



## The Graying of the Faculty in the University System of Georgia

### Background

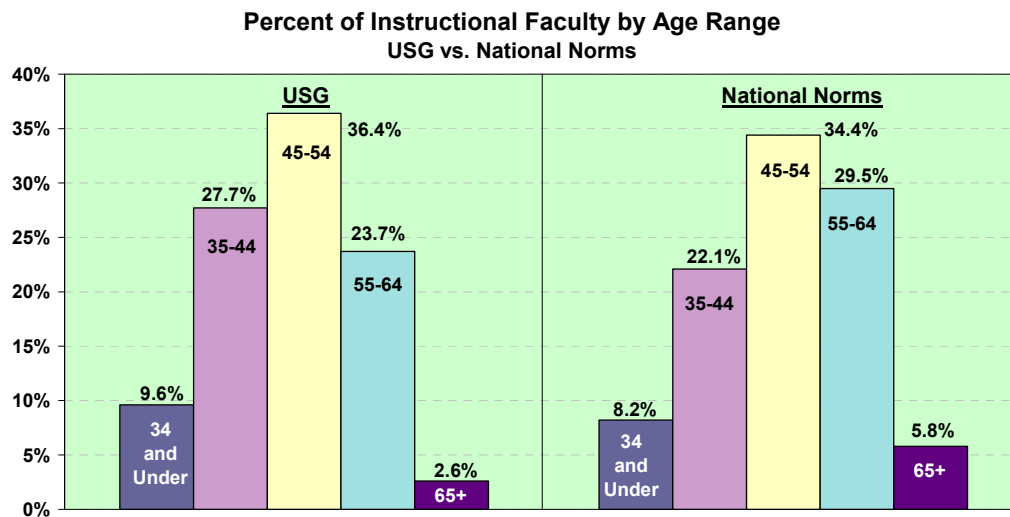
As the bulk of the academic workforce reaches career cycle maturation, American colleges and universities are struggling with replacement issues associated with a graying faculty. Reasons cited for this national trend in academe include pivotal pipeline impacts such as the massive hiring in the 1960s to accommodate the baby boomers, followed by tempered growth in subsequent decades, as well as variable retirement rates, due in part to improved healthcare and the federal abolishment of mandatory retirement.

The USG boasts a cadre of approximately 8,000 instructional faculty throughout 34 institutions. Is the graying of faculty a cause for concern in the USG? In addressing this question, the following report compares related trends of USG instructional faculty with national norms and highlights some major issues associated with a graying workforce in academe.

### Georgia and the Nation

Figure 1 compares the age ranges of USG instructional faculty with national norm survey data provided by the Higher Education Research Institute.<sup>1</sup> The graph illustrates that USG faculty tend to be younger than their national peers, with almost three quarters of the population being under the age of 55. In contrast, 65 percent of faculty across the nation are less than 55 years of age.

Figure 1



<sup>1</sup> Lindholm, J.A., Astin, A.W., Sax, L.J., & Korn, W.S. (2002). *The American College Teacher: National Norms for the 2001-02 HERI Faculty Survey*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA. The HERI Faculty Survey is a commonly used source of data on faculty. Nationally, other than survey data, there is little data on faculty through IPEDS.

