

# State of the University Address 2007

## The Chapel · January 11, 2007

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### The Land Grant Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Good afternoon, and thank you, Professor Mattern, for that introduction and for your leadership on the Council.

By Council statute, the President of the University of Georgia is required to report to the faculty annually on the state of the university. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> time that I have had the privilege of making this report and to share with the faculty, staff and students some thoughts about the condition and direction of the university.

I hope you agree that 10 years is a significant milestone. As of July, only seven other people will have served the university in this role longer than I.

This grand Chapel has traditionally been the site of the State of the University address, and that is fitting, as it is near the spot where Josiah Meigs likely taught the first class and where, four years later, the first graduates of the University received their diplomas. Just a few months ago, on October 13, we celebrated the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Old College, an adjacent facility and the oldest building in Athens.

Old College has been returned to its original role as home of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. For more than two centuries now, this faculty has been committed to providing a strong liberal arts curriculum as the core of the UGA education, and I stand with them in that commitment. In the November meeting of the University Council, a new general education curriculum was recommended and I was pleased to sign it. That curriculum reiterates the university's commitment to a broad-based liberal arts education as the foundation of what it means to be a student at the University of Georgia.

Now more than two centuries since its opening, the state of the University is strong and vibrant as she moves to become a leader in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As is my tradition, I will begin with a brief review of the many accomplishments of the university since we last met. This was an extraordinarily good year for Georgia's flagship, with another exceptional freshman class enrolled, increased demand for admission, a number of national scholarships won, numerous faculty achievements, a robust program of outreach and engagement and the opening of two remarkable research facilities.

Among the highlights:

For the eighth consecutive year, the University of Georgia was ranked among America's best public universities by *U. S. News & World Report*, coming in this year at 22<sup>nd</sup>. In November, UGA was one of a handful of selective public universities featured in a *Wall Street Journal* story entitled "Beyond Berkeley." The story detailed the rising quality of the student body, and the attendant pressure for admission, here and at the University of Florida, Chapel Hill and the University of Wisconsin, among others. We must always take such rankings for what they are, but the fact that UGA is consistently placed in a very strong peer group is something of which we can all be proud.

The freshman class which enrolled this fall was another highly prepared class, with an SAT average of 1228 and a GPA of 3.76, the highest ever. The class is also the most diverse in UGA's history, with 20 percent of the 5,020 freshmen coming from underrepresented populations. Our progress in this area has been noted by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* and the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*.

There can be no doubt that the hard work of Nancy McDuff and her staff in admissions as well as the efforts of our provost, deans, vice presidents, faculty, students and alumni are paying off as we strive to make the UGA student body representative of the college-bound population of this state.

UGA students continued to do very well in national scholarship competitions, an indication that the very talented students who come to this campus are working with a faculty that is challenging them to reach their full potential. There were four Goldwater Scholars – the maximum awarded to any one school – for excellence in science, mathematics and engineering; eight Fulbright scholars, a record number for UGA; a Marshall Scholar; one Hoover Foundation Scientific Scholar, the first at UGA; a Jack Kent Cooke Scholar; and a Merage American Dream Fellow.

Almost three out of 10 UGA undergraduate students participate in study abroad. That number is well above the 11 percent of UGA students with a study abroad experience in 2000, surpasses the goal of 25 percent by 2010 in the strategic plan and puts UGA ninth in the country. In fact, UGA study abroad now

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reaches the ends of the Earth – literally. Eighteen UGA students returned this week from a trip to Antarctica, where they surveyed penguin populations, researched global warming and examined Arctic ice plugs for clues to climate history.

Three UGA faculty members were elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

For the first time, we raised more than \$100 million in a fiscal year as the alumni, friends and supporters of this institution gave or pledged \$108.3 million to further our goals. You have heard it before, but it bears repeating: Truly great public universities have a deep reserve of private funds which supplements the support they receive from the state. Those private resources, in the form of an endowment, allow those institutions to reach heights that are simply not possible with state funding and tuition alone.

