
GTS Task Force Report:

Defining a Path Forward for Georgia Tech-Savannah

Appendix K: Deliberations: Options and Ideas Considered

At the onset of the task force's discussions, all potential options for transformational paths forward were on the table. A summary list of the ideas initially considered by the group follows:

1. Discontinue all operations and end the formal GT presence in Savannah.
2. Make Savannah a GTRI research outpost/field camp facility linked to a research activity.
3. Create an education program catering to the military.
4. Make Savannah a unique location for executive education.
5. Develop a portfolio of professional master's degrees.
6. Offer alternate undergraduate education (summer, field experiences, co-ops and/or internships).
7. Retain and enhance K-12 programs.
8. Enhance Georgia Tech's presence in the region through local partnerships and economic development activities.
9. Sustain/reinforce transfer (RETP) partnerships in southeast Georgia.
10. Assist and support local University System of Georgia engineering education partners.
11. Re-invent the undergraduate degree offerings by switching to areas of local interest.
12. Keep the present programs with organizational and facilities modifications.
13. Expand undergraduate degree offerings, create new majors and develop a full service four-year campus (in terms of student services, not necessarily academic offerings).

Based upon the wealth of information that the task force collected, the ensuing thoughtful, comprehensive, and deliberate discussion led to an initial conclusion on the viability of some of the options. In particular, the task force concluded that several options were not acceptable paths because they ran counter to at least one of the identified criteria of the paths forward, which were: *keeping with Georgia Tech's reputation for excellence, unique and complementary to GT Atlanta, and viable and self-sustaining within five years*. Further, meetings with the faculty and stakeholders as well as the directions from the administration called for a transformational change, which was also not reflective in the following of the options.

- Option 1 – *to discontinue all operations* – is not self-sustaining due to long-term financial commitments to the region as well as contrary to Georgia Tech’s understanding of the opportunities within the region and commitment to having an effective presence in southeast Georgia.
- Options 11 and 12 – *to re-invent the undergraduate degree offerings and to keep the present programs with modifications* – reflect an adapted status quo that would not generate sufficient enrollment levels.
- Option 13 – *to expand undergraduate degree offerings* – would require a significant investment and operating costs that is not feasible in the current budget climate.

Thus, the task force determined that either shutting GTS down completely or continuing with existing or adapted undergraduate degree programs were not viable paths for GTS. The task force held a workshop on March 24, 2011, to further debate the remaining nine options.

Early in the day’s meeting, it was decided that option 8 – *to enhance Georgia Tech’s presence in the region through local partnerships and economic development activities* – was prevalent in all the ideas and spoke more to the overall commitment to southeast Georgia, rather than recommendations for action.

With the remaining eight options, the group considered the implications for each. Three of these options were deemed to be programs that would continue and evolve naturally based on Georgia Tech’s presence in the region, but were not the type of programs that would be self-sustaining.

- Option 7 – *Retain and enhance K-12 programs* – The current K-12 activities run by the GTS campus are noted by everyone involved to be outstanding and providing an excellent outreach activity to the region. There is a strong interest in continuing such efforts if feasible within the new GTS structure and sustainable funding can be identified.
- Option 9 – *Sustain/reinforce transfer (RETP) partnerships in southeast Georgia* – The interest in and need for the RETP program has been steadily growing. It is anticipated that this would continue, but focusing on this alone would not adequately reflect Georgia Tech’s commitment to southeast Georgia. The related articulation agreements are continuously reviewed to reduce unnecessary barriers and enhance support to transfer students.
- Option 10 – *Assist and support local USG engineering education partners* – Through its long history of engineering education, many faculty and administrators at Georgia Tech have fostered a significant knowledge of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). As USG sister schools develop their engineering degree programs, Georgia Tech stands ready to offer advice and expertise both to their benefit and to aid current and potential engineering students in the region.

The group converged on the remaining five options as those most viable and impactful for the future of Georgia Tech.

1. Make Savannah a GTRI research outpost/field camp facility linked to a research activity.
2. Create an education program catering to the military.
3. Make Savannah a unique location for executive education.
4. Develop a portfolio of professional masters degrees
5. Offer alternate undergraduate education (summer, field experiences, co-ops and/or internships)