



# GOSS NEWS

THE GEORGIA ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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## GOSS Needs You

The Georgia Organization for Student Success (GOSS) invites you to join us on our mission to assist higher education professionals in making a positive difference in the lives of students. Student success requires an institutional effort that each department and program on campus must embrace. We encourage faculty from any discipline, advisors, tutoring and writing center staff, career center staff, instructional technologists, department chairs, college leaders, and anyone interested in improving student success to become a member of our organization.

Before 2020, GOSS was the Georgia Association of Developmental Education (GADE). GADE's primary focus was to serve faculty teaching developmental reading, writing, and mathematics, and the learning support staff that administered and supported these programs. However, changes within colleges across the nation and in Georgia deemed it necessary for our organization to expand our scope and community. Thus, we followed our national organization's move from the National Association of Development Education (NADE) to the National Organization for Student Success (NOSS) and became GOSS.

The collective body of professionals that make up GOSS has hundreds of combined years of experience teaching and supporting students from all backgrounds and all levels of academic preparedness. GOSS provides its members with a connected network of professionals where we can share, collaborate, and coordinate our efforts to support student learning and success. With declining college enrollments, increasingly disengaged students, and an under-skilled workforce in Georgia, it is imperative that we unite in this critical mission to help our students succeed.

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## Regional One-Day Conferences

The GOSS Executive Board moved our annual conference in St. Simons from February 2023 to February 2024. In place of the state conference, we are hosting two regional one-day events this academic year with one in the fall and spring semesters.

See information about the one-day conference, membership, book suggestions, and more in this issue.

## Membership Updates

During the annual GOSS meeting in March 2022, we voted to increase the annual membership fee to \$20. Since then, the executive board has also decided in favor of a member suggestion that we consider tiered membership fees for retired faculty, and we have expanded membership options to include institutional memberships. Our hope is that these new membership options will allow all faculty and staff, no matter their career stage and economic situation, to benefit from participating in GOSS. The new membership designations and fees are:

- Annual Full-time Faculty or Staff Membership - \$20
- Annual Part-time Faculty or Staff Membership - \$10
- Annual Retired Faculty or Staff Membership - \$10
- Annual Graduate Student Membership - \$5
- Five-Year Faculty or Staff Membership - \$80
- Lifetime Faculty or Staff Membership - \$300
- Institutional Membership - \$150 for up to 10 members or \$225 for up to 15 members



Annual memberships purchased between now and February 2023 will be valid through February 2024.

To request and purchase membership, complete the [Membership Form](#).

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## RECALIBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS FALL CONFERENCE CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND REGISTRATION

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As we reflect on the lessons we learned from the last several years of the pandemic and the fresh perspective we gained due to this "off-course" detour, we must recalibrate our ideas about and approaches to fostering student success. What strategies and ideas do we take forward from our days of pandemic teaching and supporting students? What did we abandon only to discover that we need to bring it back? What do we leave behind? What new roads to student success might we discover?

The Georgia Organization for Student Success (GOSS) invites you to join us September 30, 2022, at the [Georgia State University Perimeter College Newton Campus](#) in conversation over these and related questions. Presenters can share the corrections, adjustments, and realignments that were made to get back on track with student success from all aspects of their institution. We welcome proposals for individual presentations, panel presentations, roundtable discussions, and mini-workshops. Sessions will be 50 minutes.

For consideration, submit your [proposal](#) by August 30, 2022.

Complete the [conference registration](#) by September 15, 2022.



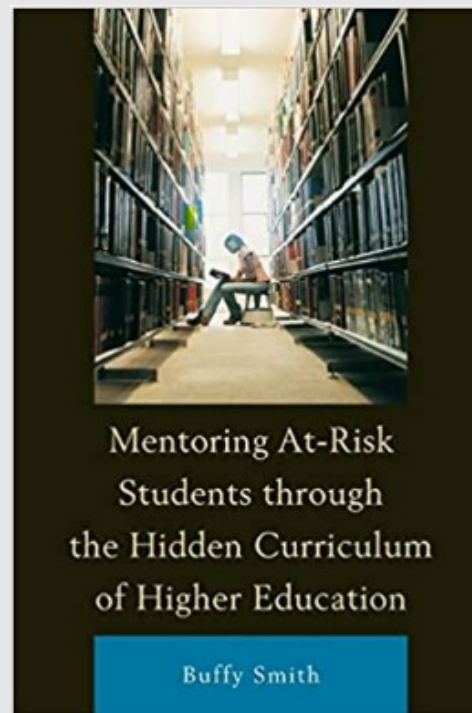
# What We Are Reading

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## The Hidden Curriculum and At-Risk Students

Dr. Jennifer Colatosti

Smith's book makes a strong case for formal mentoring programs designed to guide students through navigating not only the classroom environment, but the institutional structure and unspoken expectations of college. I'm a believer. Give me ten minutes and I'll talk your ear off about the mentoring program I've envisioned for my institution since reading Smith's book and a bunch of other scholarship on the hidden curriculum. But, creating a college-wide mentoring program from scratch is way out of my lane right now. Still, Smith's points about the need for students to be mentored in understanding the hidden curriculum now informs some aspects of my course design. Smith writes: "The formal curriculum is transparent to most students, as it is what they are officially evaluated on; however, the formal curriculum is influenced by the hidden curriculum, which is not transparent to everyone." The (uncomfortable, for me) truth is that I was trained in grad school to work under the assumption that students who came to college knew what they were in for, and if they had trouble adjusting, that was on them. That line of thinking perpetuates structural inequities, and I can't in good faith think that way anymore.