UGA athletes and coaches continued to perform very well. The athletic department was ninth in the Directors Cup ranking of overall athletic programs. The gymnastics team won its second consecutive, and seventh overall, national title. Swimming Coach Jack Bauerle was named head coach for the U.S. women's swim team for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. The women's basketball team advanced to the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA tournament. The baseball team played in the College World Series. The football team finished the season 9-4 with a thrilling, come-from-behind victory over Virginia Tech in the Chick-fil-A Bowl in Atlanta.

We opened two magnificent new research facilities as part of an increasing focus on biomedical and health research. In April, former President George H. W. Bush delivered the keynote address as we dedicated the Paul D. Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences, across Brooks Drive from the College of Veterinary Medicine. Partially funded by the United States Congress as a memorial to Georgia's late senator, the Coverdell Center was designed to foster collaboration among researchers across the spectrum of biomedical and health science fields. The public health issues facing Georgians, which I will detail later, will not be solved in isolation and must be addressed in a comprehensive and strategic manner. The Coverdell Center is one of the places where UGA is taking that approach.

Related to that effort, and one of the new academic developments of which I am most proud, is the creation of the College of Public Health in 2005. I

want to offer my congratulations to Dr. Phil Williams on his appointment as the first dean of that college. He and his colleagues have three major responsibilities:

1) To serve the people of Georgia by creating avenues through which the entirety of the state's health will be improved.

2) To become fully accredited in the minimum five-year period while developing another significant source of research funding for the university.

3) To serve as an anchor in the development of a broadened health research focus and to be a growing segment of a proposed health science campus on the Navy School site.

Similarly, the Animal Health Research Center in the College of Veterinary Medicine is a facility dedicated to investigating the causes of, and developing treatments for, many of the animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans, such as avian flu, West Nile virus and others. The AHRC is a critical link in this nation's bioterror defense effort.

These two facilities add to UGA's strengths and are key components of the state's application to be the site of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility. NBAF will be the premier location for the nation's defense against a bioterror attack or attacks on our agricultural economy and the food chain. We believe that based on the merits of the application, Georgia stands a very good chance of hosting NBAF. We have also been deeply involved in discussions at the state level that have the Orkin tract on the list of three finalists for a flu vaccine facility, which would be a tremendous economic boon for the region and an anchor for the biotechnology corridor along Highway 316. Georgia must become a player in the knowledge economy if the state is to enjoy economic success through this century.

Not only has this been a good year for the University of Georgia, but it has been a good decade as well. I hope you will indulge me for spending a few minutes reminiscing about our 10 years together. The quality of the student body has increased dramatically, in part because of the HOPE Scholarship but also because the University of Georgia has become a very attractive choice for Georgia's best students as well as a number of very good students from across the nation. In 1997, there were 11,513 applications for admission to UGA; in 2006, there were almost 16,000, while the size of the enrolled class grew from

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4,257 to 5,020. Over the same period, the GPA of the entering classes has risen from 3.52 to 3.74 and the SAT average has climbed 59 points. The academic preparation of the mean UGA student has risen considerably and has resulted in an enhanced learning environment here.

If we had taken only the top 4,000 enrolled applicants last fall, the profile would have been an average SAT score of 1265 and an average GPA of 3.87.

This is a more diverse campus than it was a decade ago. In 1996, 15 percent of the student body came from underrepresented populations; this year, that number is 23 percent, or almost a quarter of the student body. In 1996, there were 1,650 international students enrolled at UGA; this year, there are 2,111. A decade ago, 629 UGA students participated in a residential study abroad program; last year, more than 1,900 students did so. In many ways, UGA's students are being prepared for the world more fully than ever before.

This administration is committed to equality and opportunity for all people without regard to gender or ethnicity. We still have some way to go but we have made great progress in recent years, and will continue to strive for fair treatment within the university community.

