



House Budget and Research Office

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COVID-19: University System of Georgia

Since the beginning of March 2020, the University System of Georgia (USG) and its 26 institutions have been monitoring and responding to COVID-19. All instruction was briefly suspended beginning on March 16, 2020, and the institutions began implementing continuity plans in order to maintain the safety of students and staff.

Following the decision to suspend instruction, the state's colleges and universities provided over 53,000 students with assistance to safely move out of campus residences. The institutions also supported about 2,700 students who needed to remain in campus housing because they lacked a safe or appropriate housing alternative. USG institutions moved courses online in order to continue instruction and prevent interruptions to educational attainment. All institutions also provided students with prorated refunds for services they could no longer utilize on campuses, such as housing, dining, and activity centers through the end of the semester.

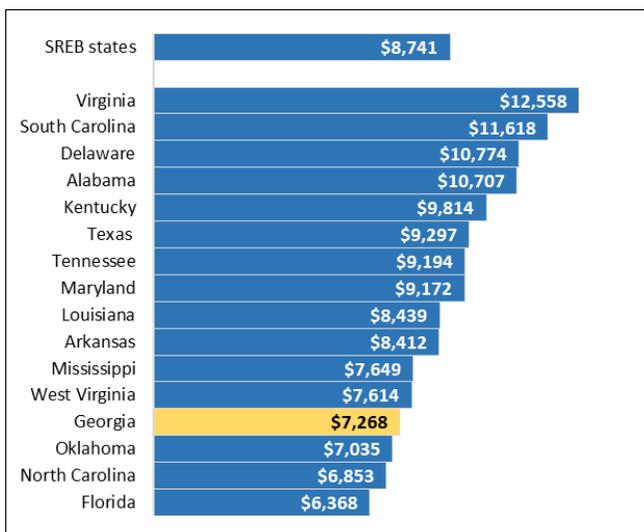
As the institutions continue student instruction online, the USG is also coordinating with the Department of Public Health and the Emergency Management Agency to respond to the virus with valuable resources. USG's institutions immediately began sharing healthcare equipment, including ventilators, masks, and sanitizing supplies that are typically used for research and instruction. They also began utilizing their 3D printers and other manufacturing abilities to create face shields and other resources needed by healthcare workers at this time.

The institutions are also providing support in other ways. Drive-thru centers have been established at the Georgia Institute of Technology and Kennesaw State University for safe testing accessible by appointment. Medical staff from Augusta University and the Medical College of Georgia are administering these tests, and the university developed the state's virtual screening tools available online ([HERE](#)) or by downloading a smart phone application. Police officers from Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, and Georgia Tech are assisting at those locations by providing traffic control and security services. Also, Albany State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College are housing traveling healthcare workers, and Valdosta State University is using its lab facilities to train nurses to utilize ventilators and other procedures specific to COVID-19.

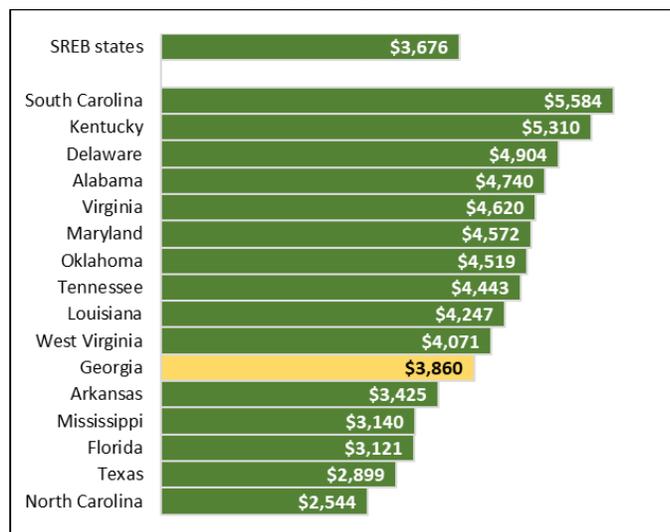
On April 14, 2020, USG’s Board of Regents made several decisions regarding future operations in the wake of COVID-19. The board chose to extend online-only instruction through the summer semester in order to maintain the safety of all who would typically be on-campus during those months. Additionally, online courses will have the same tuition rates associated with their in-person counterparts, and only appropriate fees, such as technology and special instruction fees will be implemented. To continue to address the financial hardships felt by students during this time, tuition rates will not increase at any institution during the 2020-2021 school year. Maintaining current tuition rates allows Georgia’s institutions to remain some of the most affordable among their counterparts in the region.

2018-2019 School Year Average Undergraduate Tuition

Four-Year Institutions



Two-Year Institutions



The board also discussed COVID-19’s impact to the system’s overall operating budget and projects about \$200 million in revenue will be lost by the end of the spring semester due to the interruption of services, such as sponsored research and events, in addition to the refunds to students. The system also anticipates that it may lose an additional \$150 million in revenue over the summer semester due to reductions in enrollment and the continuing interruption of services; however, the system is doing all it can in coordination with the Governor’s Coronavirus Task Force to mitigate these losses while continuing to support the state’s response to the virus.

Through the ‘Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act’, the USG has been directly awarded about \$250 million in supplemental federal funding to address COVID-19’s impact. Half of these funds are allocated for impacted students, so they can continue to access meals, housing, technology, and other resources they typically acquire through their institutions. The second half of the funds are allocated for institutions, and the Board of Regents is continuing to work with the U.S. Department of Education to determine what operations can be financed by those resources.

Further updates on USG’s response to COVID-19 can be found at <https://www.usg.edu/coronavirus/>.