

*Annual Report of
Institutional Progress*

2003-04



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



The University of Georgia

Annual Report of Institutional Progress
2003-2004

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness
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Summary of Major Institutional Accomplishments

Many University of Georgia units, in preparing their annual reports that are used as a basis for this report, noted that a major accomplishment this year was finding ways to absorb ongoing budget cuts in the least detrimental way. See the last section, *Overall Institutional Health*, for more commentary on the budget.

Continued progress was made on several institutional initiatives involving interdisciplinary instructional and research programs, as well as partnerships with other University System institutions. The School of Public and International Affairs, established in 2001, moved into Candler Hall following renovations to the 1901 building and expanded its degree offerings. A new major in international affairs was approved by the Board of Regents under the University's bachelor of arts degree, and a new major in public administration was approved under the Ph.D. degree. The existing master of public administration degree program was ranked third in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* (up from sixth in the previous ranking), and degree program specializations in "management" and "finance and budgeting" ranked second and third, respectively.

The College of Environment and Design, created by melding UGA's School of Environmental Design and Institute of Ecology, worked on an update to its 1999 strategic plan to incorporate the formation of the college in 2001. Plans include the formation of the Academy of the Environment and the creation of new masters and doctoral degree programs in environmental planning.

Other initiatives involved the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute and the Faculty of Engineering, both of which aim to coalesce instruction and research in related disciplines across campus. Membership in the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute has grown to 160 faculty, representing more than 40 departments. The BHSI held its third annual spring symposium on "Emerging Infectious Diseases: Threats to the Southeastern United States" and continued collaborations with the Medical College of Georgia on several projects, including the development of a College of Public Health at UGA with an affiliated Institute of Public Health at MCG. The proposal for a master of public health (MPH) degree was approved by the Board of Regents and the first class of 19 students entered UGA in fall 2004. A team of scientists headed by BHSI member Michael Pierce received a \$6.7 million grant (described in more detail on the next page) and construction began on the Paul D. Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences (described on page 7).

The Faculty of Engineering, organized in 2001, now numbers 100 members from more than 30 academic units at UGA. The members retain their departmental appointments while devoting time to a range of engineering-related activities. The focus of engineering on solving problems helps to identify the pragmatic value of scientific discoveries as well as triggering further innovation. One example of this dynamic relationship has occurred in the field of nanotechnology. UGA's interdisciplinary nanotechnology initiative had its origins in a symposium held when the Faculty of Engineering was originally formed. Nanotechnology applications are now being explored at UGA in fields like drug development and agriculture and \$5 million in extramural funding for projects related to nanotechnology has been awarded to

UGA since July 2003. Another example involves researchers from chemistry, biological engineering and engineering outreach partnering with private industry to develop new methods to refine fuels from biomaterials. Extramural funding for this project to date totals about \$1 million with continuing support anticipated.

UGA expanded its offerings at the Gwinnett University Center, adding a bachelor's of social work in spring 2004 as the seventh undergraduate degree-completion program launched since fall 2002. Plans also were begun for the College of Pharmacy – in conjunction with the University System's Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP) – to offer a graduate-level certificate program to train regulatory affairs professionals in the biosciences industry. UGA has delivered master's degree and continuing education programs in Gwinnett since the mid-1980s. The number of students attending UGA classes at the Gwinnett University Center in fall 2003 was 820, up 267 from the previous fall. The total included 632 graduate students and 188 undergraduates.

Another off-campus undergraduate degree program was launched in Tifton as a joint program between UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Twenty-one students enrolled in fall 2003 for the four-year degree program in agriscience and environmental systems.

UGA also has partnered with Albany State University in an ICAPP program to increase the number of pharmacists serving Southwest Georgia. Students train with UGA's College of Pharmacy and after graduation are offered employment positions in the Albany area, where there is a critical shortage of pharmacists. The program will have produced 81 pharmacists at the conclusion of Phase One and is expected to produce another 50 during Phase Two.

UGA external research funding grew 6.8 percent in fiscal year 2004, totaling a record \$159.9 million, compared with \$149.8 million received in the previous year. Research support has increased 56.8 percent during the past five years. This funding is comprised of contracts, grants and agreements from federal, state and corporate sources as well as from private funding agencies.