Today, the senior administrative team – senior vice presidents, vice presidents, associate provosts and deans – is a highly qualified, richly diverse group of national caliber. This university has an elite group of people managing the complex functions of teaching young people, conducting research, serving the people of this state and maintaining this campus.

The diversity found in the senior leadership here enhances the campus in many ways. I believe that the education of our students is enriched by having people from a wide variety of backgrounds in leadership positions; that we serve the state better when we more fully reflect the people of this state; and that UGA's impact on the future will be more significant because our students, faculty and staff appreciate and respect the differences among people instead of seeking the familiar.

Put the quality and diversity of our leadership team with the quality and diversity of our faculty and it is clear that we are making the type of progress necessary to continue to transform this institution from one that is very good to one that is great. There

is yet more to do, and broader representation to achieve on campus, but we have made great progress. Join me in celebrating the progress we have made, and work with me to carry this momentum forward as we continue to attract and cultivate quality in the people who are here to serve our students and our state.

The Graduate School under the leadership of Dean Maureen Grasso has responded to Georgia's need for a more highly educated workforce by expanding enrollment and adding programs. In 1998, total graduate enrollment was 5,329 students; in 2006, the enrollment is 6,875, an increase of 25 percent. More and more, the University of Georgia is serving this state by producing graduates with advanced degrees who are qualified for the very best jobs in the knowledge economy.

Our focus for the coming 10 years should not change dramatically from that of the past 10 years – a focus on quality over quantity. There may be, and should be, however, some changes in the “product mix” of programs available to students at the University of Georgia.

It is important for the state's flagship university to know whether it is meeting the needs of the state at all levels and in all programs. I will listen carefully to the findings of the recently appointed task force on enrollment management and its recommendations for an appropriate level of undergraduate and graduate programs and students here. The current strategic plan calls for an evolution of the enrollment mix toward a higher concentration of graduate students that would be consistent with the nation's finest public research universities.

The enhanced student and faculty quality on this campus may well be our greatest collective legacy. The significant rise in student quality has been paralleled by an enhancement of the quality of the faculty. In 1997, there were four Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholars at UGA; today there are 15. The Eminent Scholar program is a joint effort between the state of Georgia and its colleges and universities to recruit world-class scholars in areas of science with great economic development potential. The funding for the Eminent Scholars and their research staffs comes from the state and private donors. It is this kind of public-private partnership that helps Georgia address critical issues more effectively.

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Organizationally, we have established more new colleges and schools than in any short period since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when from 1903 to 1915, the university added six academic units: pharmacy (1903), forestry (1906), education (1908), the graduate school (1910), business (1912) and journalism (1915). Building on the existing strengths of the faculty and responding to the needs of this state and, indeed, the world, University Council approved the creation of the College of Environment and Design and the School of Public and International Affairs in 2001, and the College of Public Health in 2005.

The role of the administration is to put the best student in front of the best faculty in the best possible learning environment, and then get out of the way. This is a much better learning environment than it was 15 years ago, and the impact on the academic community is clear.

The physical plant has changed dramatically, starting with the Student Learning Center. Herty Field, a parking lot 10 years ago, is now an inviting greenspace where students, faculty and staff gather on every pleasant day throughout the years. The renovations of the Administration Building, Old College, Moore College, Phi Kappa Hall, Demosthenian, Gilbert, Candler and others have spoken to the importance of these grand historic structures where the history of this place is tangible. The first new residence hall in three decades, East Campus Village, opened, with the companion East Village Commons dining hall nearby. This residential core is anchored by the renovated Reed, Myers and others. The J. W. Fanning Building stands as a tribute to the first vice president for public service and outreach and is a beautiful addition to the South Campus landscape.

UGA's work today is a continuation of the land grant tradition, which began on July 2, 1862 when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act and put into law a most American concept – public higher education for the middle and working classes. The land grant legislation spoke to a precept imbedded in the Declaration of Independence, the idea that opportunity was the birthright of every American, and linked it to an acknowledgment that education was the key to seizing opportunity and pursuing happiness.

