificate level. And each campus engaged in the community, creating student learning opportunities off campus and building partnerships with schools, local businesses, and national corporations.

The new Albany State University is committed to sustaining the missions of both of its predecessors, honoring its legacy of service to the African American community and providing access to any citizen seeking a path to education, career enhancement, or personal enrichment.

### **Vision Statement**

Albany State University will be a world-class comprehensive university and a powerful catalyst for the economic growth and development of Southwest Georgia. ASU will be recognized for its innovative and creative delivery of excellent educational programs, broad-based community engagement and public service, and creative scholarship and applied research, all of which enrich the lives of the diverse constituencies served by the University.



## **Mission Statement**

Albany State University, a proud member institution of the University System of Georgia, elevates its community and region by offering a broad array of graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs at its main campuses in Albany as well as at strategically-placed branch sites and online. Committed to excellence in teaching and learning, the University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success. ASU respects and builds on the historical roots of its institutional predecessors with its commitment to access and a strong liberal arts heritage that respects diversity in all its forms and gives all students the foundation they need to succeed. Through creative scholarship, research, and public service, the University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators form strategic alliances internally and externally to promote community and economic development, resulting in an improved quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond.

## **Guiding Principles**

### **Aspire to Excellence**

*Albany State University will aspire toward excellence in teaching and learning, thus becoming the first-choice institution for students from southwest Georgia and garnering recognition as a premier southern regional university.*

### **Embrace Diversity**

*As a historically black institution and led by a highly-diverse faculty and staff, Albany State University will embrace diversity in all its forms – including age, gender identity, race and ethnicity, country of origin, religion, ability level, sexual orientation, and veteran status – and seek to foster a similar acceptance and celebration of that diversity.*

### **Expand Access to Higher Education**

*As an access institution, Albany State University will promote student success for all by welcoming students from varying levels of academic preparation, keeping costs low, offering flexible class times and instructional modalities, and pairing high student expectations with exceptional mentoring, advising, and tutoring.*

### **Elevate Historically Underserved Populations**

*Albany State University will recognize and address the many challenges that face African Americans and other students of color, adult learners, first generation students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and others from underserved populations, and form strong partnerships with K-12, government agencies, and community outreach organizations to increase access and success rates.*

### **Promote Economic Development**

*As part of its commitment to teaching and learning, Albany State University will promote economic development in Albany and throughout southwest Georgia by engaging in applied research, aligning its resources in support of identified needs,*

*developing and enhancing academic programs to meet evolving needs, forming broad strategic partnerships, supplying a trained workforce, and fostering a sense of entrepreneurship.*

[ASU's Strategic Plan for 2012-17](#) expires next year. DSC's strategic plan expired and has not been updated. Neither plan anticipated actions by the governing board to consolidate ASU and DSC, so neither plan referenced strategic goals related to consolidation. Once the two institutions are consolidated, President Dunning will kick off a 12 to 18 month strategic planning process to create the new ASU's 2018-23 Strategic Plan. More details on that are provided below.

In the interim, the five Guiding Principles listed above will serve as strategic goals for the new ASU. The strong correlation between the content of the Guiding Principles and the strategic goals of ASU's 2012-17 Strategic Plan reinforces their appropriateness to guide the strategic thinking in the new ASU. They are:

- **Aspire to Excellence**
- **Embrace Diversity**
- **Expand Access to Higher Education**
- **Elevate Historically Underserved Populations**
- **Promote Economic Development**

These five interim strategic goals will be numbered 2 through 6 for reasons explained next.

Since consolidation implementation will dominate institutional operations of the new ASU for the next several years, one additional strategic goal pertaining to consolidation will top the interim list for the new ASU. It is:

**Strategic Goal #1: Realize the Power of Better Together** Integrate programs, policies, procedures, and cultural traditions in ways that build synergistically on the strengths of ASU and DSC to ensure a smooth and seamless institutional consolidation, out of which a new ASU emerges that is more efficient, effective, and successful than ever.

