

East Georgia State College CARES Act Institutional Portion and MSI Grant Plan

East Georgia State College's (EGSC) primary goals for the distribution of the CARES Act institutional portion and MSI Grant are to continue to support students during this prolonged period of disruption, keep them on track and provide tools for future success. Several components of the plan are associated with the significant changes to the delivery of instruction during COVID-19 crisis. The plan contains several key provisions: to rapidly transmit emergency funds to EGSC students with demonstrated need, initiate a laptop loaner program to increase technology access among EGSC students, increase online tutoring services to ensure student success, to purchase virtual classroom technology for hybrid classes in Fall 2020, to enhance EGSC's network capacity to address significantly increased utilization by EGSC students and faculty for accessing EGSC's online courses in Georgia View D2L Brightspace system and other EGSC online academic systems and services and to reimburse the institution for amounts refunded to students during the COVID-19 crisis. Each component is described in detail below. The following chart provides the funding amounts for each priority item:

FUNDING PRIORITIES	AMOUNT	Cares Act Institutional Aid	Cares Act Minority Serving Institutions
Student Emergency Grants	\$ 308,847	\$ 308,847	
Laptop Loaner Program	37,950	37,950	
Online Tutoring	50,000	50,000	
Virtual Classroom Technology	16,489	16,489	
Network Capacity Enhancement	294,496	110,117	\$ 184,379
Face Coverings	40,000	40,000	
Student Refunds	876,373	876,373	
Totals	\$ 1,624,155	\$ 1,439,776	\$ 184,379

Student Emergency Grants

East Georgia State College (EGSC) participated in the student emergency grants portion of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund CARES Act which will result in a distribution of \$1,439,777 to students whose education was disrupted by COVID-19 crisis in Spring and Summer 2020. EGSC serves an economically disadvantaged region and has a high percentage of students with demonstrated financial need who were uniquely and adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis. EGSC proposed to use a portion of the CARES Act institutional portion to award student emergency grants to those enrolled eligible students with demonstrated need as defined herein. Continuing the administrative plan adopted for the calculation and distribution of prior student emergency grants, the total distribution of \$348,847 will be divided using actual student total enrollment and credit hours for Fall 2020 as described below. Students that received awards in Spring 2020 and/or Summer 2020 and re-enroll for Fall 2020 and are Title IV eligible with a current FAFSA on file will receive an award. The amount of each award will be determined using the student's Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) for the Federal Application for Student Financial Aid (FAFSA) and the number of credit hours for which the student is enrolled for Fall 2020. Students that could be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV but have not filed a FAFSA will be required to file a FAFSA for Fall 2020 by August 31, 2020 to be eligible for an award.

Emergency award amounts will be divided into three tiers based on need (i.e.EFC). Students with the lowest EFC will be assigned to tier one and will each receive the highest emergency award. Students with the highest EFC will be assigned to their three and will each receive the lowest emergency award. Each of the three tiers will have two levels of emergency awards: a higher level for full time and a lower level for part-time students. Students enrolled full time for each semester will receive the maximum funding (100%) within the tier to which the student is assigned; part-time students will receive 50% of the maximum amount for the tier to which the student is assigned.

The following students will not receive awards:

- Transient students;
- Student enrolled in exclusively online programs or enrolled in exclusively online courses as of March 13, 2020;
- Newly enrolled students for Fall 2020; and
- Students that are not eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act 1965, as amended.

Full time and Part-time Definition and Eligibility Dates

Fall Semester 2020

Full time is a student enrolled in 12 credit hours or above as of September 14, 2020.

Part-time student is a student enrolled in 4-11 credit hours as of September 14, 2020. Students enrolled in 1-3 hours for Fall 2020 will not receive an award.

Student distributions will be directly to students using EGSC's financial aid refund process, Bank Mobile, to be used as the student deems necessary to cover expenses related to the disruption caused by COVID-19 and to transition to wholly online schedules. The student will not be required to report to EGSC or account for the expenditure of the emergency funds.

