

**P**ostsecondary education has been proven to reduce recidivism and promote more successful transitions back into communities for adults returning from incarceration.<sup>1</sup> However, currently incarcerated and reentering adults often face barriers to receiving high-quality postsecondary education. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, with support from Lumina Foundation, conducted an intensive 50-state scan and survey of the statutory, financial, and administrative policies and practices that impact the provision of postsecondary education for this population. This fact sheet outlines the research findings for Georgia.



### HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

#### Correctional Agency Funding

- The Georgia legislature may appropriate state funds for college programs in state correctional facilities; academic and career and technical education have designated budgets.<sup>2</sup> Postsecondary education is funded through federal sources—such as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act—and private sources.<sup>3</sup>
- Although Second Chance Pell sites are active in correctional facilities, Georgia did not apply for/receive Second Chance Pell pilot funding for their specific state colleges and universities.<sup>4</sup>

#### State Financial Aid

- Every relevant Georgia financial aid program explicitly states that people who are currently incarcerated cannot receive the award and that recipients must be in compliance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990.<sup>5</sup> The HOPE Scholarship and the Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen Scholarship extend their eligibility restrictions after incarceration to any individual with felony drug convictions.<sup>6</sup>



### WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

#### Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- In partnership with the Georgia Department of Corrections, Technical College System of Georgia, and University System of Georgia provide career and technical education in commercial driver's licensing, diesel mechanics, and forklift; as well as programs leading to an Occupational Safety and Health Administration certification, and ServSafe certification.<sup>7</sup>

#### Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Associate degrees are offered through Brewton Parker College,<sup>8</sup> a private institution.
- Associate degrees and bachelor's degrees are offered through the Second Chance Pell Pilot site at Ashland University, a private university.<sup>9</sup>

- ➔ Associate degrees and bachelor’s degrees are offered through Life University’s (a private university) Chillon Project.<sup>10</sup>
- ➔ An associate degree and a bachelor’s degree in Christian ministry are offered through Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, a private institution.<sup>11</sup>
- ➔ A certificate in theological studies is offered through Emory University, a private institution.<sup>12</sup>
- ➔ College courses are offered through the Common Good Atlanta, which bridges six Georgia universities with Georgia state prisons: Emory University (a private institution), Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, Morehouse College (a private institution), and University of Georgia.<sup>13</sup>

**Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment**

- ➔ Georgia has not identified local labor market trends, employer feedback or outcome data as their primary reasons for determining the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.<sup>14</sup>



**WHAT RESTRICTIONS OR BARRIERS ARE IMPOSED ON ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION?**

**Statutory or Administrative Requirements, Permissions, and Restrictions**

- ➔ Participation in postsecondary education programs is based on behavior during incarceration, length of sentence, and type of offense.<sup>15</sup> For example, individuals on death row are not allowed to formally participate in education programming.<sup>16</sup>

**Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications**

- ➔ Georgia has 26 state universities, 3 of which used the 2019–2020 Common Application.<sup>17</sup> All 3 of these schools added questions asking applicants to disclose their criminal history: Georgia College, Georgia State University, and Georgia Institute of Technology.
- ➔ All of the remaining state colleges and universities that do not use the Common Application require students to disclose their criminal history and disciplinary information.



**WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?**

**Statutory or Administrative Benefits**

- ➔ Individuals can earn “performance incentive credits” to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs.<sup>18</sup>
- ➔ Participants may have designated housing for being enrolled in programming.<sup>19</sup>

**Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions**

- ➔ State law permits the board to consider participation in postsecondary educational activities during incarceration when deciding whether to grant or deny parole.<sup>20</sup>

**Parole Conditions Related to Postsecondary Education**

- ➔ The parole board may require individuals to pursue a trade at a vocational or technical school as a condition of parole.<sup>21</sup>

## Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency does not provide occupational training, information on postsecondary education, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.<sup>22</sup>

## Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ Georgia Department of Corrections has articulation agreements with schools offering programming in the correctional facilities.<sup>23</sup> In addition, some technical colleges, including Central Georgia Technical College, help individuals continue their education after release.<sup>24</sup>

1. Lois M. Davis et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR266.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html).
2. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. "Zell Miller Scholarship Program at Public and Private Institutions" (Georgia Student Finance Committee, 2019), 14, <https://gsfc.georgia.gov/sites/gsfsc.georgia.gov/files/2019-Zell%20Miller%20Scholarship.pdf>;
6. "Hope Scholarships Program at Public Institutions" (Georgia Student Finance Committee, 2019) 10, <https://gsfc.georgia.gov/sites/gsfsc.georgia.gov/files/2019-HOPE%20Scholarship%20Public.pdf>; Ga. Code Ann. § 20-3-519.1(b)(6); Ga. Code Ann. § 20-1-20, et. seq; Lauren Hobby, Brian Walsh, and Ruth Delaney, *A Piece of the Puzzle: State Financial Aid for Incarcerated Students—Technical Appendix*, (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2019), 18-19.
7. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019. "Overview," George Department of Corrections: Education & Programs, accessed May 1, 2019, [http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/sites/all/files/pdf/Research/Fact\\_Sheets/Info\\_Sheets\\_Education\\_Programs.pdf](http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/sites/all/files/pdf/Research/Fact_Sheets/Info_Sheets_Education_Programs.pdf); "Vocational and Postsecondary Education," Georgia Department of Corrections, accessed April 2, 2019, <http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/Divisions/InmateServices/Vocational>.
8. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
9. Ibid.
10. "Projects," Life University accessed April 8, 2019, <http://www.compassion.life.edu/projects/>; Life University, "Life University's Chillon Project awarded program-sustaining grant from Laughing Gull Foundation," news release, November 8, 2018, <https://www.life.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/11-8-18-Chillon-Project-Awarded-Program-Sustaining-Grant-From-Laughing-Gull-Foundation-Press-Release.pdf>.
11. "New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS)," Prison Studies Project, accessed December 3, 2019, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/2011/08/angola-prison/>; "Fact Sheet Inmate Services," Georgia Department of Corrections, accessed January 2, 2020, [http://www.gdc.ga.gov/sites/default/files/Inmate%20Services\\_1.pdf](http://www.gdc.ga.gov/sites/default/files/Inmate%20Services_1.pdf).
12. "Certificate in Theological Studies," Emory University, accessed April 8, 2019, <http://candler.emory.edu/programs-resources/institutes-initiatives/certificate-theological-studies.html>.
13. "Common Good Atlanta," Prison Studies Project, accessed April 3, 2019, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/2018/10/common-good-atlanta-2/>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
14. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
15. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; "Georgia Department of Corrections: Offender Chaplaincy Services," Georgia Department of Corrections, [http://dcor.state.ga.us/sites/all/files/pdf/Research/Fact\\_Sheets/Info\\_Sheets\\_Chaplaincy.pdf](http://dcor.state.ga.us/sites/all/files/pdf/Research/Fact_Sheets/Info_Sheets_Chaplaincy.pdf).
16. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
17. The Common Application, an undergraduate college application system, recently removed its required criminal history question, but maintains its questions on disciplinary infractions. However, colleges on the Common Application can add questions regarding criminal conviction or disciplinary information to their individualized applications.
18. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; Ga. Code Ann. § 42-5-101.
19. Ibid.
20. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
21. Ga. Code Ann. § 42-9-44.
22. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
23. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
24. Ibid.