Furthermore, in light of the challenges to consolidation that are enumerated above, a seventh important interim strategic goal will be added to the list for the new ASU. It represents a continuation of one of ASU's unrealized strategic goals in its 2012-17 Strategic Plan. Its revised wording reads:

**Strategic Goal #7: Attract and Retain Talented Personnel** Recruit and sustain a highly talented and expert team of faculty, staff, and administrators who collaborate effectively and efficiently with each other to achieve the vision, mission and strategic goals of the university.

### **Assessing Overall Institutional Effectiveness of the New ASU**

The administrative organization of the new ASU will include an Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment & Accreditation (OIEAA), the director of which will also serve as the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison. The professional staff in this office, with the assistance of those in the Office of Institutional Research, will take the lead in coordinating, analyzing, and reporting each year on institutional progress made in achieving ASU's strategic goals. The seven interim strategic goals referenced above will be the focus of those evaluation reports in 2017 and 2018. The institutional goals in ASU's new 2018-23 Strategic Plan will be the focus of subsequent annual progress reports beginning in 2019. The OIEAA will present the annual Progress Report on ASU's Strategic Goals Attainment to the President, the President's Cabinet, and others as appropriate for review, follow-up and corrective action as needed.

Examples of the assessment results that will be reported and analyzed in the initial 2017 Progress Report on ASU's Strategic Goals Attainment are presented on a goal-by-goal basis as follows:

#### **For interim Strategic Goal #1, Realize the Power of Better Together**

1. Evidence of a successful Consolidation Prospectus, consolidation approval from SACSCOC, and official consolidation in January 2017.
2. Evidence that the initial consolidated ASU and DSC payrolls were operational and accurate in January 2017 and remained accurate at the start of the new fiscal year (July 2017) and academic year (August 2017).
3. Evidence that the consolidated curriculum scheduled to go into effect in Fall 2017 was completed and loaded in Banner for a successful early registration for Fall Semester 2017 in April 2017.
4. Evidence that the initial consolidated operating budget for FY 2017-18 for the new ASU was successfully and accurately prepared and approved in June 2017.
5. Evidence that federal financial aid accounts for DSC and ASU were successfully merged for the new ASU in time for smooth and seamless distributions of student aid at the start-up of Fall Semester.
6. Evidence of a smooth and seamless regular and late registration process for Fall Semester 2017 in August 2017.
7. Evidence of a seamless and accurate consolidation of DSC and ASU student records in Banner for the new ASU.
8. Evidence of a turnaround in fall enrollment trends with an increase for Fall 2017.
9. Evidence of an improved financial condition for the new ASU in FY 2017-18 over FY 2016-17.
10. Evidence from FY 2016-17 financial aid audits of improved management of federal student aid administration.
11. Evidence from FY 2016-17 institutional audits of sound financial management.
12. Evidence of the new ASU's continuing compliance with SACSCOC requirements in the Report of the Substantive Change Committee in fall 2017.

#### **For Strategic Goal #2, Aspire to Excellence**

1. Evidence of educational program quality as reflected in visiting review committee reports and national re-accreditations attained in 2017.

2. Evidence of high passing rates of ASU graduates on their licensing and certification exams in 2017.
3. Evidence in admission records for Fall 2017 of ASU's first-choice status by prospective students as compared to the previous years' data.
4. Evidence of ASU awards and public recognitions received for academic excellence in 2017.

For Strategic Goal #3, Embrace Diversity

1. Evidence of increased diversity in the student body and employees of ASU in Fall 2017 compared to Fall 2016.
2. Evidence of positive attitudes toward student and employee diversity in 2017 from campus surveys.
3. Evidence of institutional recognitions, awards, and celebrations involving diversity in the campus and local communities in 2017.

For Strategic Goal #4, Expand Access to Higher Education

1. Evidence of increased enrollment in Fall 2017 compared to Fall 2016 of students in different categories of academic preparation.
2. Evidence of efforts made in 2017 to keep the costs of attending ASU low compared to peer institutions in other states.
3. Evidence of expanded online course and program offerings and other means of providing flexible class times in 2017.
4. Evidence of improvements made in mentoring, advising, and tutoring services in 2017.