Clearly, America in the mid-19th century, in the throes of the Civil War, was a place with far to go to

achieve the ideal of equal opportunity for all her people. Even today, this country has not fully achieved that goal. But we have made great progress, and the full potential of the Morrill Act is more nearly within our grasp today than it has ever been before.

As is the case with most grand ideas, the concept of the land grant system was born in the mind of a single individual with the desire and the will and the drive and the tenacity to see it come to fruition. Justin Smith Morrill, a Member of Congress from Vermont, nurtured a dream of a public higher education system that would serve the middle and working classes, who were largely denied access to a college education. Private colleges and universities catered to the wealthy; public colleges and universities were too small to offer advanced education to the broad sweep of America.

Morrill was an example of that very struggle. His family could not afford to send him to college, and he left school at age 15. But he continued to educate himself, reading in architecture, business, horticulture and politics.

“The land-grant colleges were founded on the ideal that a higher and broader education should be placed in every state within the reach of those whose destiny assigned them to, or may have the courage to choose, industrial vocations where the wealth of nations is produced,” Morrill said in 1887. “The design was to open the door to a liberal education for this large class.”

Morrill first proposed the legislation in 1857; it was passed by the House and the Senate but was vetoed by President James Buchanan on the grounds that it violated the states' right to control public education. Morrill introduced the bill again, with some modifications, including a requirement for military training, in 1861.

His colleagues knew they were in the company of a great man with a great idea. Senator Redfield Proctor, also of Vermont, said, “At a time in which the nation was engaged in a death struggle which many thought it could not survive . . . he calmly and peacefully looked forward to and prepared to lay the foundation for the practical betterment of the people in peaceful pursuits.”

The University of Georgia has had its own share of giants whose ideas and drive changed not only this institution, but the course of history itself. Abraham Baldwin wrote the charter which created America's

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first state university, and served as the first president of UGA. Josiah Meigs was president when the first class was held here on North Campus and when the first graduates received their degrees. Walter Hill, at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, set UGA on a course to becoming the modern university we know today. J.W. Fanning more fully personified the land-grant mission envisioned by Justin Morrill than anybody else. Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes, two very brave young people, stood up against a society that told them they could not walk on this campus and strode through The Arch and into the registrar's office, quietly demanding their portion of Morrill's promise. Fred Davison saw that one of the most important areas of study for a public university was biomedicine and public health, and laid the foundation for the successes we enjoy in those areas today. Many of the academic accomplishments of the past decade were begun by my immediate predecessor, Charles Knapp. I have had the privilege of building further academic success on these shoulders.

Our call today is to build on the foresight of those heroes of UGA's history and to make sure that the land-grant mission is not only relevant to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but a powerful force for good. True public service keeps pace with – no, anticipates – society's needs. That must be our goal – to be ahead of what the people of this state and, increasingly, the nation and the world, need from us. They cannot be asked to wait, nor wait to be asked.

I have just completed a term as chair of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, and my fellow presidents and I are convinced that the land-grant institution must transform itself for true service to the public in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This transformation of the land grant as we know it must be as dramatic as the concept itself was in the mid-19th century. Justin Morrill changed American higher education in a profound way; we must now advance his legacy in equally profound ways. To do so requires new ways of thinking about the challenges facing our world, and a commitment to collaboration across a wide variety of disciplines, departments and directions.

I want to spend the next few minutes exploring what UGA is already doing to anticipate Georgia's needs and the challenges of serving the public in a world that seems to change quite rapidly. I will close by focusing on the public service we provide by

educating the best young people that Georgia can produce.

Georgia today faces a range of challenges, some of which border on crisis. The health of Georgians is one challenge which the University of Georgia is addressing, and addressing aggressively. The following statistics indicate not only the desirability but the clear necessity for a statewide public focus on health research and education. According to the United Health Foundation, Georgia ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> overall in the health of her citizens based on a rubric of health statistics as education, public health spending and poverty.