While research figures are up, UGA's total external funding – which includes research, instruction, public service and outreach – fell 1.2 percent, ending the year at \$227.8 million. External awards from federal agencies grew 6.6 percent and funds from industry and corporations grew 23.3 percent, helping to offset significant decreases in state and private foundation funding.

The university receives a substantial share of external funding from federal agencies and experienced double-digit increases from the National Science Foundation (up 22.6 percent to \$27.2 million) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (up 30.5 percent to \$20.4 million). UGA continues to rank among the top 100 public and private research universities for federal research and development expenditures, placing 89th in the most recent NSF rankings, based on figures from FY 2002.

Major FY 2004 grants and contracts included:

* \$6.7 million, five-year grant from the National Center for Research Resources at the National Institutes of Health, and co-sponsored by the NIH National Cancer Institute, to create a federal center for studying a class of complex carbohydrates found in cell surface molecules that

may lead to treatments for cancer and Parkinson's disease. J. Michael Pierce, a faculty member in the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center, is the principal investigator.

* \$5.3 million, five-year National Science Foundation grant (of \$34.6 million awarded statewide) for the Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM) to improve student achievement in northeast Georgia for grades P-12. Michael Padilla, director of the College of Education's educational partnerships, is the principal investigator.

* \$3.9 million, four-year NSF grant to study genes involved in growth and differentiation of plant tissue. Plant biologist Michael Scanlon is the principal investigator.

* \$2.7 million, five-year NIH grant to develop and implement effective preventive intervention programs for rural African-American families. Gene Brody, the principal investigator, and Velma Murry, the co-principal investigator, are with UGA's Institute for Behavioral Research.

* \$1.5 million grant from the Georgia Department of Human Resources to train family independence case managers who work with such programs as Medicaid and food stamps. Lettie Lockhart in the School of Social Work is the principal investigator.

* \$1 million, four-year NSF grant to expand nanofabrication technology for applications in biosensing. The principal investigators are Yiping Zhao, physics and astronomy department, and William Kisaalita and Guigen Zhang, both of the biological and agricultural engineering department.

The University continued stepped-up efforts to recruit students from historically under-represented populations. The freshman class that entered in fall 2003 was one of UGA's most racially and ethnically diverse. The number of entering minority students rose by about 40 percent, including a 25 percent increase in the number of African-American students.

About 800 freshman students (15 percent of the class) are non-Caucasian – up from 566 the previous fall – and 274 of those are African-American students, 56 more than last year. About 53 percent of accepted African-American students enrolled, the highest yield ever for African Americans. The non-Caucasian yield is also 53 percent and includes increases in the number of Asian, Hispanic and "multicultural" students as well as African Americans. The class includes 164 students whose native language isn't English, and 155 who came to the United States to attend UGA.

The University Council approved a statement on diversity in spring 2004 that commits UGA to adopt "policies and procedures to increase diversity among its entering students." The statement specifies four factors that should be used in evaluating freshmen applicants: their race and ethnic background, where they live, their native language, and the range and quality of their experiences and background. But the statement also calls for a "highly individualized, holistic review" of applicants' files – language the Supreme Court used in a recent ruling involving admissions at the University of Michigan. The Faculty Admissions Committee and the Undergraduate Admissions Office are working on implementation of the statement.

UGA's Office of Institutional Diversity also provided leadership in supporting equity and diversity at UGA. Following a national search, Keith Parker came to UGA in 2003 as the first full-time head of that unit. Under his direction, the office held fall and spring workshops for administrators and faculty to discuss diversity initiatives at UGA. Among "best practices"

highlighted was the Young Scholars Program, a pre-collegiate program administered through the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences that recruits 50-60 students per year to work with UGA researchers. The office also sponsored a conference for middle school students and parents that provided information on admissions, academic enrichment and testing.