For Strategic Goal #5, Elevate Historically Underserved Populations

1. Evidence of improved retention and graduation rates in 2017 for all ASU students, also applicable to the different historically underserved populations.
2. Evidence of new and improved services provided at ASU in 2017 specifically aimed at supporting the success of historically underserved populations.
3. Evidence of institutional partnerships formed in 2017 with k-12, government agencies, and community outreach organizations to increase access and success rates of historically underserved populations.

For Strategic Goal #6, Promote Economic Development

1. Evidence of increases in grants and contracts received by ASU in 2017 to support research and development
2. Evidence of educational program development and expansion in 2017 that addresses workforce shortages and training demands in the community and its different industries.
3. Evidence of partnerships formed in 2017 with entities in the community or region that are aimed at promoting economic development.
4. Evidence of expanded educational programs in 2017 to foster entrepreneurship and business start-ups.
5. Evidence of other alignments of institutional programs and resources in support of identified community needs or interests.

#### For Strategic Goal #7, Attract and Retain Talented Personnel

1. Evidence that key leadership positions were filled in 2017 with personnel who were well-qualified for their positions.
2. Evidence that new hires in the faculty, staff, and administrative ranks in 2017 came to ASU with strong credentials for their positions.
3. Evidence that the annual performance evaluations of continuing employees at ASU in 2017 reflect acceptable job performance and collaborative contributions to the achievement of the institution's mission and goals.
4. Evidence that stability in the ranks of faculty, staff, and administrators was achieved and that personnel turnover was kept to reasonably low levels in 2017.

To ensure that this analysis of assessment results related to ASU's strategic goals are used for continuing improvement of the institution, the President's Cabinet, after receiving each year's Progress Report, will schedule a special meeting or retreat of the Cabinet that is devoted to producing a written set of action steps to be taken in the coming year to achieve further improvements in strategic goal attainment. The written product of the Cabinet's work will initially be named the 2017 Action Plan for Improving ASU's Strategic Goals Attainment. In subsequent years, those annual Cabinet retreat sessions will begin with a review of the extent to which the previous year's planned action steps were accomplished. A written summary of those accomplishments will serve as evidence of institutional improvement, and OIEAA's subsequent annual reassessments of strategic progress will confirm the impact of improvement initiatives completed.

The annual production of a Progress Report on ASU's Strategic Goals Attainment and the Cabinet's subsequent formulation of an annual Action Plan for Improving ASU's Strategic Goals Attainment will ensure that ASU's strategic goals remain in the forefront of ASU's day-to-day operation and will serve as a powerful and ongoing catalyst for ASU's continuing institutional improvement and quality enhancement.

#### **Assessing and Improving Unit-Level Institutional Effectiveness in the New ASU**

In addition to coordinating ASU's annual assessments of overall institutional effectiveness, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment & Accreditation, with the Assistance of the Office of Institutional Research, will also coordinate and facilitate annual unit-level Assessment for Improvement reporting and its archival storage for campus access in Compliance Assist. The term, unit-level, refers to the five categories of institutional effectiveness identified in CS 3.3.1, including educational programs, administrative support services, academic and student support services, research, and community/public service. Annual Assessment for Improvement reporting at ASU will emphasize the use of collected assessment results for continuing improvement at the unit level in keeping with the Commission's requirements for producing evidence of improvement and continuing quality enhancement. Annual Assessment for Improvement reporting at ASU will also be tightly aligned with the strategic goals of the new ASU.

