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Introductory Panel Comments  
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The best way to prepare students to answer the world's grand challenges is to define to them what these challenges are as early as possible in their educational career. We often forget as we get further along in our educations and careers what the most essential difference between ourselves as undergraduates and ourselves now really is. Though there is obviously a wealth of information in me that was not there when I started college, the knowledge is not the important difference, it is merely an aspect of what is truly important. The important part is the perspective that we gain as we move through our educational and professional careers. In science we say all questions are worth asking, but some questions are more important to ask than others. We as researchers find what these important questions are as we gain more experience in our fields and begin to understand the priority and impact of the questions that we seek to answer. This is where I see faculty making the biggest impact in those early undergraduates. Help these students to see your chosen field of study through your eyes. Impart to them not only the basic concepts but the grand challenges associated with the basic information as well. In this way you are providing context and importance to the lessons that you seek to teach. When I think back on me as a freshman, I can see in myself the same excitement and exuberance as I now have. What I do not see is the sense of focus and purpose that I now have at the end of my educational career. Had I been aware of the need to double the world's food production by 2050, for example, when I was choosing a field of study then it may not have taken me until my Ph.D. studies to decide that this is how I can help to address one of the world's grand challenges. However, I agree that knowing that simple fact by itself would not have been enough. The other component that was missing early on was again the context within which this problem was presented. By this I mean, how is the issue currently being addressed and what are the plans to address it in the future. This is where UGA has an opportunity to capitalize. The university has a significant number of highly qualified researchers addressing the world's grand challenges both individually and in collaboration. By highlighting this university research in relation to the world's grand challenges in a class setting, you will provide students with the context and tangible examples of how they themselves can participate through their education/research.

In summary, I do not think that students at UGA are ill-prepared to address the world's grand challenges. I believe that students are more than anything, ill-informed, whether it be due to coming into the information late in their education or receiving the information in the absence of context. I believe that this is an issue of dissemination of the perspective held by the amazing research professionals/instructors specifically on the issues of the world's grand challenges.