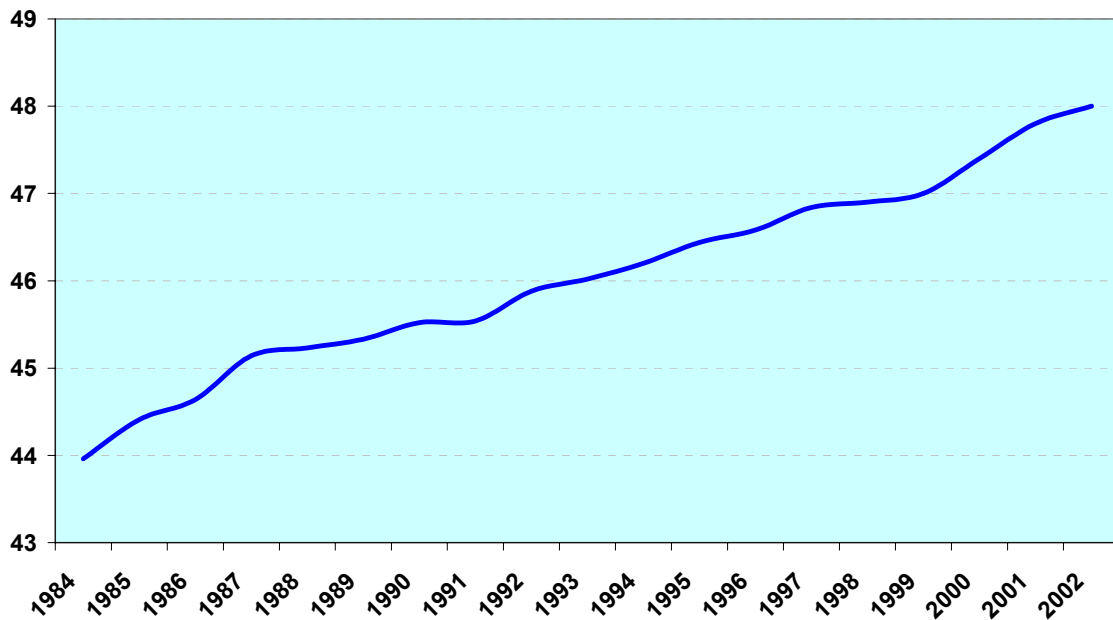
Presently, the average age of USG instructional faculty is 48; however, this figure varies across institutions and sectors (see Appendix 1). The research university sector has the youngest average age (47), with nearly half of all instructional faculty at Georgia Institute of Technology and Georgia State University being under the age of 45. In contrast, over 70 percent of the faculty at the state colleges are over the age of 45, with the average age being 50.

### The Reasons for a Younger Faculty in Georgia

Figure 2 illustrates the rate at which the average age of USG instructional faculty is shifting over time.

Figure 2

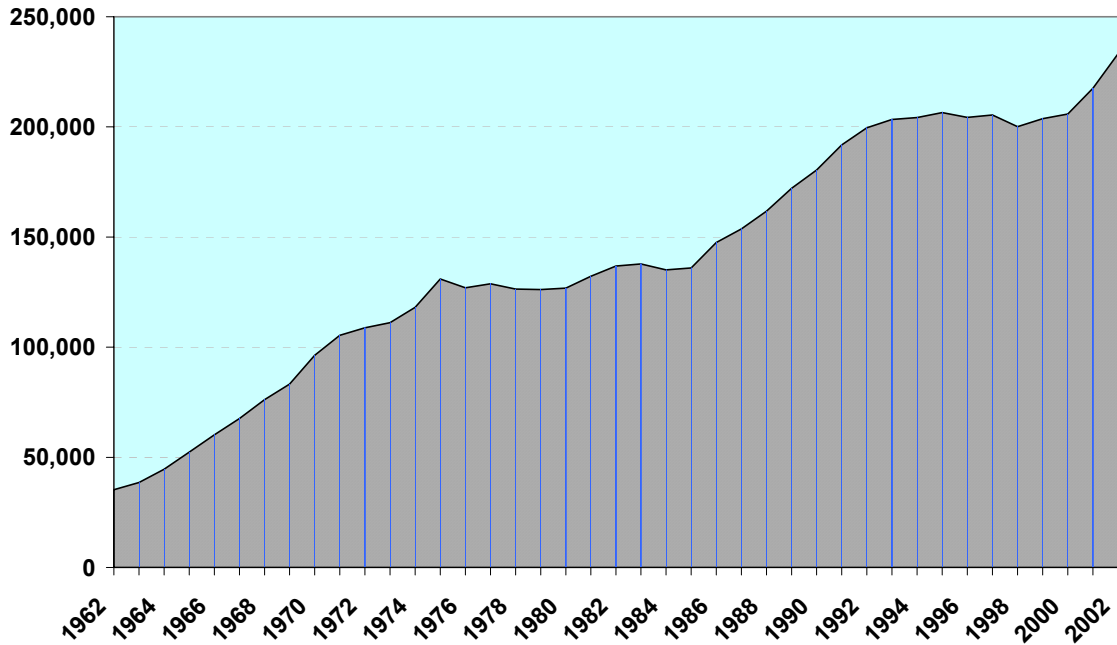
**Average Age of USG Instructional Faculty  
1984-2002**



While the average age of USG instructional faculty is steadily rising, it is interesting to note that smaller rates of increase were observed during the late 1980s and 1990s. During these years, student enrollment within USG institutions markedly increased. This trend is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3

