

The GOALS Program

The Guidance and Opportunities for Academic and Leadership Success (GOALS) Program at Columbus State University is a two-year certificate program that provides a college experience for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Typical applicants are those who received special education services for a developmental disability (i.e., intellectual disability) through most of their K-12 schooling and have graduated high school with an alternative diploma (i.e., special education diploma, certificate of attendance, etc.). Using a person-centered planning process, GOALS provides students with developmental disabilities the opportunity to set and work toward their personal post-secondary goals as a foundation for active, lifelong career and community participation. The GOALS Program at CSU represents an inclusive, university-based program built upon the four principles of personal advocacy, career development, health education, and civic engagement. Students complete 36 credit hours of inclusive and program-specific courses, along with work-related internships that are designed to support the academic and personal leadership development of students.

Students accepted into the GOALS Program at CSU are those who meet the following minimal requirements to assure they will benefit from the program:

- Be a graduate of an accredited high school and served under IDEA
- 3rd grade reading level preferred
- Knowledge of basic mathematics and ability to use a calculator
- Ability to function independently for a sustained period of time
- No significant behavioral or emotional problems that would impact school performance
- Potential to be successful in competitive employment situations
- Understanding of college and motivation to complete a college program
- Strongly recommended that applicant be on an active Vocational Rehabilitation caseload
- Have a willingness to complete all academic assignments with support

Inclusive Coursework

The GOALS Program at CSU provides students the opportunity to complete college coursework within an inclusive environment. Students complete 9 hours of courses per semester over a 2-year, 4 semester period leading to a Certificate of Completion from the GOALS Program at CSU. Each semester, 6 of the 9 course hours that students complete are drawn from the university course catalogue. The remaining 3 hours are program-specific courses related to self-determination, personal leadership, and community engagement.

Peer Mentoring / Circle of Friends

The GOALS Program provides peer mentoring to support the academic and social development of everyone participating within the GOALS Program. Academic mentors provide academic tutoring and class support services designed to help GOALS students succeed. The Best Buddies at CSU chapter provides the foundation for them to develop authentic friendships with others from across campus.

Job Internships

Each semester, GOALS students complete a job internship designed to provide important career related knowledge and skills. GOALS students work with program staff from the university to set up internships that are interesting and challenging.

To Apply...

Contact the [GOALS Program at CSU](#) to learn how you can apply to our next cohort of students. Space is limited so be sure to apply as early as possible! For more information contact goalsinfo@columbusstate.edu.

Foundational Support for the GOALS Program Provided by:

- Clinical Neurodiagnostics
- [The Chattahoochee Valley Down Syndrome Association](#)
- The Georgia Inclusive Post-secondary Education Consortium