In related activity, UGA joined with the universities of Alabama and Mississippi in a January videoconference to reflect on the 40th anniversary commemorations of desegregation at the three schools. UGA held the first event in January 2001, marking the 1961 enrollment of Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter as the first African-American students at a major university in the deep South. Alabama and Mississippi followed with programs in 2003, marking the schools' desegregation in 1963. Also in January, Georgia Public Television aired a one-hour documentary on Holmes and the social activism of his family. The documentary was produced by UGA's Foot Soldier Project for Civil Rights Studies.

Other pioneers of UGA integration were celebrated in April, when the School of Law invited Chester Davenport, who in 1966 was the school's first African-American graduate, to deliver the annual Sibley Lecture and participate in day-long activities with other trailblazers, including Robert Benham, the second African-American graduate, and Sharon Nyota Tucker, the first African-American female graduate.

In other activities, the Graduate School established a feeder program with Spelman College and the College of Education's Center for Latino Achievement and Success in Education continued work to improve education for Latino students in the state. The center was established in June 2002 with a \$3.5 million grant from The Goizueta Foundation.

Several students, faculty and staff earned major awards and honors during the course of the year. UGA students had another banner year in winning prestigious scholarships. These included a Marshall Scholarship (Joseph Wolpin), two Truman Scholarships (Matthew Crim and Sarah Sattelmeyer), three Goldwater Scholarships (Chris Tarr, Amy Sexauer and Rebekah Rogers), and a Gates Cambridge Scholarship (Amanda Castro). Only two other public universities – Virginia and Penn State – had recipients of all four of these awards, and only four institutions won more of these major scholarships than UGA: Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Stanford.

In addition, Lorina Naci, a native of Albania, was the first UGA student to win a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarship, which provides up to \$50,000 for graduate study, and four current UGA students and three recent graduates received Fulbright Scholarships for the 2003-04 school year.

Notable achievements by UGA faculty included Eve Troutt Powell, associate professor of history, winning a \$500,000 MacArthur Foundation "genius award." Jeffrey Bennetzen, Georgia Research Alliance professor of molecular genetics, was elected to the National Academy of Sciences and Susan Wessler, Distinguished Research Professor of plant sciences, was elected a councilor of the academy. Henry Schaefer III, Graham Perdue Professor of chemistry, was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and Timothy Dore, assistant professor of chemistry, received a National Science Foundation early career development award.

Gene Brody, Distinguished Research Professor in child and family development, was named a Regents Professor and Conrad Fink, veteran journalist and professor in the Grady

College of Journalism and Mass Communication, received the Regents Award for Excellence in Teaching. His dean, John Soloski, served as president of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication. President Michael F. Adams was elected chairman of the Council of Presidents for the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges.

The UGA athletic program enjoyed a number of successes, with the women's equestrian team repeating as national champions. The baseball team finished its season as co-champions of the SEC and went on to the final four in the College World Series. David Perno was named the National Coach of the Year by Baseball America. The gymnastics team also won an SEC championship and finished second at the NCAAs. Five members of the team were All-Americans and Suzanne Yoculan was named SEC coach of the year. The men's golf and tennis teams also won SEC championships and swim coach Jack Bauerle was named SEC Women's Coach of the Year for the ninth time in his career.

Several student athletes won NCAA individual titles, including Hyleas Fountain and Fanni Juhasz in track and field events, and swimmers Mary DeScenza and Kara Lynn Joyce. The women's 200- and 400-meter free relay and 400-meter medley relay teams also were national champions.

UGA finished fifth in the U.S. Sports Academy Director's Cup competition honoring the best overall collegiate athletics programs in the country. Schools are awarded points based on national finishes for up to 10 men's and 10 women's sports. Fifteen of Georgia's 18 teams contributed points this year, giving UGA its highest-ever point total of 1,005.25. The Varsity National Championship in equestrian was not counted toward the final standings because equestrian is classified as an "emerging sport."