**University System of Georgia Enrollment  
1962-2002**

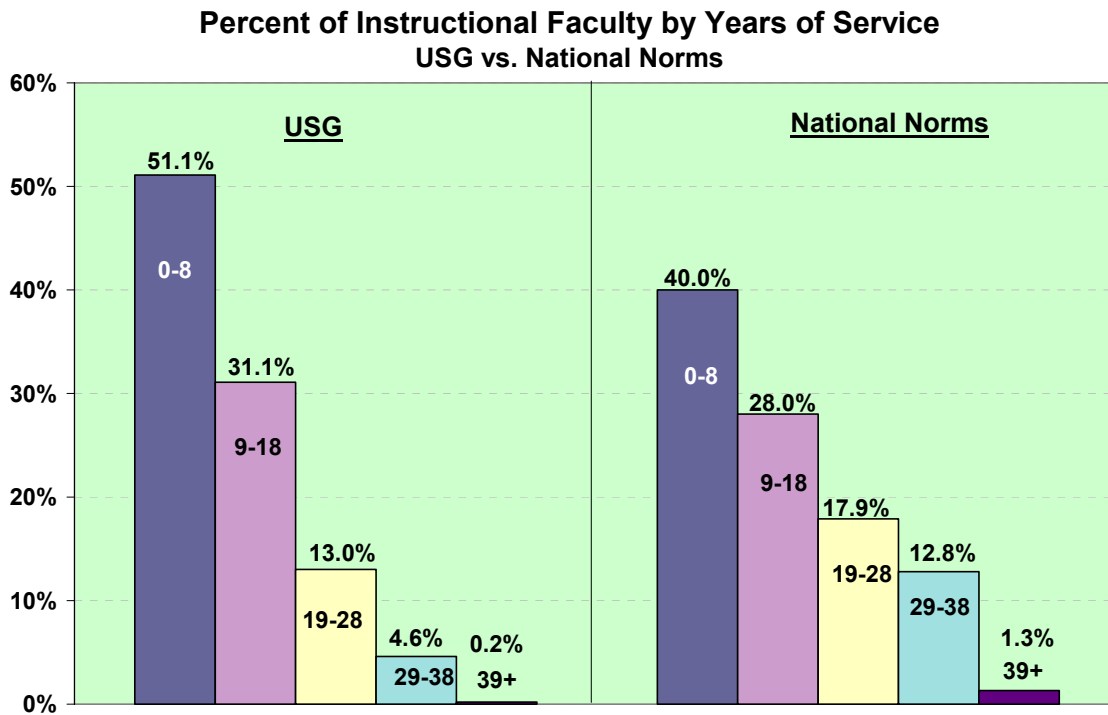


Managing the instructional demands associated with enrollment growth is discretionary at USG institutions, and does not always translate into increasing faculty hires. Yet, it is logical that new faculty appointments to accommodate enrollment growth would impact average age trends. Since most instructional hires are made at the junior level, and this typically corresponds with a younger population, a slower rate of increase in average age would be evident during employment surges. Thus, relatively recent notable gains in student enrollment and subsequent faculty hiring may explain why the USG instructional population is younger, on average, than their national counterparts.

**Years in Service**

An examination of years of service provides further detail (see Appendix 2). Figure 4 illustrates that over 50 percent of USG instructional faculty were hired after 1994, as compared to 40 percent nationally.

Figure 4



System-wide, over one half of instructional faculty has fewer than nine years of service. Additionally, most institutions have the greatest proportion of their faculty in the 0-8 years of service range. Augusta State University, Coastal Georgia Community College, and Georgia Perimeter College have the largest proportions of faculty in the 9-18 years of service range. Atlanta Metropolitan and Bainbridge College have the greatest proportions of faculty in the 19-28 years of service range.

An important point to consider is that the percent change in student headcount from 1994 to 2002 at Bainbridge College was 85.8 percent and Coastal Georgia Community College 24.9 percent. If institutions with large proportions of faculty nearing retirement continue to experience large gains in enrollment, staffing plans will need to be formulated to ensure stability in educational quality and delivery to students.