I'd like to share some of those findings with you. Georgia is:

- 36<sup>th</sup> in obesity
- 49<sup>th</sup> in high school graduation rate
- 47<sup>th</sup> in infectious disease rates
- 39<sup>th</sup> in children in poverty
- 28<sup>th</sup> in per capita public health spending
- 41<sup>st</sup> in cardiovascular deaths
- 25<sup>th</sup> in cancer deaths
- 41<sup>st</sup> in total mortality

A recent Harvard University study of American life expectancies placed Georgia 41<sup>st</sup>, at 75.3 years.

My friends, this is a challenge, a challenge to which the state's flagship, as it is charged to do, must respond and respond effectively and efficiently.

We have focused our research efforts, and our laboratory construction, on biomedical and health issues. In the Complex Carbohydrate Research Center, UGA scientists are studying how carbohydrates are broken down by individual cells – a process which has direct implications for the study of the mechanisms of cancer cells. In the Paul D. Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences, researchers across a range of disciplines are working collaboratively on tropical and emerging diseases, public policy issues, developmental biology and bioimaging to address critical public health issues. In the Animal Health Research Center, the only biosafety level 3 agricultural lab on an American university campus, researchers are on the front lines of responding to outbreaks of animal-borne diseases

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that can also infect humans, and are working to prevent and cure such outbreaks. In the Center for Applied Genetic Technologies, the Georgia Biobusiness Center is converting viable research findings into commercial products; a treatment for hepatitis B developed there has been approved for use in Korea and is awaiting U.S. approval, and three other drugs are in clinical trials.

Finally, and most importantly, our proposal for the Navy School property signals that our commitment to the health of Georgia's citizens is more than just rhetoric. While our colleagues at Emory are doing very good work in the area of public health – particularly international public health – it is incumbent upon the public flagship institution to mount a response to the challenges I have outlined. Teaming up with the clinical staff at the Medical College of Georgia, the academic programs of Athens Technical College and the two local hospitals will provide here in Athens a public health campus that promises to have a significant positive impact on the quality of life in our state. I believe that 50 years hence, the creation of a UGA Health Sciences Center will be seen as one of this state's most important public policy moves of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This is exactly what Justin Morrill had in mind: A university that would both educate and train young people for citizenship and productive lives while also applying its intellectual prowess to the issues and challenges of the day. His scope, however, given the time in which he lived, was smaller than ours must be today. He saw the land grants as having an impact on their home states, and while that still must be true today, the reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that we must have an impact on the world.

UGA's strategic plan recognizes this calling with its focus on "Competing in a Global Economy." A University of Georgia student must be prepared to take advantage of all the opportunities the world offers. We must also be producing graduates who will make a difference in the complex world of international relations. The creation of the School of Public and International Affairs, as was the case with the College of Public Health, built on existing strengths while declaring that UGA is committed to a mission that is global, not parochial. Consistently ranked among the top three public affairs schools in the country, SPIA is training young people for work in public policy, public administration and international affairs. Five years after 9/11, it is critically important that the next generation of world leaders be educated

in a way that solves problems and avoids conflict whenever possible. We are doing that work here.

While the university of 1997 was an institution of both quality and complexity, it lacked such targeted academic units as the School of Public and International Affairs, the College of Public Health, the College of Environment and Design and the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute. The university also needed an enhanced focus on study abroad and an engineering curriculum tailored to the state's need for more general engineers. These voids in our service to Georgia were preventing the university from reaching the full research potential of most flagships. These additions, coupled with our plans for the Navy School property and supported with both public and private funds, position the University of Georgia for even greater service as a land grant through the remainder of this century.

I want to thank the Governor for the inclusion in his budget of \$3.8 million for the expansion of medical education in Athens in a collaborative venture between the Medical College of Georgia and the University of Georgia. This venture, on which a small team of staff members, including the presidents of both institutions, has been working for more than a year is designed to place 40 medical students in Athens by the summer of 2009.