The University hosted several major events on and off campus, including the biennial Richard B. Russell Symposium, which focused on homeland security issues. Sen. Saxby Chambliss, former Sen. Sam Nunn and Asa Hutchinson, undersecretary for border and transportation security in the Department of Homeland Security, were among the participants. The 63rd annual Peabody Awards, administered by the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, were presented in New York in May with Katie Couric, co-anchor of NBC's "Today" show, serving as host. Winners of the coveted awards for electronic media were announced live via satellite from GPTV headquarters in Atlanta in March. UGA's Center for Humanities and Arts and Center for International Trade and Security awarded the Delta Prize for Global Understanding to Václav Havel, first president of the Czech Republic, for his stand against communist political repression and his leadership in the pursuit of peaceful change in Europe. A ceremony was held at the Czech Embassy in Washington, D.C. in June. The Terry College of Business again hosted its annual Georgia Economic Outlook luncheon at the World Congress Center in December. This has become the state's biggest economic forecasting event, drawing more than 1,000 of the state's top business and government leaders.

Among noted visitors to campus were former University of Chicago president Hanna Gray, legal scholar Lawrence Friedman and evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson, who gave the 2003-04 Charter Lectures. Karen Holbrook, former UGA provost and now president of

The Ohio State University, delivered the annual McBee Lecture, while U.S. Rep. Harold Ford Jr. delivered the Holmes-Hunter Lecture.

The University also marked the 50th anniversaries of the Marine Institute and the opening of the original Main Library building and concluded a year-long observance of the centennial of the College of Pharmacy.

The Office of University Architects completed several major construction projects during FY04. These included the Student Learning Center and the new building for the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center, described in the next section of this report. A \$3 million renovation of Candler Hall was completed and the building, constructed in 1901, was occupied by the School of Public and International Affairs. Work also was completed on a \$4.2 million addition and \$2.4 million renovation for the Food Science building. The renovation of Myers residence hall was completed and it reopened in fall 2003 with 100 percent occupancy. Construction continued on the 1,200-bed East Campus Village, which was finished in time for occupancy in fall 2004. After three years of planning, construction began in April on the Paul D. Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences.

The University concluded several national searches for key administrative positions during the academic year. Richard Porterfield, a forestry professor who held executive positions at Champion International paper company, was named dean of the Warnell School of Forest Resources and Garnett Stokes, head of UGA's psychology department, was named dean of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. Barbara A. White, who oversaw information technology services at Utah State University, was selected as chief information officer and associate provost; Rebecca Macon, former executive director of enrollment services at the University of Northern Colorado, was named registrar; and Damon Evans, UGA's senior associate athletic director for internal affairs, was named director of athletics.

Institutional Strategic Planning

The University of Georgia's strategic plan sets out a vision for the institution in the year 2010, with emphasis on three strategic directions: 1) Building the new learning environment by enhancing the undergraduate experience, 2) Maximizing research opportunities, and 3) Increasing global awareness and expanding international opportunities. In 2003-2004, continued progress was made in each of these areas.

Several initiatives were undertaken or continued to enhance the undergraduate experience. The new \$43 million Student Learning Center, one of the largest and most technologically advanced facilities of its kind on an American university campus, opened its doors in fall semester 2003 and immediately became an immensely popular and heavily used facility. The 200,000-square-foot center, located in the heart of campus, is a testament to the University's commitment to create the optimal student environment. It includes technologically advanced classrooms, 96 group study rooms, a pervasive wireless network and a 21st-century electronic library.

Construction continued throughout the year on the East Campus Village, a complex of new residence halls with 1,200 beds that also includes a new dining hall and parking deck. Funded by bonds issued by the UGA Real Estate Foundation, these are the first new UGA residence halls built since 1967, when there were 10,000 fewer students at the University than today. The complex opened in fall semester 2004, at the same time a new University policy requiring first-year students to live in campus housing went into effect. The policy is aimed at giving students a good start in their academic careers; students who live in UGA residence halls regularly earn higher GPAs than those living off campus.

The Office of the Vice President for Instruction, working with the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach, established an interest group for faculty and graduate students who want to pursue service learning, which incorporates experiential activities in the community into the learning process. The group meets monthly. OVPI also worked with the Division of Student Affairs to develop a pilot learning communities program for implementation in fall 2004. Students from the incoming freshman class were recruited to participate in the four learning communities set up in the areas of science, social science, education and international issues, with about 20 students in each cohort.