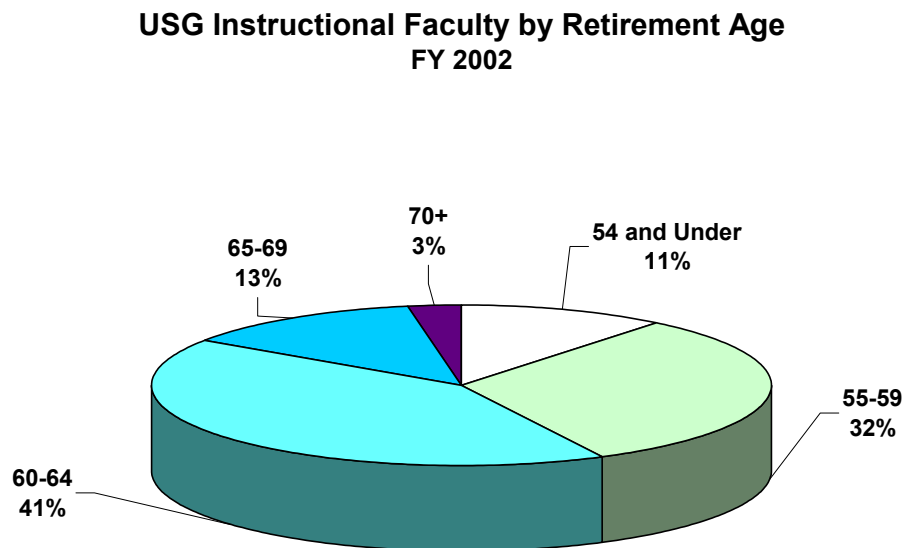
**The End of Mandatory Retirement: Projecting Retirements**

Projecting enrollments incorporates broad-based factors such as population growth, high school graduation rates, economic indicators, and institutional recruitment efforts; however, forecasting retirement trends is inherently more complex. Retirement decisions are highly personal and based upon an individual’s financial circumstances, health and family issues, and workplace satisfaction.

Though the 1970 Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was amended in 1986 to make mandatory retirement illegal, it allowed colleges and universities to set mandatory retirement ages because they were dealing with tenured employees. When that exemption expired in 1994, some observers conjectured that the employment pipeline would be clogged up with elderly professors who refused to retire.<sup>2</sup> This assertion does not appear to have much validity either nationally or in Georgia.<sup>3</sup>

In the 2002 fiscal year, 148 of USG instructional faculty retired at an average age of 60 years (see Appendix 3). Figure 5 illustrates that 84 percent of the retirees for that year were under the age of 65.

Figure 5



### Conclusions

In general, the USG does not have an urgent need to address replacing an aging faculty population; however, the data suggest that some individual USG institutions will confront this issue in the next decade. While the System-wide retirements for fiscal year 2002 amounted to less than 2 percent of the instructional population, for some institutions this impact was greater. Retirements at Clayton College & State University, Columbus State University, Southern

<sup>2</sup> Harvard, J. *A Slightly Grayer Faculty*. Harvard Magazine, Inc. November-December 2002: Volume 105, Number 2, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Fleck, C. *Faculty Retirement: The Issue, the Predictions, and the Effects on Campuses*. Association of American Colleges & Universities Briefing Paper #22, September 2001.

Polytechnic State University, Atlanta Metropolitan College, Bainbridge College, and Coastal Georgia Community College accounted for approximately 5-8 percent of the instructional workforce at those institutions.

*For more information, write or email:*

Dr. Anoush Pisani  
Senior Research Associate  
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia  
270 Washington St., SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

[Anoush.pisani@usg.edu](mailto:Anoush.pisani@usg.edu)

