

The University of Georgia
2013 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium

Brasstown Valley Resort

March 22 - 23, 2013

Panel II. Faculty Support

In My Heart I am a Teacher

Jason B. Peake

Associate Professor

Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication

UGA Tifton Campus

In my heart I am a teacher. My background is in education and agriculture, but in my heart I am a teacher. I think it is important that we think about that and accept that while we have appointments related to research, grantsmanship, and extension, that each of us in our heart need to be a teacher.

The Tifton Campus is a little different from Athens. Many of the challenges and opportunities that I face are not the same as what you will face in Athens, but one challenge I think we all face the pressure to publish... 'publish or perish' as the saying goes. My best mechanism for dealing with this is to start a faculty learning group that focuses on the scholarship of teaching. I try to pull the best and brightest teaching faculty together and help guide them through the process of conducting educational research. We start with best practices, move on to the literature with our questions, then start designing our own research projects that foster effective teaching and lead to publication.

For faculty members who do not have a background in education and need help with either distance education or face-to-face education consider hiring a graduate assistant who is on half-time appointment with your department and the other half of their time is in the College of Education. These graduate students are a gold mine of knowledge on how to teach effectively and you will get more 'bang for your buck' with graduate students who bring a fresh perspective to well established teaching methodologies.

Consider yourself a life-long-learner with regards to your teaching. Attend symposiums, conferences, workshops, audit an education class or audit one of the best teaching faculty from within your department. We are not all so smart that we have nothing to learn, continue to develop and grow. If you are far behind do not despair, you just need to cut across town to catch the parade. Don't keep chasing it from the back, always behind and trying to catch up. Cut across town to the front of the parade, try the latest technique, technology, or teaching method.