Gifts from Chick-fil-A and UGA's Parents and Families Association enabled Student Affairs to expand its student leadership programs and community service activities, which help develop campus networks and build a sense of UGA community.

To maximize research opportunities, the need for more lab space was identified and is being met. As mentioned on page 1, construction of the Paul D. Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences began in April. The 135,000-square-foot research center will be the signature component of UGA's burgeoning initiative in biomedicine, health and life sciences. It will be the home of the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute and contain research space and offices for more than 275 scientists and graduate students. The U.S. Congress and the Georgia General Assembly are each providing \$10 million for the center, with UGA raising another \$20 million through gifts, grants and contracts. The building is expected to be complete by December 2005. The BHSI website (www.biomed.uga.edu) offers a birds-eye view of the site.

Construction of a new building for the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center was completed in the fall, and a dedication ceremony was held in February. The \$34 million, 135,000-square-foot CCRC facility was designed to house state-of-the-art equipment and to promote collaborative research among faculty. It is the first large-scale research facility funded by the UGA Real Estate Foundation and is a focal development within UGA's Riverbend Research Village. The CCRC houses scientists whose studies of complex carbohydrates are relevant to many human diseases, including cancer, type II diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis.

As noted earlier in this report, progress was made on a variety of collaborative research efforts at UGA, including initiatives in engineering and biomedical and health sciences. Though UGA has neither a medical school nor an engineering school, significant numbers of faculty in several disciplines are engaged in teaching and research in these areas. The Faculty of Engineering and the Institute for Biomedical and Health Sciences provide a means to link these efforts.

The University continued to build its strength in bioinformatics by partnering with the

Georgia Research Alliance to recruit two eminent scholars in the field: Jeffrey Bennetzen and Ying Xu. Bennetzen comes to UGA from a chaired professorship at Purdue, while Xu was most recently at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. A third GRA eminent scholar, Roberto DeCampo, was recruited in the spring. He and his wife and collaborator Silvia Moreno will leave the University of Illinois to join UGA's Center for Tropical and Emerging Global Diseases in January 2005.

The UGA-sponsored Georgia BioBusiness Center, which helps spawn new bioscience companies related to UGA research, worked with GRA to develop business strategies and assist in identifying management for three new companies started in 2003 (Insectigen, Aruna and Angionics).

To prepare students to compete in the global marketplace, the University continues to promote study abroad experiences as well as international activities on campus. UGA is now ranked 10th nationally in the number of students participating in study abroad programs and third for the number of students involved in short-term study abroad. According to the Office of International Education, close to 18 percent of UGA students graduate with a study abroad experience, up from 11 percent in 2000. More than 100 study abroad and exchange programs are offered and the diversity of destinations has expanded to include more countries outside western Europe. UGA's annual Study Abroad Fair is the largest in the Southeast.

More than 2,000 international students and visiting scholars help to internationalize the campus. International Student Life sponsors more than 20 international student organizations, as well as various programs to bring international and American students together. An international street festival held in downtown Athens each spring is a popular event for the campus and local community.

UGA's commitment to internationalism is evident in its curriculum. In addition to offerings through the School of Public and International Affairs, students can earn certificates through the African Studies Institute, the Center for Asian Studies, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and other units. Enrollment in foreign language courses is flourishing, with 60 percent of UGA students graduating with competency in a foreign language. The broad array of languages taught ranges from Arabic to Zulu.

The Center for Humanities and Arts hosted its 10th annual international symposium in February, which brought scholars and diplomats to campus to address "Globalization and Human Rights in Africa." The Center for International Trade and Security and the Honors Program also jointly sponsored forums on international affairs throughout the year. In November, UGA hosted informal talks between policy framers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and U.S. experts and policy advisors in an effort to further dialog between the two countries regarding North Korea's military and nuclear programs. Han Park, director of UGA's Center for Global Issues, served as moderator.

UGA's Office of International Public Service and Outreach (IPSO) facilitates international outreach efforts, along with units such as the International Center for Democratic Governance. In the spring, IPSO hosted a three-week visit by a delegation of entrepreneurs and trade association representatives from Kenya under a grant-funded project to strengthen trade between the U.S. and East Africa.