**Appendix 1**  
**University System of Georgia**  
**Instructional Faculty by Age**  
**As of December 31, 2002**

	<b>Total Faculty</b>	<b>34 and Under</b>		<b>35-44</b>		<b>45-54</b>		<b>55-64</b>		<b>65 and Above</b>		<b>Average Age</b>
		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	
Georgia Institute of Technology	766	105	14%	266	35%	219	29%	149	19%	27	4%	46
Georgia State University	958	121	13%	294	31%	326	34%	202	21%	15	2%	46
Medical College of Georgia	351	18	5%	100	28%	168	48%	59	17%	6	2%	48
University of Georgia	1,577	132	8%	440	28%	580	37%	374	24%	51	3%	48
<b>Research Universities</b>	<b>3,652</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>47</b>
Georgia Southern University	569	56	10%	153	27%	226	40%	122	21%	12	2%	47
Valdosta State University	397	35	9%	106	27%	144	36%	102	26%	10	3%	48
<b>Regional Universities</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>48</b>
Albany State University	125	4	3%	20	16%	49	39%	46	37%	6	5%	52
Armstrong Atlantic State Univ.	187	23	12%	50	27%	57	30%	51	27%	6	3%	48
Augusta State University	163	8	5%	43	26%	57	35%	52	32%	3	2%	49
Clayton College & State Univ.	107	14	13%	21	20%	42	39%	28	26%	2	2%	48
Columbus State University	173	21	12%	38	22%	56	32%	52	30%	6	3%	48
Fort Valley State University	125	4	3%	29	23%	48	38%	39	31%	5	4%	51
Georgia College & State Univ.	277	35	13%	77	28%	102	37%	56	20%	7	3%	47
Georgia Southwestern State Univ.	91	11	12%	24	26%	40	44%	15	16%	1	1%	46
Kennesaw State University	341	33	10%	89	26%	121	35%	92	27%	6	2%	48
North Georgia Coll. & State Univ.	115	13	11%	21	18%	53	46%	28	24%	0	0%	48
Savannah State University	104	0	0%	22	21%	51	49%	27	26%	4	4%	51
Southern Polytechnic State Univ.	129	8	6%	25	19%	44	34%	45	35%	7	5%	51
State University of West Georgia	259	28	11%	75	29%	85	33%	66	25%	5	2%	48
<b>State Universities</b>	<b>2,196</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>48</b>
Dalton State College	108	3	3%	28	26%	42	39%	31	29%	4	4%	50
Macon State College	108	8	7%	23	21%	36	33%	37	34%	4	4%	50
<b>State Colleges</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>50</b>
Abraham Baldwin Agric. Coll.	78	12	15%	25	32%	31	40%	9	12%	1	1%	45
Atlanta Metropolitan College	35	1	3%	7	20%	11	31%	14	40%	2	6%	52
Bainbridge College	29	3	10%	4	14%	12	41%	9	31%	1	3%	50
Coastal Georgia Comm. Coll.	41	1	2%	7	17%	12	29%	18	44%	3	7%	53
Darton College	67	7	10%	20	30%	25	37%	13	19%	2	3%	47
East Georgia College	23	2	9%	10	43%	7	30%	4	17%	0	0%	45
Floyd College	71	8	11%	20	28%	23	32%	20	28%	0	0%	47
Gainesville College	93	11	12%	34	37%	35	38%	12	13%	1	1%	45
Georgia Perimeter College	286	14	5%	71	25%	121	42%	72	25%	8	3%	49
Gordon College	73	11	15%	19	26%	27	37%	15	21%	1	1%	46
Middle Georgia College	71	6	8%	21	30%	23	32%	19	27%	2	3%	48
South Georgia College	30	5	17%	9	30%	12	40%	4	13%	0	0%	44
Waycross College	20	1	5%	7	35%	7	35%	4	20%	1	5%	48
<b>Two-Year Colleges</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>SYSTEM TOTAL</b>	<b>7,947</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>2,198</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>2,892</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>1,886</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>48</b>

**Appendix 2**  
**University System of Georgia**  
**Instructional Faculty by Years of Service**  
**As of December 31, 2002**

