

## Overview of the Academic Affairs Symposium

The University of Georgia's Teaching Academy in collaboration with the Office of the Provost sponsors and organizes the annual Academic Affairs Symposium around a topic of teaching and learning that is important to the University community. The planning committee selects a topic, considers how that topic relates to UGA and convenes invited faculty, administrators, and students to explore the topic in a substantive way, including by "thinking big" about institutional changes that may enhance the student experience. Symposium attendees are encouraged to think creatively about ways to improve the educational environment across all levels and functions of the university.

The symposium provides an opportunity for participants to step away, both geographically and psychologically, from the daily routine of work on campus to foster a sense of renewal and rededication to the teaching and learning mission of UGA.

The symposium has a dual purpose to provide individual benefits to attendees and to serve university level interests as those relate to educational programs and the mission of teaching and learning.

Benefits to program participants include opportunities:

- **to network with colleagues** working across schools, colleges, campuses, and other units dedicated to the instructional mission at UGA;
- **to interact with upper level administrators** in a setting marked by openness and informality;
- **to gain insight into various viewpoints** regarding the symposium topic through exposure to the diversity of professional approaches and disciplinary perspectives of colleagues in other fields;
- **to provide input and react to campus-wide issues** in a way that enhances individual capacity for leadership and informs university leaders of grassroots perspectives; and
- **to learn about and contribute to the creation and development of cutting-edge programs and initiatives** at UGA.

University level benefits include opportunities for senior administrators:

- **to share with a broad cross-section of the UGA community the big picture** of challenges and opportunities affecting major research universities, in general, and UGA, specifically;
- **to come to know emerging and established campus leaders** and their potential for greater university involvement;
- **to gather feedback from a diverse group of university stakeholders** on the symposium topic; and
- **to receive new and constructive ideas and proposals generated through collaboration** and distinctive synergies created by the symposium environment.