

Opening Remarks

Introduce Myself- How I want to tackle the grand challenges

My name is Chip Chambers and I'm a sophomore from the far-away city of Watkinsville studying biology and economics. As a CURO Scholar, I got involved in some really exciting research early on in my college career in the biochemistry department of Dr. Michael Terns working with CRISPR-Cas. I have worked in the student government association, as a volunteer at Mercy Health Center, as an executive member of both the Tate Honor Society and Economics Society, served the Honors Program Student Council, and worked with the UGA Cheerleading Team. I am also involved in Reformed University Fellowship and the Institute for Leadership Advancement through the Terry College of Business.

This semester, I was fortunate enough to be awarded the mid-term foundation fellowship, which has placed me in a community of incredibly diverse, passionate, and talented individuals that have pushed me in the best way possible.

The question I get so often is "why the biology, economics, health policy and management minor, and certificate in interdisciplinary writing?" Besides the fact that apparently I hate having a social life, I want to prepare myself and put tools in my tool belt to speak different languages. Healthcare represents a unique intersection of science, ethics, policy, and business. If we want to fix it, we need to all talk together.

How UGA can prepare us

I was looking at requirements for medical school this week and was almost overwhelmed by the sheer volume of disciplines they expect us to have competency in: biology, chemistry, physics, calculus, statistics, psychology, sociology, leadership, writing, biochemistry, genetics, physiology, cellular biology, etc. I think courses which address many of these disciplines make it feasible to squeeze all of them in, as well as see the complementarity between them. As we seek to tackle the grand challenges, we have to prepare students to speak languages of multiple disciplines.

There was a day when a politician could run on a single issue. There was a day when a doctor could make decisions alone. There was a day when a professor could publish an article without 15 collaborators. Those days are gone. I think the shift towards interdisciplinary work is great. Just make sure you're teaching us to think that way. I think one way to do this would be to offer courses taught by faculty in multiple departments (e.g. a course in the biochemistry of medical psychology, or in the psychology of economics, or the mathematics of ecology, or the physics of athletic exercise, or the chemistry of art, or the psychology of medical sociology, etc.)