	0-8 Years	9-18 Years	19-28 Years	29-38 Years	39+ Years
Georgia Institute of Technology	48.0%	31.6%	13.8%	6.4%	0.1%
Georgia State University	54.7%	28.9%	11.7%	4.6%	0.1%
Medical College of Georgia	56.1%	30.5%	11.7%	1.7%	0.0%
University of Georgia	42.4%	31.5%	19.7%	5.9%	0.5%
<b>Research Universities</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
Georgia Southern University	53.4%	36.0%	7.4%	3.2%	0.0%
Valdosta State University	58.9%	30.2%	8.6%	2.3%	0.0%
<b>Regional Universities</b>	<b>55.7%</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Albany State University	53.6%	23.2%	12.0%	11.2%	0.0%
Armstrong Atlantic State University	53.5%	28.3%	11.2%	7.0%	0.0%
Augusta State University	41.1%	41.7%	11.7%	5.5%	0.0%
Clayton College & State University	52.3%	31.8%	12.1%	3.7%	0.0%
Columbus State University	60.7%	19.7%	12.1%	7.5%	0.0%
Fort Valley State University	53.6%	17.6%	17.6%	10.4%	0.8%
Georgia College & State University	67.5%	22.4%	7.2%	2.9%	0.0%
Georgia Southwestern State University	68.1%	17.6%	7.7%	6.6%	0.0%
Kennesaw State University	54.3%	35.5%	8.2%	2.1%	0.0%
North Georgia College & State University	63.5%	27.0%	7.8%	1.7%	0.0%
Savannah State University	44.2%	32.7%	16.3%	5.8%	1.0%
Southern Polytechnic State University	43.4%	41.1%	13.2%	2.3%	0.0%
State University of West Georgia	64.5%	20.5%	10.8%	4.2%	0.0%
<b>State Universities</b>	<b>56.4%</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
Dalton State College	40.7%	36.1%	16.7%	6.5%	0.0%
Macon State College	39.8%	38.9%	15.7%	5.6%	0.0%
<b>State Colleges</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	55.1%	30.8%	10.3%	3.8%	0.0%
Atlanta Metropolitan College	28.6%	28.6%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Bainbridge College	31.0%	24.1%	41.4%	3.4%	0.0%
Coastal Georgia Community College	31.7%	43.9%	17.1%	7.3%	0.0%
Darton College	53.7%	25.4%	13.4%	7.5%	0.0%
East Georgia College	73.9%	17.4%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0%
Floyd College	59.2%	23.9%	14.1%	2.8%	0.0%
Gainesville College	53.8%	37.6%	7.5%	1.1%	0.0%
Georgia Perimeter College	34.6%	55.2%	7.7%	2.4%	0.0%
Gordon College	72.6%	17.8%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Middle Georgia College	57.7%	25.4%	11.3%	5.6%	0.0%
South Georgia College	53.3%	30.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Waycross College	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Two-Year Colleges</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>SYSTEM TOTAL</b>	<b>51.1%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>



**Appendix 3**  
**University System of Georgia**  
**Instructional Faculty by Age at Retirement**  
**Fiscal Year 2002**

	<b>Total Faculty</b>	<b>54 and Under</b>		<b>55-59</b>		<b>60-64</b>		<b>65-69</b>		<b>70-74</b>		<b>75 and Above</b>		<b>Average Age</b>
		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	
Georgia Institute of Technology	10	0	0%	3	30%	4	40%	2	20%	1	10%	0	0%	62
Georgia State University	17	4	24%	4	24%	8	47%	0	0%	0	0%	1	6%	59
Medical College of Georgia	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
University of Georgia	28	2	7%	6	21%	14	50%	6	21%	0	0%	0	0%	61
<b>Research Universities</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>61</b>
Georgia Southern University	7	3	43%	2	29%	2	29%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	56
Valdosta State University	9	1	11%	3	33%	2	22%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	61
<b>Regional Universities</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>59</b>
Albany State University	3	1	33%	0	0%	1	33%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	62
Armstrong Atlantic State Univ.	3	0	0%	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	62
Augusta State University	3	0	0%	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	62
Clayton College & State Univ.	6	0	0%	2	33%	4	67%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	60
Columbus State University	9	1	11%	5	56%	2	22%	1	11%	0	0%	0	0%	59
Fort Valley State University	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
Georgia College & State Univ.	5	1	20%	2	40%	1	20%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	59
Georgia Southwestern State Univ.	3	0	0%	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	62
Kennesaw State University	4	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	60
North Georgia Coll. & State Univ.	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	54
Savannah State University	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
Southern Polytechnic State Univ.	10	0	0%	2	20%	7	70%	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%	61
State University of West Georgia	3	0	0%	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	59
<b>State Universities</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>60</b>
Dalton State College	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	58
Macon State College	4	0	0%	2	50%	1	25%	0	0%	1	25%	0	0%	61
<b>State Colleges</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>60</b>
Abraham Baldwin Agric. Coll.	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	59
Atlanta Metropolitan College	2	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	57
Bainbridge College	2	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	61
Coastal Georgia Comm. Coll.	2	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	58
Darton College	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	59
East Georgia College	1	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	60
Floyd College	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	55
Gainesville College	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	52
Georgia Perimeter College	10	0	0%	2	20%	5	50%	2	20%	1	10%	0	0%	63
Gordon College	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
Middle Georgia College	1	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	60
South Georgia College	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
Waycross College	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	na
<b>Two-Year Colleges</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>SYSTEM TOTAL</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>60</b>