The Office of Enterprise Information Technology Services (EITS) provides resources and services in support of the University's strategic plan. To support the learning environment, EITS and the Office of Instructional Support and Development have worked together for several years to provide WebCT (Web Course Tools) to enhance the traditional classroom experience. As of spring semester 2004, more than 4,300 courses used WebCT. A significant hardware upgrade provided additional capacity for the current system and planning and testing began for implementation of the next generation of WebCT, known as WebCT Vista. EITS also worked with OISD and the University Libraries to support the opening of the Student Learning Center in fall 2003 and to offer Element K online training to students, faculty and staff via the UGA portal (<http://my.uga.edu>).

EITS worked with the Office of the Vice President for Research and the University System's Office of Information and Instructional Technology to significantly upgrade UGA's Internet connection. EITS also continued to add zones to the campus wireless network (PAWS), including green spaces on North Campus and South Campus and the Boyd Graduate Research Center. The Office of Information Security, which is part of EITS, established the Centaur Lab @ UGA-InfoSec to provide research, education and support services related to information security.

Other major EITS projects included:

- Completing the first phase of an electronic payroll system to reduce costs and increase the speed and accuracy of the payroll voucher process.
- Revamping the online application process for University Housing to allow real-time access to data on the mainframe.
- Completing a web application to collect graduation data from the deans' offices, replacing a paper scanning system.
- Working on the Board of Regents Financial Data Warehouse Project to provide financial information to the University System on a monthly basis.

Assessing Institutional Effectiveness

With the 1999-2000 self-study coming to a successful close in 2003 with official notice of completion of all required follow-up, the University is now looking ahead to the next accreditation cycle (2009-2010, with reaffirmation anticipated in 2011). The associate provost for institutional effectiveness will initiate a plan to inform and educate the University community about the new SACS Principles of Accreditation and the new accreditation process. In the interim, guidelines for five-year program planning for the schools and colleges and designated centers and institutes were developed over the past year with advice from the Strategic Planning Committee of University Council, vice presidents and deans. These will further strengthen the University's efforts to integrate planning, assessment and resource allocation. The five-year plans will be in place for use in budget development in spring 2005.

To address long-term institutional concerns, the associate provost for institutional effectiveness was asked to chair two task forces: one to coordinate institutional-level methods of assessment and one to assure data integration across campus. Final reports, with detailed recommendations and cost estimates, were completed during spring semester.

The assessment coordination project will further enhance the University's long-standing commitment to assessment, including program review of all academic programs, assessment of all undergraduate majors and general education, assessment of all graduate programs, and assessment of all support units.

Another project undertaken during the year by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness was the launching of a new web site (www.uga.edu/effectiveness), where information about strategic planning, assessments, institutional progress and other data can be found.

Continued improvements were made in the support unit review process, developed in response to a recommendation from SACS. Since the process was initiated in 2002, the following units have been reviewed: Career Center, Public Affairs, Environmental Safety, Institutional Research, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and units that report to that vice president. Now in progress are reviews of the State Botanical Garden, Controller, Government Relations, Human Resources and the Office of Instructional Support and Development.

In fall 2003, UGA received results of the National Survey of Student Engagement, administered the previous spring. The responses of randomly selected UGA freshmen and seniors were compared with those from students at more than 400 colleges and universities involved in the survey, which is conducted annually by a research center at Indiana University. UGA students responding to the survey were generally more pleased with their educational experience than their counterparts at other major research institutions and indicated they would be much more likely than their peers to attend the same school if they started college over again.

But the students also indicated they spend less time studying and preparing for class than their counterparts at comparable universities. These and other survey results were studied by a committee chaired by Ann Crowther, associate vice president for instruction. Beginning in December 2003 and continuing through April 2004, the committee held a series of "NSSE conversations" with 11 groups and more than 250 people representing all facets of the learning environment in order to identify areas needing improvement and make recommendations. UGA will administer the NSSE survey again during the 2005-06 academic year.

