Summer is coming to an end and my reading has transitioned back from fun to serious. I just ordered a book entitled *Higher Education Accreditation: How It’s Changing, Why It Must* (Paul L. Gason, 2013). Sounds like a real page-turner for a Provost. I will keep you posted. I have recently returned from the SACSCOC Summer Institute (along with Terry Betkowski and Ed Whitelock) where we learned more about the work ahead of us for reaffirmation of our accreditation. We will keep you posted on that also.

Before that, I attended my last session of the ACE (American Council on Education) new Chief Academic Officer Institution. This was a year-long professional development program for new provosts/VPAA’s. It was an important part of my professional growth this past year and I developed another network of resources and contacts across the country to call upon when I am stumped for solutions.

The summer has been busy with staffing classes and other key positions in Academic Affairs. If your dean and/or department head looks weary, please know that staffing has been a busy job this summer. Since our last newsletter, we have hired a Department Head for Mathematics & Physical Science, Dr. Nolan McMurray. Dr. McMurray has extensive experience as a faculty member at institutions such as UNC Wilmington and most recently served as department chair at Benedict College in South Carolina. We have also hired a new coordinator for our HSIA (Health Services & Informatics Administration) baccalaureate degree program, Mr. Melvin Seale. Mr. Seale comes with a wealth of experience in the medical field but also has experience teaching and assisting with program accreditation in the HSIA field at the college level. Please help us welcome these folks to our Academic Leadership Team in addition to Ms. Sonya Gaither, our new Director of the Hightower Library, and many other new faculty who will be introduced at our opening meetings in August.

At our retreat in June, the Academic Affairs leadership team identified several key areas of focus for the upcoming academic year. We did not attempt to prioritize since we agreed they were all urgent. Some of the general themes in our list included such things as accreditation and assessment work, faculty related issues and student related issues, retention and graduation work, external site development as well as the development of an Academic Master Plan. It is my plan to refine our list and share it in more detail with faculty at an opening faculty meeting. There is exciting work ahead of us but I would not be truthful if I did not admit it is a bit intimidating to look at the list. We have good people, though, to share in the work and I am grateful for that knowledge. Together, we are making a difference.

As the summer days wind down and we brace ourselves for the rush of the fall semester, please know that I look forward to seeing the campus full again with students and faculty. My wish is that you return to us safely and refreshed with new ideas and energy.
## Schedule for the Week of Return

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, August 5, 2014</td>
<td>New Faculty Orientation</td>
<td>NAHS 123</td>
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<td>Wednesday, August 6, 2014</td>
<td>Joint Faculty and Staff Meeting</td>
<td>Fine Arts Auditorium</td>
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<td>Wednesday, August 6, 2014</td>
<td>Full Faculty Meeting</td>
<td>Russell Hall Room 211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, August 7, 2014</td>
<td>School Meetings and Department Meetings</td>
<td>Varies by School and Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, August 7, 2014</td>
<td>Adjuncts Evening</td>
<td>NAHS 123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, August 8, 2014</td>
<td>New Student Orientation</td>
<td>Campus Wide</td>
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**Gordon State College Summer Institute**

*Dr. Margaret H. Venable*

Thirteen students participated in the “Gordon State College Summer Institute (GSCSI)”, a pilot program created to offer limited admission to students who did not initially meet Gordon’s admission requirements. More than 200 student records were screened by faculty and staff to determine the “ability to benefit” from attending a pilot such as this. Students were required to take and pass with a “C” or better Pre-College Composition and GFYE. Both courses were taught by Professor Michele Perry-Stewart. All thirteen students who began the program accomplished this goal and are enrolled as full-time students at Gordon State for Fall 2014. To celebrate their success, twelve of the thirteen students were accompanied by Professor Perry-Stewart and Mr. Fredrick Bailey to the new Center for Civil and Human Rights that opened this summer in Atlanta.
SSC Nominated for Chancellor’s Award

Members of the department of Academic Affairs nominated “Peter Higgins and his Student Success Center Team” for the USG Chancellor’s Annual Outstanding Team Service Excellence Award. This award recognizes teams who have demonstrated outstanding service to students, colleagues and members of the USG family. Over the past year, Peter and his Team’s actions were RESPECTFUL, ACCESSIBLE, INFORMED, SUPPORTIVE AND RESPONSIVE, all attributes of service excellence.

Task Force for General Education Assessment

Dr. Margaret Venable

As part of the College’s work in revising our academic assessment processes, a Task Force for General Education Assessment has been formed. This Task Force for General Education Assessment will work with the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee in achieving our academic assessment and review processes. As we prepare for reaffirmation, assessment of our general education outcomes is going to be both critical and time-consuming. Our thanks to the following members for their willingness to serve on the Gen Ed Assessment Task Force: Allen Fuller, Erica Johnson, Masoud Nourizadeh, Barry Kicklighter, Theresa Stanley, and Anna Higgins, chair.

