UGA, Gordon State sign partnership pact

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In a ceremony Wednesday at UGA-Griffin's Stuckey Auditorium, representatives of the University of Georgia and Gordon State College signed a transfer articulation agreement designed to assist students who enroll at Gordon and wish to transfer to UGA's Griffin campus as juniors.

As numerous city and county officials were on hand to show support for the partnership of the two institutions, UGA Vice President for Instruction Laura Jolly, Gordon State College President Max Burns and Board of Regents member Tommy Hopkins sat on stage to speak to the audience.

All three expressed their hope and belief

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University of Georgia Vice President for Instruction Laura Jolly, left, and Gordon State College President Max Burns, center, signed a transfer articulation agreement Wednesday at UGA-Griffin's Stuckey Auditorium. Board of Regents member Tommy Hopkins, who was heavily involved in the process, also attended.

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that the agreement will increase the number of students earning or completing their college degree.

Gov. Nathan Deal's Complete College Georgia initiative of 2012 predicts that by 2020, 60 percent of all jobs in Georgia will require a post-secondary degree.

However, only 42 percent of all Georgians currently hold such a degree.

"Georgia must increase the number of citizens that have college degrees," said Jolly. "We are working together to help students see a pathway to complete that degree."

According to a UGA news release, the Griffin campus on Experiment Street allows students who have completed their core curriculum at another institution to complete their academic program here — choosing from eight undergraduate degree programs — while earning a University of Georgia degree.

"This is an exciting partnership between Gordon State College and the University of Georgia in serving the educational and workforce needs of Griffin-Spalding County and the south metro area," said Burns. "We are committed to providing a degree closer to home and assisting prospective students from Gordon State College to progress toward their baccalaureate goals at UGA."

Hopkins, who has been heavily involved in the transfer articulation agreement, said he was happy to see previous efforts come to fruition.

"We’ve worked on this for some time, and I’m glad it’s come through," Hopkins said, pointing out that the Georgia General Assembly no longer allocates funds to universities and colleges based on student population but instead based on student graduates.

At the UGA-Griffin Campus, 97 percent of the students end up obtaining a degree.

"I don’t know if the community realizes what they have here," Hopkins said.

Advisers at UGA-Griffin and Gordon State College, who specialize in transfer information for the preferred UGA program, will work with students to follow a course of study that allows them to begin upper-level coursework immediately upon transfer, the release said. Students who meet the terms of their approved transfer agreement will be admitted to the University of Georgia.