So, how does this idea of mentoring students through the hidden curriculum translate to changes in my classes? One major difference is the way I introduce the syllabus. I lead my students in a discussion of the classroom as a rhetorical situation where we each have our own motivations and goals, and I set them to answering some questions aimed at analyzing the class policies regarding, for example, attendance, deadlines, and make-up work. Some of those questions are: how is this policy designed to benefit students? How is it designed to benefit the professor? What does the policy not take into account regarding students' needs or situations? This is all part of a start-of-semester assignment wherein students work in groups to propose revisions to the class policies, and a major component of that assignment is an in-depth, multi-day discussion of how a college classroom works and what each person's role is. Guiding my students to see the syllabus as a contract meant to benefit everyone, along with being open to revising those policies where there is some room for flexibility, is one way of making the hidden curriculum visible.

Smith, Buffy. *Mentoring At-Risk Students Through the Hidden Curriculum*. Lexington Books, 2013.

## Other Suggested Readings

- Lang, James. *Distracted Why Students Can't Focus and What to Do About It*. Basic Books, 2020.
- Oakley, Barbara, et al. *Uncommon Sense Teaching Practical Insights in Brain Science to Help Students Learn*. TarcherPerigee, 2021.
- The Chronicle of Higher Education's weekly teaching column has been presenting different viewpoints on continuing pandemic-era flexibility in attendance and deadlines. [This one](#) contains some ideas about a middle-ground, with one professor advocating for "flexibility with guiderails." You'll also find links to previous contributions to the conversation.

# Teacher Thoughts and Tips

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## Face-to-Face by Jen Colatosti

I've been recalibrating my thinking around student success in relation to how I use my face-to-face class periods. I used to think about structuring these class periods around what I wanted to accomplish (in service of getting students to meet a learning goal, of course), but now I'm consciously shifting my thinking toward what the students need in order to learn. On the surface it may seem like more or less the same thing, but reframing in terms of the students' needs as opposed to my own pedagogical goals involves letting go of my ego; I may be the expert in the room and the life dedicated to studying, practicing, and teaching, but I can't presume to know what's going on in every student's mind. So, this past Spring semester, I made asking my students what they needed a more consistent and deliberate part of my lesson plans. I've always done some kind of verbal check-in – *are y'all with me? what questions do you have? do you need me to go back to anything?* -- and hoped that was enough, but I'd come to suspect that I was likely to get more voices (and more honest answers) if I made the check-ins more intentional and anonymous. I used a polling software for quick, anonymous online polls, roughly once every other class period. Sometimes the poll question was some version of *"what's one thing we went over today that you need more clarification on?"*, and sometimes it was along the lines of *"what do you need from me in order to be successful on your topic X?"* I'd then use the answers either to lead into discussion, do an on-the-spot mini-lesson, inform the next class period's lesson plans, or search for additional resources to post to our LMS.

## Online by Andrea Hendricks

In July 2021, the U.S. Department of Education issued new regulations requiring all online courses and programs for which students may use federal financial aid include regular and substantive interaction (RSI) between students and instructors. While RSI is not a new requirement of distance education courses, there was considerable uncertainty regarding the meaning and extent of this expectation which the new policy addresses. Regular interaction requires that students have the opportunity for substantive interactions with their instructor on a predictable and scheduled basis throughout the term and that the interactions are instructor-initiated. Substantive interaction means engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the course content and includes at least two of these five activities: providing direct instruction, assessing/providing feedback on student's work, providing information or responding to questions about the content, facilitating a group discussion, or other activities approved by the institution. RSI is a hallmark of a quality learning experience for students and ensures they are set up for success. A few ways that I incorporate RSI in my online courses are 1) providing personalized comments for individual student's assignments, 2) holding weekly live homework help and test review sessions, and 3) sending weekly announcements with key concepts and misconceptions from the previous week, a list of thought-provoking questions to consider while watching video lessons and completing the assignments, and a call to interact with me to discuss concepts further.

## SHARE YOUR STUDENT SUCCESS TIPS AND IDEAS

We invite you to join us in conversation about these and other student success tips on our [Facebook page](#). Want to contribute your own student success quick tip to an upcoming newsletter? Email [talk2goss@gmail.com](mailto:talk2goss@gmail.com).

# Practices That Promote Student Success

In his article, [Student Success: Definition, Outcomes, Principles and Practices](#), Joe Cuseo answers the questions, what is student success, how do we promote it, and how can institutions measure and assess student success? He lists the following seven processes grounded in research and theory that have the most potential to promote student success.

- (1) Personal validation: Students feel valued and welcomed by the institution; they matter.
- (2) Self-efficacy: Students believe and hope their efforts will produce success.
- (3) Sense of purpose: Students see relevance between their learning and their life and career goals.
- (4) Active involvement: Students engaged in and outside the classroom are more likely to succeed.
- (5) Reflective thinking: Students reflect on what they are learning and how it relates to prior knowledge.
- (6) Social integration: Students should connect with others to support their learning.
- (7) Self-awareness: Students think about their thinking and adjust strategies and practices to improve.

What do you or your institution do to promote these principles? Respond on our [Facebook page](#) or email us at [talk2goss@gmail.com](mailto:talk2goss@gmail.com).

Cuseo, Joe. Student Success: Definition, Outcomes, Principles and Practices. Excerpted from “The Big Picture,” a column appearing in *Esource for College Transitions* (Electronic Newsletter), published by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition, University of South Carolina.

## Resources for Student Success

[The Student Success Challenge](#)

[What is Student Success in 2022? The Complete Guide](#)

[J-CASP: Journal of College Academic Support Programs](#)

[USG Strategic Plan 2024 Student Success Goals](#)

The Georgia Organization for Student Success (GOSS) is a state affiliate of the [National Organization for Student Success \(NOSS\)](#).