Laptop Loaner Program

In response to the COVID-19 disruption, EGSC students vacated the residence halls in March 2020, EGSC required faculty to transition all classes to an online format for the remainder of the semester, and all students were moved to a wholly online schedule. The rapid transition to wholly online classes revealed a gap in equipment and technology access among a portion of EGSC students. EGSC proposes to use a portion of funds for a laptop loaner program to fill this essential access need for our unique student population. The laptop loaner program will include forty HP 255 G7 laptops and will support EGSC students who experience challenges accessing their EGSC online classes and other online academic systems and services due to information technology equipment hardships. The laptops will be available to students for checkout via the college's library. Laptop cost is \$37,950.

Increase Online Student Tutoring Services

To increase student success, EGSC proposes to purchase significant additional online tutoring services from Tutor.com, Inc. In 2019, the College initially purchased 500 hours of online tutoring at the rate of \$26 per hour. The rationale for the initial purchase was to provide students with tutoring during evening and weekend hours when the campus tutoring center was closed. Students eagerly began to access

Tutor.com services, to the point where the College made the decision to purchase another 250 hours in Spring, 2020. This purchase was timely, since shortly afterward students were transitioned to wholly online classes and the tutoring center closed for face to face instruction. The increased tutoring hours allowed students continued access to the online services through the end of the semester and final exams. This service has been particularly useful for nontraditional, online, and adult students who must juggle their academics around employment and family obligations. For the upcoming academic year, the College proposes to increase the number of tutoring hours to almost 2,000. The cost for this increase is \$50,000. In the event instruction moves wholly online in response to COVID-19 or other public health emergency in the next academic year, students will have access to this important academic support service. This proposal is in response to the anticipated increase in student use of Tutor.com services and the desire of the College to provide academic access to all students.

Virtual Classroom Technology Enhancements

Moving forward to Fall 2020, EGSC proposes hybrid classes with synchronous instruction. This format will ease the transition to online format should it become necessary at a later point in the academic year. Central to the success of this class format is converting existing classrooms to virtual technology classrooms. EGSC proposes to use the CARES Act funds to purchase virtual technology for forty-five EGSC classrooms. The technology includes Logitech C930e web cameras and HP EliteDesk 800DM G5 computers; the cost for this equipment is \$16,489. To facilitate the collaboration of faculty and students in the virtual/online synchronous learning environment, Zoom and Microsoft Teams collaboration software will be utilized in conjunction with the virtual classroom technology.

Network Capacity Enhancements

The transition to a wholly online environment in Spring 2020 due to COVID-19 resulted in a significantly increased demand for technology by faculty, staff and students. EGSC was able to address only a small portion of its technology needs which arose from the COVID-19 crisis and resulting transition to wholly online classes, telework and virtual meetings. EGSC proposes to use CARES Act institutional portion funding and MSI funds to pay for enhancements to the college's network firewall and server/storage area network (SAN) equipment. All proposed enhancements will build EGSC's IT capacity to support the expansion of remote learning.

Enhancement of the EGSC network capacity is required to address the challenges posed by the demand for off-campus/remote access by students and faculty to EGSC's online courses in the Georgia View D2L Brightspace system as well as to other key EGSC online academic services and systems such as the EGSC student web portal, Tutor.com, Eduroam, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, student and faculty email, Degree Works, and Banner Web. The heightened demand for continuously available access to EGSC students and faculty, has significantly increased the utilization and demand of the college's network firewall and server/storage area network (SAN) equipment. The cost for the proposed enhancements to the network firewall and server/ SAN is \$293,522.

EGSC purchased a network firewall upgrade for the Swainsboro campus in April 2020 which improved the off campus/remote connectivity management and processing on the network. However, to ensure the increased demand for off-campus/remote connectivity by EGSC students and faculty to EGSC's online courses in the Georgia View D2L system and other key EGSC online academic services, including the utilization of Zoom software, at the Statesboro and Augusta campuses can be efficiently and effectively

managed and processed, it is necessary to add capacity to the Cisco 5525x and 5505 network firewall equipment with the implementation of a Fortinet 401E firewall and a Fortinet 101F firewall, respectively. Additionally, the Fortinet firewall units will provide high availability/network redundancy, which will ensure that student and faculty access to EGSC courses in Georgia View D2L Brightspace and the other key EGSC online academic services is always available. Furthermore, the addition of the Fortinet firewall equipment will be essential to students' and faculty utilization of the Eduroam WiFi service, which was recently implemented by EGSC and all other University System of Georgia institutions.