I would especially like to thank Dr. Anna Higgins for agreeing to chair this important group.

Our first task force meeting will be held Friday, August 8, 9:30-11:30 am, in Russell 325 (Conference Room). At this meeting, Dr. Venable will charge all members with their respective duties and thereafter turn the meeting over to Dr. Higgins. It is an open meeting.

Reporting Grades for High School Dual-Credit Students

Dr. Richard Baskin

In a conversation with a colleague at Clayton State University, I learned of an approach to study abroad that may interest our faculty. Dr. Kevin Demmitt, Interim Provost, will be on campus Friday, August 29 to talk about what he and some others at CSU are doing: spring semester classes in which students do nearly all the work before spring break, then travel during the break. He mentioned his psychology class and a literature class that were involved in a trip to Italy, and they have had strong numbers. Anyone interested is welcome to the conversation. We will meet in the Collaborative Learning Room, NAHS 123 at 1:00 pm.

Last spring Dr. Butts suggested that the college come up with a way to report the grades of Accel students to the high schools, rather than individual faculty members having to send grades to the various schools. Laura Shadrick, Academic Affairs Coordinator, was able to make that happen. As of last December, she now reports grades every semester to each high school, within a few days after grades are posted . . . . If a high school counselor contacts you and asks for a numerical grade for a student, it is likely because the student has the chance of being valedictorian or salutatorian at the high school. If you have or can arrive at a numerical grade, we encourage you to support the student by forwarding the grade to the counselor.
Honors Program news: In April, I wrote to you about desired changes in the Honors Program—program expansion, greater faculty involvement, additional material support, and a more formal selection process for director. To facilitate program development, administrative oversight of the Honors Program is being handed over to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Professors Janssen, Knighton, Venable and I agreed that this change would help support that development. The Honors Program has continued to grow in strength and effectiveness under our two directors, and now we want to take it to the next level. We would like to involve the Director of the program more closely in academic planning and conversations at the school and departmental levels. Doing so should facilitate greater visibility and more faculty involvement.

The Schools of Education and Nursing and Health Sciences will continue to be represented on the Council and have the opportunity for students to participate in the program as their academic programs allow. Of course, the Honors Program will continue to have the full support of Academic Affairs. We appreciate Dr. Knighton’s willingness to serve our students in this capacity and Dr. Janssen’s continuing leadership of the program this year as changes are put in place.

Gordon State College has been awarded one of the University System of Georgia’s African-American Male Initiative (AAMI) FY2015 grants. The AAMI Grant Selection Committee is awarding 17 grants in this funding cycle, and GSC’s grant is for $20,000. The grant will help the college implement the AAMI Living-Learning Community, which will entail peer mentoring, intrusive academic advising, and social/cultural development activities. Our thanks to Michele Perry-Stewart, Fredrick Bailey, Rhonda Toon, Institutional Research (Britt Lifsey), and Terry Betkowski for putting together the grant proposal. In addition, Dr. Venable and Mr. Fruitticher were instrumental in planning and budgeting.

Advising Tip of the Month

Advises flourish when we are honest with them. When you don’t know a specific piece of information, don’t be afraid to say, “I don’t know, but let’s find out.” As soon as you found an answer, call/email your advisee with the correct information. If you do make an honest mistake, your advisee will forgive you. As long as you demonstrate respect and concern for the advisee, he will return the favor.

GFYE News

Dr. Richard Baskin

The Gordon First Year Experience course is now in the capable hands of Prof. Peter Higgins, Director of Student Success, Advising, and Testing. Prof. Higgins will be providing leadership in developing an FYE program, and he will be asking for our help in that endeavor. Part of that effort is review of GFYE 0097. Some of the faculty experienced in teaching the course met before spring finals to consider course redesign to fit the different needs of an entire class of first-year students. Conversation continued via D2L during the summer and will pick up again in the fall term.
Dr. Mike Mahan, Dr. Theresa Stanley (Biology) and the Georgia Aquarium were awarded a $41,000 Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (TQE) by the State of Georgia for improving K-12 Teacher Professional Development. The grant was during the week of June 22nd to June 27th. There were 4 teachers from Lamar County, 3 teachers from Butts County, and 1 teacher from Thomaston-Upson County schools that participated in the weeklong experience that began in Atlanta at the Georgia Aquarium and followed the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers to the Altamaha and then on to the Ocean. The group learned about water sampling and environment along the way. The culmination was a trip aboard the R.V. Savannah out to Grays Reef and back.

The School of Education has received notice from the Board of Regents of the University System and Georgia Power that Gordon State will again be in the running for two of our graduates this year to be considered for a $1,000 scholarship to help them begin their teaching career. This is the 11th year of the scholarship and Gordon State has had winners in previous years. The candidate must be in the top 25% of his/her class, have a high aptitude for teaching, and be recommended by the faculty.

