

The University of Georgia
2015 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium
Unicoi Conference Center
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Introduction by
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Teaching Academy Executive Committee

I am pleased to welcome you to the 2015 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium. Good morning, my name is Joe Broder and I have the pleasure of chairing the Symposium Planning Committee. I also have the pleasure of serving as Executive Committee Chair of the UGA Teaching Academy. Today's symposium is the 25th, a quarter of a century, in a series of symposia that were initiated in 1991 at the recommendation of the Senior Teaching Fellows. I invite you to review the list topics of past symposia in your packets. 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.

Here are a few examples. The Office of Service Learning was first recommended by a break-out group at the 1999 Symposium entitled, *Citizen Scholars: Engaging Student with Their Communities*. The 2005 symposium on "*Greater Expectations for Student Learning and General Education*" gave new directions to the Center for Teaching and Learning which was previously know as OISD, the Office of Instructional Support and Development. Note, the addition of the word "Learning."

The need for greater communications between students and faculty was the focus of the 2007 Symposium on "*Enhancing the Undergraduate Experience through Discovery, Engagement & Transformation*" and gave rise to the "Compact for Responsible Scholarship: A Joint Resolution for Academic Excellence" This Compact would later be endorsed by The UGA Student Government Association and The UGA Teaching Academy. The Teaching Academy Fellows program was a recommendation from the 2011 Symposium, *Understanding our Students: Ethos, Experience and Expectations*. The Fellows Program is accepting nominations for its forth class to begin this fall.

Recommendations and new initiatives from last year's symposium, *Changing Roles, Perceptions & Expectations: Faculty in the American Research University* will be addressed in the Provost's remarks along with her letter to participants in your padfolios.

Before we begin this morning, let me take a moment to thank those who made this symposium possible. First, I want to thank UGA **President Jere Morehead**, for his moral support and for being a champion for teaching and learning at the University of Georgia. We are honored to have President Morehead as a member of the Teaching Academy, Class of 2001. We especially appreciate the significant role he has played in these symposiums. He could not be with us this morning but has agreed to host the Symposium's Fireside Chat this evening. Next, I want to thank Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, **Dr. Pamela Whitten**. Dr. Whitten we appreciate your continued financial support and participation in this symposium,

despite your initiation dance with the Accidentals at last year's symposium! We hope the discussions and recommendations will be helpful to your leadership at UGA.

I would like to acknowledge PriceWaterhouseCoopers and **Mark Huber**, Planning Committee Member, for their assistance in providing the portfolios for the Symposium.

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 would ask the members of the Committee to please stand and be recognized. I want to express a sincere thanks to **Stefani Hilley**, Administrative Associate and Executive Secretary of the Teaching Academy, 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.

The 2015 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium, *Transforming Graduate Education at the University of Georgia*, will explore strategies for transforming graduate education as an integral part of UGA's goal to become a world class institution. What role can and should graduate education play in this effort?

While the literature and UGA itself have focused on the quality of the undergraduate experience, less attention has been paid to graduate education. Long known for the meteoric rise in the quality undergraduate education, UGA is poised to embrace a comparable goal of transforming graduate education. I am hopeful that this effort will complement and not compete with the quality of our undergraduate programs. Here is why.

Increasingly, the lines between undergraduate and graduate/professional education have blurred. Many of our beginning undergraduates enter UGA with enough AP or IB credits to complete their bachelors degrees in 3 years. Many will enroll in graduate courses and/or pursue joint 3+2 Bachelors - Masters degrees. In this environment, research universities can no longer rely on undergraduate programs alone to sustain academic excellence. Also, the sheer numbers of students that go on to graduate or professional school is notable. In our college alone, 35% of our students pursue formal education beyond the bachelors.

The Planning Committee considered a number of topics and themes for this symposium. After looking over past symposiums and the changes that are taking place in our Graduate School, the Committee felt that this was the year to take a serious look at graduate education at UGA. Given the potential of graduate education at UGA, we changed the title from "Enhancing Graduate Education" to "Transforming Graduate Education at UGA." With this change, we invite and expect bold recommendations from our break-out groups that would not merely tweak graduate education but transform it to keep pace with UGA's quest to become a world-class institution.

The Committee also gave some thought as to how broadly graduate education should be defined for this symposium. Early on, we felt that this symposium should not become a program review of our Graduate School. Instead, graduate education is seen as the responsibility of our schools and colleges and the respective departments and institutes. Ultimately, the responsibility for graduate education resides in our faculty who teach, mentor and direct our graduate students.

We believe that the task of transforming graduate education begins with our faculty with the support of our institution.

The issue of graduate vs professional school was discussed and we use the term graduate education broadly as formal (or degree seeking) post-undergraduate education. This distinction or definition may not be relevant in all of your break-out groups but these faculty symposiums attempt to be inclusive of all UGA schools and colleges and across all disciplines of study.

For this particular symposium, the question we are asking is, “How can we transform graduate (and professional) education at UGA as an integral part of our quest for preeminence.” This challenge will be examined across a broad context of graduate education activities from recruitment pathways to career placements. We have asked each of our 5 working or break-out groups to address a different aspect of graduate education from Student recruitment and retention - Mentoring and professional development - - Curriculum, pedagogy and learning - Organizational structures and policies - Grants and extramural funding. These groups will meet three times to assess the current efforts in their particular activity and develop recommendations for the Provost on how to transform graduate education at UGA. Marcus Fechheimer will give the formal charge to the break-out groups later this morning. My personal request to the groups is that they limit their lamenting and complaining about the current state of affairs to the first session and then take on a more constructive role in developing their recommendations. You know, we can complain back on campus and we don't have to travel to Unicoi for this purpose.

Every year, some of the participants ask how they were selected for this symposium. Each year, the Planning Committee develops the theme of the symposium and then invites faculty that can best contribute to or benefit from the dialogue. This year, we invited faculty and administrators who could offer a unique perspective to and or benefit from a discussion of graduate education. We aim for a broad invitation list that includes early, mid and later career faculty and includes faculty across our campus. While some of us are administrators, this is intended to be a faculty symposium where faculty are free to explore the full potential of graduate education at UGA.

In closing my remarks, let me thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in the 2015 Symposium. I hope your experience here will be enjoyable and productive. Also, I hope you will meet and make new connections here at the symposium and that you will have the opportunity to work together back on campus. Finally, I hope that this symposium will help you to develop new appreciation of graduate education and the critical role graduate education will play in UGA's future.

So, what happens at the end of the Symposium? First, Provost Whitten will have your recommendations for transforming graduate education. I suspect that she will take these recommendations to heart. Second, we will discuss and advance the recommendations as part of the Teaching Academy's Spring Workshop on April 13th where we will recognize the 2014-15 recipients of the Interdisciplinary Certificate in University Teaching. Third, will post your recommendations along with the symposium presentations in an online proceedings to share with the larger university community. Our hopes is for the dialogue on graduate education continues after this symposium and that transformative initiatives for UGA graduate education emerge.

And now to officially welcome you to the 2015 Academic Affairs Faculty Symposium is Dr. Pamela Whitten, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Dr. Whitten.