

# GTS Task Force Report: Defining a Path Forward for Georgia Tech Savannah

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#### **Task Force Formation**

- Introduction of new Georgia Tech Strategic Plan: *Designing the Future*
- Institute practice of academic program reviews to ensure excellence
- Factors external to GT:
  - State budget challenges
  - Evolving engineering degree offerings in the state
  - Cyclical nature of workforce needs
- Uniform desire to define direction



## **Task Force Charge**

Define a sustainable and viable path forward for GTS that

- a) is in keeping with Georgia Tech's reputation for excellence;
- b) is unique and complementary to GT Atlanta and;
- c) can be viable and self-sustaining within five years.



## **Process Summary and Data**

- Engaged in creating a common foundation of knowledge
  - operations of GTS
  - local community needs, interests, and opportunities
- Meetings and interviews with various constituencies
- Compiled and studied operations data
- Investigated experiences and programs elsewhere



## **Findings**

- Low enrollment
- Limited student contact with GT faculty in first two years
- Low student to faculty ratio compared to Atlanta creates resource struggles
- Low admission yield and retention from EA program
- Difficulty in recruiting faculty and graduate students
- Significant funding deficit
- Duplication and direct competition with degree programs offered in Atlanta
- Enthusiastic support for GT in coastal Georgia



#### **Task Force Recommendations**

- 1. A continued and strong presence in Southeast Georgia by creating a new academic and operational model for GTS
- 2. Discontinuing the current degree programs



## **Transition from Current Degree Programs**

- Phasing out undergraduate degree offerings as well as GTREP and EA transfer programs
- Continue, enhance and expand RETP partnerships
- Shift current GTREP partners to RETP
- Subject to policies of the USG and notification of SACS and ABET
- Phasing out current graduate degree programs as well



## **Creating a New Model for GTS**

- Strong potential for financial self-sufficiency and revenue neutrality (or even revenue generation)
- support the advanced education requirements of regional business and the local community
- alignment with mission, vision, and strategic plan
- flexibility and the agility to respond to shifting market demands
- Go beyond engineering create unique programs
- Offer a portfolio of:
  - 1) undergraduate co-curricular educational experiences
  - 2) educational programs directed to the military
  - 3) executive and other non-credit educational programs
  - 4) credit-bearing professional master's degree programs
  - 5) regional applied research opportunities



## **Undergraduate Experiential Learning**

- internships, co-op, and field experiences
- a unique offering not duplicative of Atlanta efforts and leverages unique aspects of the region
- expanding the pool of participants to all Atlanta students, in all fields of study
- engagement of local industry and business
- uses existing facilities including distance learning to keep some course work on-going while engaged in a co-op assignment or internship
- largely self-sustaining with participation of industry
- quick implementation



## **Education Programs for the Military**

- potential for a sustainable revenue source
- administered through the current DLPE operations with proven successful business models
- strong preliminary interest
- potential to replicate across the nation with federal support
- new demographic
- Possible topics: robotics, applied physiology, and leadership
- Market studies to determine sustainable demand and areas of focus would be necessary



#### **Executive & Noncredit Education**

- low risk and low cost; self-sustaining
- administered through the current DLPE operations with proven successful business models
- local or across the globe; delivered long-distance, in person or with hybrid models.
- not restricted to activities of Colleges outside the traditional educational model.
- courses easily customized to needs of the client
- addresses a regional need not presently being served.
- could be "branded" in Savannah; augmented with workshops, professional meetings, and other activities compatible with the Savannah location and GT-S facilities.



## **Professional Master's Degrees**

- leverage current programs and infrastructure to create unique programs
- self-sustaining and involve differential tuition
- rely on experienced professionals to serve on the faculty
- leverage local competitive strengths and GT brand
- Savannah could become Tech's professional degree center
- The target population is world-wide
- Not competitive with Atlanta; there are very few such programs in existence.
- There is a need for such programs spanning practically all areas where Georgia Tech excels across all colleges.



## **Regional Applied Research**

- low-risk opportunity
- supported by external funding.
- consistent with the Georgia Tech brand but unique to this region.
- synergistic potential with traditional research activities in Atlanta and will bring activity to Savannah
- fits into the economic development strategies of the region
- can spur infrastructure development such as research labs that leverage available facilities
- GTRI and others are currently pursuing such activities and are willing to explore others (GTRI currently operates in 16 locations worldwide).



#### **Governance of the new GTS**

- Operate autonomously with independence of action and authority to ensure support and success
- Report through the established and successful Distance Learning and Professional Education (DLPE) unit
  - significant budgetary and administrative autonomy
  - innovative and unique approaches to education and programs
  - incentivizes participation from the academic units
  - Experienced in technology for distance and non-traditional delivery of education
  - delivers content and technology to Savannah, as well as to other
     Georgia Tech campus locations and to individuals around the world
  - nimble and non-traditional approach that is needed to make this new model succeed



## **Transition Planning: Guiding Principles**

- Integrate Savannah into Georgia Tech's strategic plan and global perspective.
- Honor our commitment to Georgia Tech students in Savannah to complete their Georgia Tech degree programs.
- Be sensitive and responsive to the needs of faculty and staff within any new structure and preserve employment wherever possible.
- Acknowledge and show appreciation for the role and contribution of all stakeholders through honest, open, and frequent communication with GTS faculty, staff, students, and the Savannah community.



# **Guiding Principles, continued**

- Engage the Savannah community in evolving the new model to ensure a collaborative and lasting investment in success. Develop a mutual, multidimensional understanding of the needs and opportunities in Savannah and the programs and strengths offered by Georgia Tech.
- Lay the foundation for long-term partnerships in the Savannah region to **foster economic and workforce development through education and outreach**.
- Develop the appropriate mechanisms, structures, and support to market programs effectively, ensure quality, and assess progress toward transitional benchmarks such as viability and sustainability.



## **Transition Operations**

- central contact at the Savannah campus to help respond to and coordinate all inquiries
- "business as usual" mode during the summer and fall semesters of 2011
- detailed degree completion plan will be released by September 2011
- Upon acceptance of the recommendations, DLPE will be charged with developing an implementation team to guide the new directions



## **GTS Faculty Transition**

- All will be invited to join their disciplinary colleagues in Atlanta and will offered relocation support along with continuation of their academic appointments
- Relocations will be coordinated with the degree completion plan to meet Savannah teaching obligations
- As transition plans are finalized, the assignment of specific faculty members will be discussed individually
- The engineering deans office and the school chairs will play a critical role in coordinating faculty transitions



## **Proposed Implementation Timeline**

July 2011: Implementation Team formation pending

acceptance of recommendations

Fall 2011: Perform market studies to include new

programs as well as potential existing programs

Fall 2011: Determine appropriate nimble organizational

structures

Fall 2011: Develop appropriate business models

Jan 2012: Select small set of programs to move forward

into implementation based on market

studies and available resources

Spring 2012: Schedule existing executive education and non-

credit programs as appropriate



#### **The Path Forward**

- a future consistent with Georgia Tech's strategic plan that is a sustainable and viable presence in the region
- engagement of the GTS staff will be vital and current staff expertise and contributions will be essential
- slow, gradual transition
- every attempt will be made to match the talents and experience of the staff with developing program needs.