It is important, both for accreditation and collaboration, that this effort be done in concert with the staff and expertise of the Medical College of Georgia.

I believe that this is one more initiative, coupled with our already established College of Public Health and our announced intention of expanding medical research, that would ultimately make the acquisition of the Navy School property a terrific boon for the state of Georgia, the city of Athens and the University of Georgia. The economic development potential of a full health science and health research campus in Athens has almost unlimited reach.

We have made great progress in generating private support for the much-needed expansion of the Georgia Museum of Art, which is not only an important component of the academic program at UGA but also serves as the state's official museum of art. The existing facility allows for the display of only a small portion of the total collection, and we will serve both the university and the state better with a larger museum. There have been several significant gifts recently, among them a \$2 million pledge from

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Jane Willson for the sculpture garden; \$1 million from C.L. Morehead, adding to his generous support for the museum; Kathy Prescott and her brother, Louis Griffith Jr., have pledged \$1 million; and Smitty Griffith, whose \$1 million pledge in 1999 jump started the fundraising for Phase II, has pledged an additional \$1 million. Our goal is \$15 million, and when we meet that goal, a major foundation has pledged an additional \$5 million.

The arts and music have an important public service role in expanding minds through cultural exposure. UGA's long tradition of producing talented musicians lives on in the Hugh Hodgson School of Music, whose namesake understood decades ago that music was a bridge across the divides that separate people. Likewise, the Lamar Dodd School of Art, whose new home is now under construction on East Campus, memorializes a man who used his artistic talent to speak to people across divides. The power of the arts to educate, to broaden, to communicate and to foster understanding among people and peoples must be a part of our mission to serve.

Applying research findings to society's needs is an important part of our historical and 21<sup>st</sup> century mission. It is also important that a land-grant institution cultivate civic responsibility through its outreach. The Latino Initiative, created in 2001 under the direction of Dr. Dunning in Public Service and Outreach, is helping the state with the rapid influx of Latino immigrants and helping those immigrants address their needs in their new home. The state's Latino population increased 300 percent from 1990-2000, and continues to grow as Georgia's economy grows. From 1993-2003, the Hispanic population of Georgia's schools grew 390 percent, the fourth-largest increase in the nation. The Latino Initiative has developed programs on nutrition, leadership, youth development and economic development for these "new Georgians."

We are also involved heavily in both statewide and local efforts to reduce the cycle of poverty, and especially to mitigate its impact on Georgia's children. I am proud that UGA is one of the driving forces behind Partners for a Prosperous Athens. We are committed to providing whatever assistance we can to address this serious local problem. The Initiative on Poverty and the Economy, another Public Service and Outreach effort, grew out of a 2003 study on poverty in 11 rural states, including Georgia. The findings were startling: More than 11 and a half million people in those states live in poverty – defined in 2004 as

\$19,157 for a family of four. The child poverty rate is 19 percent, meaning that almost one in five children lives in poverty.

These challenges – the health of Georgians, the changing demographics of this state, the need for global understanding – are obstacles in the path toward obtaining the full benefits of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have reconfigured this university to apply the talents of the faculty to the needs of the state, as we were called to do by Justin Morrill.

Perhaps the greatest service the University of Georgia extends to the state is that of educating the best and brightest young people who graduate from Georgia's high schools each year. Nils Hasselmo, the former president of the University of Minnesota and the recently retired president of the Association of American Universities, delivered the McBee Lecture in the Chapel in October. He recalled that in his inaugural address at Minnesota, he said that "even at the risk of being called 'high-falutin'" (the equivalent of the damning "elitist" charge in Georgia), he believed that "the public . . . really wants excellence." I believe that the people of Georgia also want excellence. Georgians want a top-flight flagship university, one that stands alongside the University of Michigan, the University of North Carolina, the University of Virginia and the University of Texas.

