

**The University of Georgia**  
**2009 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium**  
Unicoi Conference Center  
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Introduction by  
**Josef M. Broder**, Chair  
Teaching Academy Executive Committee

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I am pleased to welcome you to the 2009 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium. Good morning, my name is Joe Broder and I have the pleasure of serving as Co-Chair of the Symposium Planning Committee and Executive Committee Chair of the UGA Teaching Academy. Today's symposium is the 19<sup>th</sup> in a series of symposia that were initiated in 1991. I invite you to review the topics of past symposia. Many significant academic initiatives at the University have been explored and developed at these events. Often, the impacts of these symposium are not immediate but new ideas are certainly set in motion for future opportunities.

Before we begin this morning, let me take a moment to thank those who made this symposium possible. First, I want to thank the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dr. Arnett Mace, for his financial support and for his participation in our program. Provost Mace, we greatly appreciate your generous support for this symposium and for the teaching and learning enterprise. Next, I want to thank President Adams for his continued support of the symposium series, the Teaching Academy and for Teaching and Learning. I regret that Dr. Adams will not be able to join us this evening. He sends his regrets and best wishes for a successful symposium. I would also like to thank Professor Jere Morehead who has been a staunch supporter of the Faculty Symposium and our strongest advocate to continue these meetings in good and bad times

At this time, I would like to thank the members of the Planning and Coordinating Committee, their names can be found on the back of the program. I especially want to thank Marcus Fechheimer who served as co-chair. I would ask the members of the committee to please stand and be recognized. I want to express a sincere thanks to Stefani Hilley, my administrative associate, for her dedicated assistance in planning the symposium. Finally, I would like to recognize the members of the UGA Teaching Academy for their support and participation in the symposium. Could I ask the Teaching Academy members to please stand and be recognized. Let's give them a round of applause. A brief description of the UGA Teaching Academy can be found on the back of the program.

Let me take you back a few years. The first ever symposium in 1991 addressed the topic,

***“Balancing the Responsibilities of Scholarship at the University of Georgia”***

This title suggests that the issues faced by our faculty in 1991 have yet to be fully resolved. That particular symposium addressed a concern that the University's three missions of teaching, research and service, may not be created, valued and rewarded equally. Thus, we began the conversation on how faculty at a major land grant university, interact, understand and relate to

one another and the larger university. Today, the issue is not one of judging the relative importance of our missions but to explore ways in which the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts. That is, how can faculty from different missions, departments and colleges work together to be more productive, more creative and more engaged than working in isolation.

This Symposium comes at a critical time for the University. A time when we are facing unprecedented budget reductions, matched only by a new wave of scrutiny by the public and public officials. Increasingly, higher education and the University are being examined in an almost “witch-hunt” fashion. So why are faculty teaching courses in sex education? Are faculty wasting taxpayer money by traveling to distant parts of the world. Successful efforts to increase revenues to the University are then, criticized as “Pork.” And here I thought we were referring to “Blueberries!” Recently I learned that the University is no longer trusted to build their own buildings. Perhaps, we named a building after the wrong person!

In the midst of these challenging times, we take this occasion to examine the “Challenged University.” Our task here is not to cast blame, for there are many forces which led us here. Likewise, we’re not here to whine, although some *constructive venting* is allowed. Instead, we will ask you as faculty to be part of the solution to these challenging times. We will ask you, in the various break-out sessions, to examine how we relate and interact as faculty within and across our respective units, how we relate to the administration and how we relate to students. We are pleased to have a few students with us today to serve as “reality checks” on how we think we communicate and interact with students. Finally, the symposium will examine how we, as a university, relate to the general public and to our elected officials.

On a personal note, I’m concerned that current budget climate and public scrutiny will call in to question what we know and do as a preeminent institution of higher education. The University has made tremendous gains in stature and has become the envy of many of our peer institutions. We should not forget or abandon the fine work we are doing in teaching, research and service. Now is not the time to retreat but to re-double our efforts and our commitment to the educational mission.

As I read about adversity faced by institutions and organizations, I was struck by how often the work “character” was offered as an ingredient. That is, “character” is both the consequence and solution to adversity. For the University and faculty, maintaining our character as a public institution, our resolve to stay our mission to serve our students, families and communities is essential to weathering the storm.

No doubt, some of you have asked, just how did I get invited to this Symposium? Each year, the Planning Committee develops the theme of the symposium and then invites faculty that are the best candidates for addressing the issues and problems. This year, we selected a majority of faculty who are respected in their respective departments. Faculty who are considered opinion leaders but are not in administration. Faculty who can contribute to the discussion of faculty-led solutions and provide leadership to these initiatives in their respective departments. Some would call you the up and coming “movers and shakers” in our departments. Now you know and the pressure is on!

The UGA Teaching Academy has been invited to plan and coordinate these symposia since 2004. These symposia have become an integral part of the University's conversation on teaching and learning. At this particular symposium, we will explore and develop "how we interact as faculty and with the public" That is, we will look critically at the concept of faculty communication and collaboration and how these can be used to address the budget cuts and the heightened public scrutiny.

Many of the conversations will take place in our breakout groups. Here, participants will be asked to examine communication and collaboration in various contexts. Later, Marcus Fechheimer, Co-chair of the Planning Committee will give the specific charge of the break-out groups.

These symposiums are aptly labeled "Academic Affairs **Faculty** Symposium." Our students (and administrators and politicians) may come and go, while many of our faculty are here for the duration of their careers. Faculty don't graduate per se, but continue to be good (or bad) teachers, researchers, etc. Today and tomorrow, we have a unique opportunity to discuss a topic of importance to faculty and the larger university. While the University has some of the best faculty in their respective fields, we should be concerned about how we can continue to function, to be productive and to be happy and rewarded in these challenging times. The conversations we have here today will not only engage those in attendance but will be carried to the larger University Community. This is designed to give us time to reflect on the status and well-being of our changing professoriate. Our task today is not so much to find solutions to our problems but to ask relevant and pressing questions about our University

In preparation for this symposium, we asked you to complete an on-line survey. The results of that survey can be found in your registrations packets. I want to thank each of you for completing the survey and invite you to review the survey results as you examine the topics in your breakout groups. While this group may not be completely representative of the larger university, the survey can, no doubt, confirm or dispel our perceptions of communication and collaboration at the University.

And now to officially welcome you to the 2009 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium is Dr. Arnett C. Mace, Jr. Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost.