Annual Report on Academic Services for Students with Disabilities, 2012-2013

Executive Summary

The Annual Report on Academic Services for Students with Disabilities display access services provided for students with disabilities from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. The data reflect services provided by 29 of the 31 University System of Georgia institutions. The 2012-2013 report excludes data from Georgia Regents University and Atlanta Metropolitan State College. (The Georgia Regents, University is the result of a merger, and only started operations in August of last year, and Atlanta Metropolitan State College is a new addition to the University System of Georgia). The report also does not contain data from the Georgia Public Library Services or the Georgia Archives, which are affiliates of the University System of Georgia. This report does not reflect any data from the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG).

Disability Groups Served The total unduplicated head count of students with disabilities served was 9,876. The following report, broken down into three main sections, displays 1) the Disability Groups served, 2) Testing and Course Accommodations, 3) Accessible Materials utilized by USG students, and 4) Evaluation Services.

Testing and Course Accommodations The three largest disability groups served for the year were students with 1) Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) (3,581 students), 2) Learning Disorders (LD) (2,366 students), and 3) Systemic Disorders (1,768 students). (Systemic disorders are conditions affecting one or more of the body's systems, including the respiratory, immunological, neurological, circulatory, or digestive systems.)

The three largest testing accommodations made for students with disabilities include 1) Extended Time (6,975 students), 2) Distraction Reduced Environment (5,851 students), and 3) Word Processor (1,593 students). Other testing accommodations representing significant amounts include Reader/Speech-to-Text Software, Spell Check, and Non-Programmable Calculators. The three largest course accommodations for the year include providing students with 1) Priority Registration (5,895 students), 2) Note Taker (4,565 students), and 3) Digital/Tape Recorder (4,322 students).

Accessible Materials USG students with disabilities used a variety of adaptive course materials obtained from AMAC Accessibility Solutions, Learning Ally (formerly Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic), Bookshare, and many textbook publishers (often through AMAC's AccessText Network). Students used well over a million pages of accessible electronic text, and AMAC provided over 919,000 of these pages for the University System. Students also utilized Braille, Audio Books, and Large Print versions, of course textbooks and other learning materials.

Evaluation Services Not included in previous versions of the Annual Report on Academic Services for Students with Disabilities was data on evaluation services provided by the USG Regents' Centers for Learning Disorders (RCLDs). The RCLDs assist USG students seeking academic accommodations by providing comprehensive psychoeducational

assessments for students with potential learning disorders. The RCLDs assist USG disability service providers by providing expert review of outside disability documentation submitted by students for eligibility determinations.

During 2012-2013, the RCLDs provided psychoeducational evaluations for 290 USG students and conducted 967 outside documentation reviews. The diagnoses most often identified via an RCLD evaluation were Learning Disabilities (138), Attention- Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; 116), and Psychological Disorders (105). The diagnoses most often confirmed via an RCLD review of outside documentation were ADHD (340), Psychological Disorders (185), and Learning Disabilities (174).

The greatest number of evaluations were provided to students from Georgia Southern University (54), the University of Georgia (41), and the University of North Georgia-Gainesville (32). The greatest number of outside documentation reviews were provided for Georgia Southern (166), Armstrong Atlantic State University (78), and Kennesaw State University (77).

The schools that most often availed themselves of RCLD services (i.e., the total of inside evaluations and outside documentation reviews) were GA Southern (220), Kennesaw State University (89), and Georgia College and State University (88). The schools that least often used RCLD services were Columbus State University (0), Atlanta Metropolitan College (2), and Georgia Southwestern State (2).

In 2012-2013, all USG institutions, but one (Columbus State University) used RCLD services.

Current and Future Annual Report Analysis

The data in this report are in some ways difficult to compare to previous reporting years based on the decision of the Academic Committee on Learning Disorders (ACLD) to condense the report. This decision was based on the incorporation of a new Web-based collection format as well as an urgency to meet a reduced timeline for distribution.

While the total number of students served is down slightly from the previous year, this is more likely a reflection of differences in reporting standards and practices by USG institution administrators, and also due to mergers and institutional changes within the University System of Georgia. The general trend over the last several years has been a steady *increase* in the number of students with disabilities attending USG institutions, which is also reflected nationwide. (According to a Government Accountability Office report from October 2009, the proportion of college students with any sort of disability has inched upward, to about 11% in 2008 from 9% in 2000.) Additionally, in order to obtain more accurate information, our new reporting application also includes useful descriptions of many categories present in the report that may be confusing to some users in the past. Moving forward, this will allow for much more accurate reporting and analysis of all disability groups served and the accommodations that are provided to them.

The 2012-2013 Annual Report on Academic Services for Students with Disabilities survey data was collected, stored, and analyzed through a Web-based application, which was designed, developed, and is hosted by the University System of Georgia| AMAC Accessibility Solutions and Research Center, located within the College of Architecture at the Georgia Institute of Technology. The data categories were abstracted from the 2011-2012 USG Annual Report on Academic Services for Students with Disabilities. The 2012-2013 report data is currently stored through a third party vendor, Intuit Quickbase. Intuit Quickbase maintains a data management facility with advanced firewall technology, data protection through daily backups, industry standard 128-bit secure sockets layer (SSL) protocol. This new annual report application was developed to meet Section 508 VPAT accessibility standards.

Through the revised Web-based annual report, we can now begin creating more detailed and accurate information regarding these academic services. As we are moving forward in the coming years, this report will be revised to provide more useful, accurate, and timely information regarding disability student services, institutions' disability policies and protocol, and accessibility challenges and standards within the University System of Georgia.