

January 22, 2007

Happy New Year to all! The intercollegiate debate program at the University of Georgia has had an outstanding fall semester and I wish to inform you of its accomplishments. I know that you, our alumni and friends, will share the pride I feel as the program continues to produce highly competitive debaters who perform with distinction in both tournament competitions and in the classroom.

- **UGA is currently the #2 varsity debate program in the nation.**

A strong squad from top to bottom has earned the #2 spot in the NDT rankings system for varsity programs. This ranking is the result of multiple elimination round appearances at both regional and national tournaments. At Georgia State, Kentucky, Vanderbilt, James Madison, Harvard, Appalachian State and Wake Forest students in every class won rounds for the Bulldogs.

- **Brent Culpepper and Kevin Rabinowitz are currently ranked as the #1 policy debate team in the nation.**

According to the individual team rankings found at [debateresults.com](http://debateresults.com), Brent Culpepper and Kevin Rabinowitz are currently rated the #1 individual debate team in the country. Their fall performances include: 1<sup>st</sup> place at the National Season Opener in Atlanta (145 teams), 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Henry Clay Debates (160 teams), Top Seed and Quarterfinals at Harvard and 2<sup>nd</sup> place at Wake Forest University (165 teams). Both Brent and Kevin are in their final year at UGA. During their undergraduate careers, each was awarded a Richard Russell Advocacy Scholarship by the Russell Foundation. Their success testifies to the empowering impact and value of such scholarships.

- **The squad continues to provide community service through its debate program with inmates at Lee Arrendale Prison and Washington State Prison.**

Three years ago our program initiated an outreach program to teach debate in Georgia prisons. We have an active program at the male correctional facility in Davisboro (Washington Prison) and an emerging program at the female facility in Alto (Lee Arrendale). Our students provide the prisoners with evidence, deliver lectures, and judge their debates. Eric Jenkins, a Speech Communication Ph.D. student, has been leading this effort, and every participant has thoroughly enjoyed the experience. UGA debaters are learning that the ability to debate is something that is treasured by our prison debaters. Recently, the inmates at Washington challenged Brent and Kevin to a debate at the end of the season!

- **The Bulldogs bid to host the Irish National Team in April.**

In the fall we submitted a bid to host the Irish National Team in the spring of 2007 when the Irish come to the United States to visit seven colleges. The host committee is in the process of finalizing their schedule. We'll post more details on the Georgia Debate Union webpage (<http://www.uga.edu/~spc/debate>). You are all invited to

attend the spirited debate with the Irish. By the way, I encourage you to take a look at this web page, for in addition to current tournament information, there is a fair amount of history. We have also set up an alumni contact area where people can post brief bios and stay in touch via e-mail.

- **We are working to ensure the future of intercollegiate debate at the University of Georgia.**

In the fall of 2007, I'll begin my 20<sup>th</sup> year as the program director at the University of Georgia. My priority for the next few years is to work toward providing a stable long-term base of financial support for intercollegiate debate at UGA. As a student of debate history, I would like to help UGA avoid the recurrent problem that often plagues debate teams at public institutions of higher learning: an unstable transition when a program director moves on. Our own history reflects a few periods in which Georgia Debate was unable to field competitive teams at the regional or national level. I'll be working with my colleagues in Speech Communication and the UGA administration to ensure the viability and vitality of intercollegiate debate.

Needless to say, **the support of alumni is essential in any strategy to have debate prosper in the University of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.** I welcome any suggestions you might have regarding the future of our program. I also welcome and appreciate your financial commitment. As you know, it costs money to train debaters and take the team on the road. In addition to current scholarship funds, we recently established a **Georgia Debate Union Fund**. Your gift to this fund will not only cheer our team as they strive to finish this season but also live on as a measure of your own legacy to debating at UGA.

Built on a foundation of excellence, we have a program with a national presence. We want to provide the next generation of Georgia debaters with the chance to match and carry on the tradition of competitive success of previous generations of Bulldogs. With your loyalty, I am confident that debate will continue to enrich the lives of students and continue to bring glory to the University and to Georgia.

Very truly yours,

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P.S. For questions about making pledges, corporate matches or other major gifts, please contact Suzi Wong in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at [swong@franklin.uga.edu](mailto:swong@franklin.uga.edu), or (706) 542-9867.