The new ASU will elect to standardize the focus of program-level Assessment for Improvement reporting on a common set of expected program performance outcomes (PPOs) that matter most for ASU's academic success. This common set of PPOs is tightly aligned with BOR policy and procedures on Comprehensive Program Review. PPOs are distinguished from student learning outcomes (SLOs) in that the educational program is the unit of analysis and focus of evaluation in the assessment of PPOs. The following expected program performance outcomes will be assessed separately and annually, and the results used for program improvement, for each undergraduate and graduate degree program and certificate that is offered at each instructional site, including online delivery of the educational program:

1. **PPO 1: The educational program has sufficient annual student enrollment to be viable.** Viable educational programs consistently enroll a sufficient number of students each year to regularly support the offering of the program's required and elective courses, which ensures the educational integrity of those course experiences for students, the cost-effectiveness of the instruction provided, and timely completions of the educational program. Program productivity in terms of annual program enrollment is one of the key variables for defending the viability and retention of an educational program under the Board of Regents' policy and procedures for Comprehensive Program Review.
2. **PPO 2: The educational program has a sufficient number of annual completion awards to be viable.** The successful completion of educational programs is vital to the institution's success in meeting its Complete College Georgia goals for preparing a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Successful program completions are also important to students, parents, and the state and federal governments in terms of their return on investment in higher education. Program productivity in terms of its number of graduates each year is one of the key variables for defending the viability and retention of an educational program under the Board of Regents' policy and procedures for Comprehensive Program Review.
3. **PPO 3: The educational program has sufficient indicators of program quality to be viable.** A completed program's value to its graduate is inextricably linked to the program's quality. An educational program's indicators of quality include the integrity and rigor of the curriculum, the strength of the faculty's credentials, the adequacy of the program's instructional facilities and support services, the performance of graduates, and the strength of peer judgments about program quality in comprehensive program reviews and program accreditations. Such indicators of program quality comprise one of the key variables for defending the viability and retention of an educational program under the Board of Regents' policy and procedures for Comprehensive Program Review.

The new ASU will also elect to standardize the focus of program-level Assessment for Improvement reporting on a common set of expected student learning outcomes (SLOs) that matter most for ASU's academic success. SLOs are distinguished from program performance outcomes (PPOs) in that what the student has learned by the time the program is completed is the unit of analysis and focus of evaluation in the assessment of

SLOs. The following expected student learning outcomes will be assessed separately and annually, and the results used for program improvement, for each undergraduate and graduate degree program and certificate at each instructional site, including online delivery of the educational program:

1. **SLO 1: Students nearing completion of their educational program demonstrate effective communication skills that are appropriate for their major field of study, depth of study, and degree level.** Employers, graduate schools, and university faculty in general expect program graduates to have effective written, oral, graphic, and/or interpersonal communication skills that are appropriate for their fields of specialization. Those communication skills in the major field of study are expected to become greater as the student completes more coursework and attains higher degrees in the major field.
2. **SLO 2: Students nearing completion of their educational program demonstrate effective analytical problem solving skills that are appropriate for their major field of study, depth of study, and degree level.** Employers, graduate schools, and university faculty in general expect program graduates to be able to analyze and solve challenging problems in ways that are appropriate for their fields of specialization. Analytical problem solving in some fields of study is highly quantitative in orientation. In others, it is highly qualitative. Many fields of study require a blend of quantitative and qualitative problem solving skills. Analytical problem solving skills in the major field of study are expected to become greater as the student completes more coursework and attains higher degrees in the major field.
3. **SLO 3: Students nearing completion of their educational program demonstrate sufficient expertise in their major field of study or disciplinary specialization as appropriate for their depth of study in the field and degree level.** Employers, graduate schools, and university faculty in general expect program graduates to have substantial expertise in their fields of specialization. Expertise in the major field of study or disciplinary focus is expected to become greater as the student completes more coursework and attains higher degrees in the major field.