In response to the rapid escalation in demand and to ensure the continuous provision of remote access, EGSC reduced the available capacity to the server responsible for authentication and user file storage process, as a short-term solution. A more permanent solution is needed to ensure the increase in the level of off-campus/remote connectivity by EGSC students and faculty to EGSC's online courses in the Georgia View D2L system and other key EGSC online academic systems and services can be efficiently and effectively managed and processed. Adding capacity to the college's HP 7200 3PAR server and SAN equipment with the implementation of a HP Nimble system is now necessary. The server and SAN equipment work in concert, and both components are critical and necessary to authenticate EGSC students' user accounts and faculty user accounts when each access EGSC online courses via Georgia View D2L Brightspace and other key EGSC online academic systems and services previously mentioned.

The server and SAN equipment also process and store the data files that contain all student and faculty above user account activity and related files. Increasing the storage and processing components of the equipment from 140 terabytes to approximately 210 terabytes will not only provide an increase in the amount of the SAN's data storage capacity, it will also allow for approximately 50 additional virtual servers to be deployed/implemented, which will improve the online/remote student and faculty user account authentication process.

In summary, the addition of the Fortinet firewall equipment and HP Nimble sever/SAN equipment will significantly improve EGSC's ability to serve its students and support the college's wholly online academic/distance education environment for the reasons listed below:

1. To improve the authentication processes necessary for EGSC students and faculty to access courses in Georgia View D2L Brightspace system as well as to access other academic services such as Tutor.com, Banner Web, Degree Works, student and faculty email, and the EGSC student web portal.
2. To improve and increase the server capability and data storage necessary to process and store data files that contain EGSC student and faculty user account information necessary for accessing the Georgia View D2L system and other key EGSC academic systems.
3. To effectively and efficiently manage the increase in the level of off-campus/remote access by EGSC students and faculty to online courses in Georgia View D2L Brightspace and to other online academic systems and services, including Zoom and Eduroam, as a result of transitioning to a wholly online academic environment while ensuring access to the online courses, systems and services is always available by providing high availability/redundancy in network connectivity at EGSC Statesboro and Augusta campuses.

Purchase of Protective Face Coverings

Due to the Guidance below issued from the University System of Georgia, EGSC plans to purchase a reasonable supply of face coverings for students and employees. The mask will be distributed at various intervals during fall semester to encourage utilization as an aid in reducing transmission of COVID – 19.

“Use of Face Coverings - Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia (USG) institutions will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is **not** a substitute for social distancing.

Face coverings are not required in one’s own dorm room or suite, when alone in an enclosed office or study room, or in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met.

Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Repeated refusal to comply with the requirement may result in discipline through the applicable conduct code for faculty, staff or students.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.”

Reimbursement for Student Refund Amounts

EGSC proposes to utilize the Cares Act Institutional Funds to mitigate the financial impact of operations in the fee-related budgets impacted through the student refunds in the Spring of 2020. Without this funding, the reserves of the college will be severely reduced potentially resulting in cash flow difficulties and less flexibility to respond to opportunities to enhance the student experience. While striving to provide value to the students it serves, EGSC’s fees and other charges are historically among the lowest in the University System of Georgia. While operating in a fiscally conservative manner provides value to students, it does not lend itself to the accumulation of vast reserves which is why these Cares Act funds are so important to EGSC.

The refunds for the semester charges listed below were prorated and the total unused portion of declining balance meal plans were returned to students. EGSC refunded the student charges below to reduce the COVID 19 impact on students and to assist them as they transitioned to different living arrangements and a fully online educational environment. The average housing student on the Swainsboro student received approximately \$2,050 from all refunds.

Please see below for funding amounts per budget:

Student Refunds	Amounts
Activity Refunds	\$ 11,369
Dining Refunds	234,472
Housing Refunds	597,314
Parking Refunds	5,267
Transportation Refunds	27,951
Totals	\$ 876,373