As the flagship of the University System of Georgia, this institution has a statewide impact unlike any other unit in the system. In naval history, the flagship carried the admiral's flag and was the ship by which the fleet was most readily identified. The term has come to mean the largest and most recognizable entity within a group and is often used to identify a state's largest and most comprehensive public university.

As such, we must be setting a standard of excellence that enhances the quality of the entire system. UGA must be about excellence in admissions, in instruction, in faculty and staff, in facilities, in athletics, in student government, in fundraising, in research, in public service and outreach, in alumni relations and in much, much more.

Setting excellence as the standard will result in some difficult choices, for unlike Lake Wobegon, all the children cannot be above average. It is UGA's mission, its charge, its obligation, to bring the best students here and provide them with the opportunity to learn. In doing so, we serve this state by producing young people who are equipped for success in the

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complex world they will enter when they leave this campus; who have a heart for serving their communities, this state and the world; who have the skills to continue to learn throughout their lives; and who are prepared for the opportunities that will come to them.

I have outlived the half-life of the modern university president. Every UGA president, by state law, is employed on an annual contract. I have been honored by the Chancellor and the Regents, who have afforded me that opportunity now 10 times.

People have asked me, "How much longer?" The only truthful answer is, "I don't know." But I have always been moved on major decisions more by what I want to accomplish than by setting an artificial timeline. The fact is, there are several major projects that I want to get done here:

- I want to see UGA move a few more spots up the academic quality ranks, with a little more help from the state.
- I want to see a further broadening of the engineering curriculum, with all that could mean to the total research program and to the education of young people who are needed for a variety of industries in Georgia.
- I want to see the further maturation of SPIA and Public Health, and an expansion in the areas of ecology and landscape architecture.
- I want to see the anchors in place for the UGA Health Sciences Center on the Navy School campus.

As most of you know, the General Assembly convened this week, and I have already spent the better part of two days in Atlanta. I want the University community to know where we will be focusing our efforts this year with the Executive and Legislative branches.

The first priority is salaries. We have slipped some, relative to our peers, in the past few years, and we need to regain that ground. Competitive salaries are essential to our efforts to recruit and retain the very best faculty and staff, which is, in turn, essential to our ability to serve the people of this state.

Second, our top capital priority is the acquisition of funding for an expansion of the Pharmacy building. This state's citizens are seriously underserved in this area, and it is incumbent upon the flagship university to produce enough pharmacists to serve the people of Georgia. Recent federal action and the general aging of the population mean that the demand for pharmaceutical services will only increase.

Third, we need a significant increase in MRR funding. On this campus are more than half of the state's oldest buildings. As generous as UGA's private supporters have been in recent years, few of them have given us money to repair a roof, rebuild a cooling tower, or renovate a classroom or laboratory. These are clearly state responsibilities for which we need fuller support as we strive to be good stewards of the resources we have been given.

Finally, this is far from a one-man band. I have been privileged to work with 16 vice presidents, three provosts and 33 deans. Each one of them added significantly to these accomplishments. I have awarded more than 69,000 diplomas to some 30 percent of the living alumni, and have had roughly 4,500 faculty members as colleagues.

I still enjoy getting up in the morning, most days, and coming to work. I am energized by the challenges we face; I learn from the legitimate criticism; I still like the opportunity to work with college students. Your collective support has meant very much to me.

The accomplishments I have talked about today are team accomplishments. Every person on this campus and throughout the extended UGA community has played a role in these successes, and every one of us has a role to play as we move onward.

The question we must ask ourselves every day is this: Are we serving Georgia and her people better? I believe that we are. The university is now configured to apply its greatest strengths to Georgia's most pressing problems. The echoes of Justin Morrill's conviction ring across this campus and reverberate throughout the state. We are not only heirs of his passion, but stewards of his vision. Thank you for embracing this vision with me and for your commitment to serving the people of the great state of Georgia. Thank you for letting me be a part of these successes.

Thank you.