Shifting to organizational units, the new ASU will elect to standardize the focus of unit-level Assessment for Improvement reporting on a common set of expected unit performance outcomes (UPOs) that matter most for ASU's success in its support services, research operations, and public service operations. UPOs are kin to PPOs in educational programs in that the unit's performance is the unit of analysis and focus of evaluation in the assessment of UPOs. The following expected unit performance outcomes will be assessed annually, and the results used for improvement of unit operations, for each support service at ASU from the president's office to the department level, including research centers and research support units, as well as community/public service units:

1. **UPO 1: The unit operates effectively, following accepted contemporary standards, policies, and procedures for its functional area that ensure quality performance.** Effective unit performance is benchmarked against recognized good and best practices in the professional field of the unit's functional area that change and improve as a function of the evolution of professional practices at peer institutions and advances in the use of technology. Assessment results on the quality of unit performance and adherence to contemporary standards from formal audits and external peer and consultant reviews are particularly relevant.
2. **UPO 2: The unit operates efficiently and cost-effectively in its staffing and business procedures.** Responsible stewardship of human and physical resources is an institutional and unit-level obligation of publicly supported colleges and universities. Such stewardship requires unit operations and performance to be as efficient and cost-effective as possible, without sacrificing the quality and effectiveness of the unit.
3. **UPO 3: The unit makes substantive contributions to the institution's annual progress toward the achievement of ASU's strategic goals.** Successful achievement of each strategic goal of the university requires the collaboration and collective contributions of the functional units most closely associated with goal attainment. Specific functional units may not have opportunities to contribute to the achievement of each and every strategic goal of the institution, but where those opportunities exist, the unit is expected to be collaborative and make substantive contributions to the attainment of the associated institutional strategic goal(s).

The title, "Assessment for Improvement Report," has special significance worth noting. For 20 years or more under the *Criteria for Accreditation*, Institutional Effectiveness (IE) largely had an assessment-centric emphasis. Although "closing the loop" through the use of assessment results was increasingly referenced in later years, having a systematic assessment process was the primary concern for demonstrating compliance with IE requirements. That was also a time when referencing "assessment plans" was more acceptable for compliance than it is today. Under the *Principles of Accreditation* and its subtitle, *Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, especially after the revisions adopted to CS 3.3.1 in 2008, the assessment-centric focus of IE shifted to a "continuing improvement emphasis."

Under these revised and current accreditation requirements, assessment now has an explicit purpose—to generate evidence of program and unit improvement based on analysis of assessment results. Plans to deliberate on assessment results are insufficient. Plans to use assessment results in future initiatives to improve the program or unit are inadequate. Using assessment results only to justify changing assessment methods is not acceptable. Indicating that targeted achievement levels were met, and no further action (i.e., improvement) is needed, leads to a failure to produce required evidence of program or unit improvements. As the 2012 *Resource Manual* clearly states, "...the institution is responsible for producing *evidence* of improvement based on the analysis of the assessment results, as opposed to a *plan* for improvement (p. 50)." The new and



improved approaches to addressing institutional effectiveness and compliance with CS 3.3.1 as described here for the new ASU are in tighter alignment with this comprehensive standard than has been the case at ASU and DSC in the past.

Consequently, the new ASU will not be referring to program and unit IE reporting as the production of “assessment plans” or “improvement plans”—the new ASU’s Assessment for Improvement Reports will emphasize documenting improvements actually implemented that were called for as a result of the analysis of assessment results and were subsequently confirmed as real program or unit improvements by subsequent reassessment results.

Program-level and unit-level annual Assessment for Improvement Reports will cite assessment measures used for each expected outcome and include direct as well as indirect methods of assessment. Analysis and interpretation of the extent to which each expected outcome was and was not achieved according to assessment results and why that is the case will be expected in each Assessment for Improvement Report. The analysis of assessment results will be expected to have led to concrete improvements in subsequent program or unit operations and outcomes, and evidence of those improvements should be included in annual reports. Since no program’s or unit’s operations are ever perfect, all programs and units will be expected to strive for continuing improvement, even if it only involves, for example, moving more students from meeting to exceeding expectations on SLO performance. Reassessment results after improvement initiatives have been implemented will be reported to validate the extent to which those improvement initiatives were successful.

