

Georgia's General Assembly approved the charter for the **University of Georgia** in January 1785, making it the **first state created school of higher education in the United States**.

Abraham Baldwin (one of Georgia's signers of the US Constitution) was appointed by Governor Lyman Hall (a signer of the Declaration of Independence) to pen the charter documents for the University. In the charter, he argued that an educated population was necessary for a free government and that the government should make education available to all, not just the wealthy. Baldwin served as president of UGA from 1785 until 1801. The University, however, remained an institution on paper only for the next sixteen years as the state's government was challenged by creating a functioning state.

In 1801, the doors to the University finally welcomed students, and, in 1806, the first permanent building, known as Franklin College, held classes. As the school grew, the name changed from Franklin College to the University of Georgia. For many years, the only college in the University to operate was the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. Though the University struggled with financial difficulties in its early years, this did not prevent many important Georgia political and business leaders from receiving their higher education. The University's School of Law was started in 1859.

University of Georgia, circa 1850. The architecture was modeled after that of Yale University, the alma mater of Abraham Baldwin, UGA's first president



The Civil War saw the University close for a few years (1861-65), and, after the war, the University was saved from potential bankruptcy when it was declared a "land grant institution" by the Morrill Act of 1872. This Act made agriculture and mechanical arts classes available at the University. The early twentieth century brought new schools of learning to the University. Pharmacy, education, business, journalism, and graduate schools, among others, broadened opportunities for Georgia students.

In 1918, women began attending UGA as regular students. In 1961, UGA was integrated when Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter were the first black students to enroll. Since that time, UGA has continued to expand learning opportunities and its public service programs.

Though the University of Georgia was the first public university to be chartered, the University of North Carolina actually held classes first. Today there is a spirited debate between the two institutions about which one is actually the United States' first state sponsored University.

In your Interactive Notebook, create a timeline using the events below. Order the events correctly and include the year(s)! Illustrate at least three of the events.

- School of Law started.
- Women first attended classes as regular students
- Baldwin served as president
- University was saved from bankruptcy by the Morrill Act
- University closed because of the Civil War
- University doors opened for the first time.
- The first permanent building, Franklin College, held classes. UGA was first called Franklin College because of this.
- Charter for UGA is approved by GA's General Assembly
- UGA was integrated for the first time when Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter became the first black students to enroll

** include a title that signifies UGA's importance!*