The Student Success Center is pleased to welcome Jenny Britt as Gordon’s new College Completion Coach. Many of the faculty will remember Jenny from her work as an administrative aide in various divisions at GSC. As Completion Coach, Jenny will be working with students who are 90% complete with their degree programs but who need some assistance. For this purpose, Jenny will help facilitate the completion of the student’s program in unique ways. She will consult with faculty advisors on a student’s program completion, assist with financial aid concerns, provide referrals, and conduct research as needed. For the Fall 2014 semester, Jenny’s office will be located in the new Career Counseling Center across the hall from the Testing Center in the Student Center Building.

Dr. Mike Mahan

Dr. Mike Mahan, Dean of the School of Education was invited to serve the State of Georgia as a member of the Evaluation Review Panel of the Professional Standards Commission. The Evaluation Review Panel (ERP) reviews all of the state reviews of education programs and either allows the approval to send to the Commission or rejects the approval for reasons to be re-evaluated.

Dr. Brent Johnson, School of Education had guest speakers in his summer classroom. Ms. Ashley Morris, the academic coach at Lindley Middle School facilitated a workshop and lecture in Dr. Johnson’s class. She demonstrated best practices, and differentiated instruction.

Dr. Brent Johnson and Dr. Howard-Baptiste have had a proposal accepted at the International Conference on Urban Education. The program is Leading by Example: Best Practices for Scholar-Servanthood in the Classroom.

In the Physical Education area, Bev Wolf concluded training in the Wilderness First Responder Training.
Updates from the Department of Biology

Dr. Mustapha Durojaiye

Dr. Theresa Stanley will serve as chair of the Regents Biology Academic Advisory Committee this year. Some of the issues the committee hopes to resolve include improving transferability of core upper-level biology courses and improving sharing of knowledge between units within the system.

Rivers to Reefs Blog

News from the Department of History and Political Science

Dr. Erica Johnson

Critical Issues in Justice and Politics has just published Dr. Brian Webb's co-authored (with Ryan Yonk and Rochdi Alloui) article titled "Does Moderation Pay? Members of Congress, Campaign Donations and Voting Patterns." Here is the link to the article: http://suu.edu/hss/polsci/journal/V7N1%20Web%20Version.pdf

The Department of History & Political Science welcomes a new full-time faculty member, Dr. Timothy Best. Best received his Bachelor of Science degree from Mount Olive College in 2004. After completing his undergraduate work, he attended the University of Kent at Canterbury/Brussels School of International Studies where he received his combined LLM/MA degree in International Law and International Relations in 2006. He received a second master’s degree in European History from the University of North Florida in 2008. As member of the Institute on Napoleon and the French Revolution, he completed his doctoral degree at Florida State University in 2014.

Dr. Aiello prepares for, and then meets with the new Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Jeff Knighton. According to our sources, the meeting went well!
The faculty and staff of Hightower Library are pleased to welcome Dr. Sonya S. Gaither as the new Director of Hightower Library. We look forward to the leadership Dr. Gaither will bring as the library transitions through changes with the addition of a repository and a library renovation.

The programming, planning, and design process for the library renovation will begin soon. The Houser Walker Architectural firm will be leading this process.

The Hightower Library has added 2,500 electronic titles as part of the Gale Virtual Reference Library. These titles may be accessed through the GALILEO databases or the GIL catalog.

New at Hightower Library

Ms. Brenda Rutherford

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ALG Spotlight

As the library coordinator for Affordable Learning Georgia on the GSC campus, I need your assistance. Please send me information on what you are doing to make your course resources more affordable. In each issue of the GSConnect1 hope to spotlight what GSC faculty members are doing to make courses more affordable. Have you written your own textbook? Do you provide online resources through the LMS? Are you using OER?

Check out The Affordable Learning Georgia website at http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/ for ideas and opportunities.

ALG Library Coordinator:
Brenda Rutherford

GSC Staff News

Mr. Justin White

The Staff Council would like to invite everyone to participate in the BLUE JEANS DAYS sponsored by “Gordon Gives”. “Gordon Gives” has helped raise money for the Relay for Life and Lamar County Backpack/Helping Hands programs. Both programs are very well received in the Barnesville community and we would like to continue to support them by using the Blue Jeans Day proceeds. Below you will find the dates for the remainder of the school year that will require a sticker or button purchase. The buttons are $30 and will allow you to wear jeans on any of the specified jeans days. The stickers are $3 and are only good for one jeans day. The Fall Paid Jeans Day dates are listed to the right.

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<th>2014 Days to support Gordon Gives</th>
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President Burns and Mr. Justin White present a check to representatives from Lamar County School for the Backpack program.