Improving Student Retention and Graduation

High levels of retention and graduation continue to be strengths of the University of Georgia. The University enrolls students with the academic potential to succeed and offers programs to help them make a successful transition to the college environment. The retention rate for new first-year students returning for their second year is 93 percent – an uncommonly high retention rate. The retention rate for African American students is even higher: 95 percent.

The Admissions Office offers a strong orientation program for new students and their parents during the summer, which is modified year to year to keep pace with student and parental needs and improve advising and placement. A variety of other offerings, many initiated through cooperation between the vice presidents for Instruction and Student Affairs, also help students get acclimated to UGA. These include:

- **The Freshman College Summer Experience**, which provides 275 regularly admitted first-year students with an intensive academic experience during the month of July. Participants in this residential program take six hours of coursework and are exposed to events and programs that introduce the variety of co-curricular options at UGA. Students live together in Russell Hall during the program and throughout the next academic year.
- **Opening Convocation**, a welcoming ceremony for new students that marks the official start of the academic year. The program includes presentation of the “Pillars of the Arch,” a values statement that stresses the qualities of wisdom, justice and moderation and challenges members of the University community to be guided by them.
- **Welcome Week**, sponsored by Student Affairs, that includes a variety of activities, as well as special orientation sessions for international and minority students and students with disabilities.
- **First-Year Experience programs**, also sponsored by Student Affairs, that help new students learn how to become involved on campus. Recognizing that involvement in student activities improves retention and graduation rates, Student Affairs provides various leadership programs as students progress through their academic career. Participants in the First-Year Experience interact with junior and senior class mentors.
- **Additional mentoring programs** – such as those offered by the Honors Program and by Minority Services and Programs – also pair new students with upperclassmen or faculty.

The Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO) provides special opportunities for students to connect with faculty and to become engaged in research projects. At the annual spring symposium, which showcases the work of exemplary student researchers, more than a hundred students presented oral and poster sessions or offered creative statements in the visual and performing arts. In addition to the symposium, CURO sponsors “Gateway” seminars, an apprentice program, a summer research fellowship program, the online Journal for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (JURO@GA), and an online listing of research opportunities available every semester. The purpose of these efforts is to help students take maximum advantage of being at a major public research university. Though CURO is administered by the Honors Program, programs are open to all students.

The Division of Academic Enhancement ensures that entering and continuing students have access to a wide range of services to support their academic endeavors. The division is responsible for the Freshman College Summer Experience and, among other services, offers an introductory curricula in English, mathematics, reading and study strategies, plus a series of academic success workshops and a peer tutorial program.

The six-year graduation rate for undergraduates who entered as first-year students in 1997 rose to 71.8 percent, continuing the upward trend of the past several years. The University also continues to see a rise in the number of graduate students receiving degrees. A total of 2,016 graduate degrees were awarded in 2003-04, compared to 1,849 in 2002-03, 1,770 in 2001-02 and 1,661 in 2000-01.

Overall Institutional Health

One important measure of institutional health is the quality of students applying and being admitted to the University. The fall 2003 entering class reflects the continuing scholastic excellence of entering UGA students with a 3.66 high school grade point average and an average SAT score of 1212. Seven students achieved scores of either 1600 on the SAT or 36 on the ACT, and 67 scored a perfect 800 on either the verbal or math portion of the test.

More than 600 students were joint-enrolled in a college or university while in high school, while 80 percent completed College Board Advanced Placement (AP) classes. About 900 first-year students had perfect 4.0 high school grade point averages. Of those attending schools that ranked students scholastically, more than 200 ranked first or second in their senior class and 20 percent ranked first through 10th in their class. A total of 539 new freshman students is enrolled in UGA's Honors Program, a selective program for academically advanced students. They have an SAT average of 1410 and a 4.0 high school GPA.

For the first time, total summer/fall first-year enrollment topped 5,000, the result of a 58 percent "yield" rate – the percentage of accepted freshman applicants who actually enroll. The 58 percent yield is the highest since 1980, when the class was half the size of this year's and had an SAT average 200 points lower. The 2002 yield rate was 52 percent, and University officials had expected a similar figure in fall 2003. They attribute the high yield to UGA's surging popularity among high school seniors sparked by the University's fast-rising academic reputation, its affordability and the appeal of Athens as the quintessential college town.