Because a complete cycle of meaningful assessment-analysis-improvement-reassessment often takes multiple years to complete, annual Assessment for Improvement Reports will be expected to provide progress updates for ongoing assessment for improvement initiatives. For completed initiatives in a given year, annual reports will be expected to chronicle the highlights of those particular initiatives from start to finish. This will facilitate seeing evidence of complete assessment-analysis-improvement-reassessment cycles without having to review and compare a series of independent annual snapshots of Assessment for Improvement Reports that sometimes are misaligned or inconsistent in their coverage of particular initiatives from year to year.

Comprehensive program reviews and reviews for national program accreditation are major initiatives of assessment for improvement that take multiple years to complete and increasingly require continuous attention to maintaining appropriate levels of compliance between reviews. The program assessments and improvements associated with such reviews will be incorporated into annual Assessment for Improvement Reports. The self-study phase of such reviews constitute a major assessment activity that often leads to substantive program improvements before a committee visit that should be documented in annual Assessment for Improvement Reports. The external committee’s evaluation phase of such reviews also constitutes a major reassessment that confirms the effectiveness of changes made for compliance and can also lead to additional findings that result in more program improvements that should be

documented in annual Assessment for Improvement Reports. Subsequent monitoring of compliance between major reviews relative to existing or revised accreditation standards constitute additional assessment activities that typically lead to other program improvements that should be part of these annual reports as well.

It should be noted that national program accreditation entities often require a more detailed list of SLOs to be assessed than are described above for SACSCOC accreditation compliance. Such program accreditors tend to focus more deeply on the details of specific academic programs than does SACSCOC, and that is appropriate to their more limited scope of quality assurance. However, their longer lists of specific SLOs and their related assessment results typically can be cited in annual Assessment for Improvement Reports by collapsing them into the shorter list of more general SLOs listed above.

As should be obvious in the wording of the common set of SLOs that matter most to ASU's success, SLO assessments will be aimed predominately at the accumulated and retained learning that students demonstrate near the end or completion of their educational programs. In the national conversations that have been promoting a sharper focus on student learning outcomes, what matters most is not what students learned early in their educational pursuits, but what knowledge, skills, behaviors, and professional attitudes they take with them after completing their programs and graduating from the university. Consequently, embedded assessments of the major student work products or field-based practicums that are central features of capstone course experiences will be some of the strongest examples of direct assessment of SLO achievement. Performance on standardized major field exams or certification/licensing exams will be other good examples of direct assessment. Student self-reports in surveys of SLO achievement will be acceptable indirect measures, but they will be expected to be supplemented and reinforced by direct assessment results.

As the Commission's *Resource Manual* advises, unit-level assessment methods can and will be different from those used in program-level assessment for improvement. Perhaps the most obvious difference is that SLO assessments are only expected for educational programs. Another difference is that more formal audits and consultant evaluations may be found in unit-level assessments than in program-level assessments. On the other hand, some units can be subject to national accreditation reviews just as many educational programs are.

A powerful advantage of standardizing expected PPOs and SLOs for educational programs and UPOs for other units (as opposed to allowing programs and units to identify their own unique expected outcomes) is that assessment coordinators at the program-level and also at the unit-level can more easily share and learn from each other how to best conduct meaningful assessments and implement concrete improvements when they are focused on common sets of expected outcomes. When expected outcomes range widely in focus and significance from program to program and unit to unit, assessment coordinators do not speak a common language of assessment objectives or methods, and the potentials for learning from each other are diminished.

The *Resource Manual* repeatedly emphasizes connecting program and unit assessments to the achievement of the institution's mission and goals. Citing college, department, program, or unit missions in assessment reports, which frankly are rarely tightly aligned with program and unit assessments, does not ensure that what is most important to the university's mission and goals is being addressed. Using common PPOs, SLOs and UPOs that matter most to the institution's success ensures a tighter connection of assessments for improvement to institutional mission and goals. Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 begins with the words, "The institution identifies expected outcomes...." By having the institution identify common and important PPOs, SLOs, and UPOs for use campus-wide, the probabilities increase that the university's mission and strategic goals will be achieved through the convergence of the best collective efforts of all involved.

In sum, program-level and unit-level institutional effectiveness will be demonstrated comprehensively in the new ASU and in compliance with *The Principles of Accreditation*. Most importantly, the focus of assessment for improvement at the program and unit levels will be aimed at the expected outcomes that matter most to institutional success and the achievement of the new ASU's mission and strategic goals.

### **Future Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan for the new Albany State University**

The seven interim strategic goals for the new ASU described above will be the guiding force for institutional development and the overall assessment of institutional effectiveness during the consolidation implementation years of 2017 and 2018. Following approval to consolidate by SACSCOC in December 2016 and the BOR in January 2017, President Dunning will establish the Strategic Thinking and Planning Committee. This important body comprised of faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community stake holders will be charged to prepare a strategic plan that will shape the future of the new Albany State University from 2018-2023. That work is expected to take 12-18 months to complete. The new strategic plan will be reviewed and approved by the shared governance bodies of the new institution and the University System Office.

Planning for the creation of a consolidated Campus Master Plan for the new ASU is being reviewed by the Campus Master Planning operational working group (OWG 57), and will include their recommendations as approved by the CIC. A first step for OWG 57 has been to review [ASU's](#) and [DSC's](#) recently updated Campus Master Plans and to consider the integration of already completed capital projects and campus improvements. Both master plans were developed using data showing projected enrollment trends, educational program development, and supporting infrastructure at each campus. The plans show support for increased academic spaces (classroom and laboratories), along with projected needs for office space, and support space. Both plans developed a phased approach for new construction and renovations to accommodate evolving institutional needs and to make use of available financial resources.

Recommendations from the [USG's Space Utilization Study](#), conducted from September 2011 to April 2013 will also be taken into account when formulating a consolidated campus master plan for the new ASU. In that study, all USG institutions, including Albany State University and Darton State College, explored all categories of space (on-

campus, off-campus, and instructional sites) to develop a data baseline and metrics in order to adequately address the following tenants:

1. Set capital resources prioritization and allocation;
2. Improve campus management and allocation;
3. Establish objective, fact-based needs assessment for planning;
4. Inform project conception, programming, and design; and
5. Enhance research productivity where applicable.

A third initiative is also underway that will impact the content of a consolidated Campus Master Plan. ASU President Art Dunning and Interim DSC President Richard Carvajal established in 2016 a Program and Instructional Location Committee to examine and recommend how best to utilize the physical plants of ASU East and ASU West campuses. This important group is comprised of members of the USG's Office of Planning and Management, and equal representation of ASU and DSC faculty and staff. The overarching questions driving their recommendations are (1) How do we enhance student success and educational experiences in the new ASU?, and (2) How do we maintain or improve efficient space utilization? This group's recommendations will support the data-driven decision making process for how best to efficiently utilize the physical plants of the east and west campuses of the new Albany State University.

The results of the USG's space utilization initiative, in concert with the recommendations from OWG 57, and the Program and Instructional Location Committee will come together in 2017 to begin the process of formulating a consolidated Campus Master Plan. That new Plan will address documented needs for campus space improvements as well as improved space utilization. It will also include plans for improved technological infrastructure for distance education, continued use of smart communications tools campus-wide, and enhancements of effective work and study environments for faculty, students and staff.

### **Closing Observations**

Section 10 of the Prospectus started off with an honest admission that ASU's and DSC's processes for demonstrating compliance with SACSCOC institutional effectiveness requirements had withered in recent years, for both institutions overall and at their program and unit levels. Hopefully, it is obvious from the subsequent text that substantial progress has been made in laying a firm foundation and charting a powerful course for the new ASU to establish strong and meaningful assessments that generate important institutional, program, and unit improvements, all aimed at achieving the consolidated university's new vision, mission and strategic goals. Work continues on refining these creative and innovative assessment for improvement processes for the new ASU, which are expected to become fully operational once institutional consolidation becomes effective in January 2017.

### **Section 10 Supporting Documentation**

1. [ASU Strategic Plan 2012-2017](#)
2. [ASU Campus Master Plan](#)
3. [DSC Campus Master Plan](#)
4. [USG Space Utilization Study](#)