UGA's academic rankings continue to be high. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked UGA 20th in the nation among public universities in its annual "America's Best Colleges" guide. This is the fourth consecutive year that UGA has ranked in the top 20. The University ranked 42nd on the *U.S. News* list of "Great Schools at Great Prices," calculated by relating each school's academic quality to the net cost of attending.

Also in the annual college guide, the Terry College of Business ranked 27th on the list of best undergraduate business programs. Terry has been listed among the top 30 programs for the past five years and is consistently ranked among the top 20 undergraduate programs at public universities.

In *U.S. News*' annual ranking of America's best graduate schools, the Terry College ranked 42nd, with the MBA program maintaining its standing as a top 20 program among public business schools. Terry's accounting and management information systems programs ranked among top 20 specialty programs. The College of Education was tied for 24th overall, with five of its programs ranking among the top 10 and another three among the top 20. The college also was the most productive in the nation in turning out licensed teachers. The School of Law tied for 31st overall and ranked 11th among public law schools. The School of Social Work tied for 28th overall (up from 39th in the 2000 ranking) and was rated third in the South.

In other rankings, UGA was fourth on *Kiplinger's* list of the best 100 public colleges that "combine great academics and reasonable costs" and ninth among 345 public and private colleges on the *Princeton Review's* "Best Academic Bang for Your Buck" list.

Annual statistics compiled by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* show UGA among the top 50 institutions in the nation in several categories. The University remains one of the largest institutions, ranking 34th in enrollment, and also is 27th in the most Freshman Merit Scholars (up from 47th in the previous ranking). Other UGA listings in the latest *Chronicle Almanac* include the number of earned doctorates awarded (21st) and library holdings (31st).

Another important measure of institutional health is the ability to attract private support. UGA received a record \$77.8 million in private gifts and pledges in fiscal year 2004, an eight percent increase over the previous year's \$72.05 million. This marks the fourth consecutive year of a new record in private donations. Gift receipts came from 53,919 contributors, the largest number of donors ever to give to UGA in a single year.

Giving through the annual fund program totalled a record \$8.2 million, up 7.5 percent over the previous year. Fifteen contributors made gifts or commitments of \$1 million or more. The private gifts provided a significant boost to UGA's capital campaign, which completed its third year on June 30, 2004.

Gifts and pledges for instruction, research and outreach totalled \$55.3 million, up more than 30 percent from \$41.9 million the previous year. These donations are used to fund scholarships and fellowships for students; recruit outstanding new faculty; provide travel and research support for current faculty; and buy new classroom and lab equipment, as well as books and other materials for libraries. Gifts and pledges for athletic and seating priority purposes totalled \$22.5 million, a decrease from \$30.1 million in the previous year. Athletic gifts are used to support athletic scholarships, the athletic general endowment and other needs.

Consecutive years of state budget cuts pose serious challenges to the University's ability to maintain the reputation for academic excellence built over the past years. While increases in research grants and private gifts have helped sustain the University's forward progress, cuts in state funding are having a significant impact. As of July 1, 2004, the University is operating with \$74 million less in the base state budget than two years ago and some 700 fewer employees. While most of those positions are vacancies created by attrition and tightened hiring procedures, in April 2004 UGA was forced to lay off 47 staff members effective June 30, 2004. These included 18 positions in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and 29 positions in the division of Public Service and Outreach.

At the same time that staffing has been reduced, the University is serving 4,185 more students and has generated 9.6 percent more credit hours than four years ago. Increased workloads for faculty and staff take a toll on productivity and morale when extended over a period of years. The University's message to external constituencies is that more financial support is needed to maintain quality.

The operation of the University Bookstore was privatized this year to produce some additional revenue, and cost-cutting measures have been put in place across the campus. Departments have cut back on travel, limited purchases of equipment and materials and, in some cases, limited or scaled back specific programs. There is little left to trim without damage to the institution's ability to serve our students well and maintain a high level of excellence in our core missions of teaching, research and public service and outreach.