As spring approaches, I can’t help enjoying watching the flowers and trees bloom. I have enjoyed watching our campus rejuvenated with fresh pine straw and noting the resurgence of the violas under the warmth of the sunnier days. I was also reminded of the need to weed our gardens as I noticed the errant viola and those pesky dandelions we all loved as children but curse as homeowners. This idea of weeding and grooming our gardens began to creep into my thoughts as I was recently packing and now unpacking upon the sale of my house, downsizing to a smaller space.

In fact, I have spent the past few years packing and moving both my home and my office multiple times – too many times to count. In the process, I told someone recently, I have become “ruthless” when it comes to deciding what to keep and what to eliminate from my possessions. I am generally not a collector of things, but I have to admit I do love to collect books. I think of my books as my old friends. I love to look at the shelves and remember the great stories, characters, language and writing styles, and the compelling lessons I gained from reading each book. Thus, as hard-nosed as I can be at weeding my personal collection, I still find I have more belongings than one should reasonably expect one person to own. Weeding my collections involves many difficult choices.

All of this makes me consider very carefully why I choose to own the things I do, even when it means packing and unpacking it, paying someone to load it onto and off of a truck, paying even to store it in a climate controlled facility. Each of us makes decisions every day about what we value. For me, it was most recently vividly displayed in the boxes of books and kitchenware and clothes. But it is also evident in the way we each choose to spend our time.

This past week, I invested some of my time in having dinner with friends. I realized I considered that an important investment of my time. It is something that renews my soul and feeds me in a way even chocolate does not. I also regularly invest time in my work. I consider my work my most favorite hobby. Helping students obtain a college education is a passion of mine and it is what drives me to work long hours and attend those tedious committee meetings.

Consider what you value. Have you tended your garden lately? What do you see as a weed that needs to be pruned away and what do you want to fertilize? What feeds YOUR soul?
Pomp and Circumstance

Dr. Margaret Venable

Do you enjoy the pageantry of ceremonies such as commencement? Some occasions seem to call for special rituals and festivities in order to celebrate the event. If you attended the December graduation, you surely noticed the new school banners, called gonfalons. Each school has its own gonfalon and there is also one for Gordon State College itself. At the May ceremony, we will honor some of our senior faculty by asking them to lead their school in the procession carrying the school gonfalon. Will it be your turn?

ADVISING: Tip of the Month

In providing academic advising to students, remember to treat the whole student rather than the piece that presents itself or the aspect that is easiest to address. Students often need advice about choosing their careers and majors, managing academic workloads along with their personal lives, dealing with outside pressures such as family or job issues. Faculty are not professional counselors, but we can connect our advisees with personnel on campus who can assist with career, personal or financial aid counseling. Often, students simply need advice about how to approach a faculty member they find intimidating. We can suggest ways to send a professional email or have an appropriate conversation with a faculty member about concerns regarding class grades. Asking questions about how the student is enjoying the classes in their intended major may open the conversation to a life changing moment. Be the advisor you would have wanted or that you would want your children to have.

Dean of Arts and Sciences Position Posted

Dr. Margaret Venable

The Dean of Arts & Sciences position has been posted on our employment website and advertised in a variety of media outlets. The following will represent us as members of the search committee to help us identify this important leader.

- Mike Mahan (Dean of Education), Chair
- Greg Hartman (Biology)
- Evelyn Schleicker (Business & Public Service)
- Susan Glenn (Mathematics & Physical Science)
- Tom Aiello (Chair, History & Political Science)
- David Janssen (Humanities)
- Rhonda Wooley (Fine & Performing Arts)

Other Arts & Sciences faculty will have a chance to provide input during this process, so stay tuned for opportunities to share your feedback before the end of the spring semester.
New Faculty Rank and Gordon Considered

Dr. Margaret Venable

Most of us are aware of the limitations for our current “Temporary Full-Time” or “Limited Term” faculty. Such faculty have been limited to three years in these positions which means we often lose excellent colleagues at the end of three years because we either have no available tenure track position or because the faculty member does not have a terminal degree. Recently, concerns about requirements for implementation of the new Affordable Care Act lead us to believe we will be restricted to use of such faculty for a maximum of TWO years. Because of the need for more long-term faculty positions that are not tenure-track positions, Gordon State College is exploring the option of Lecturer positions. These are not temporary positions but the faculty must be evaluated and renewed annually with increased notice of non-renewal compared to the temporary full-time positions we currently have. Jeff White (Physical Education) has volunteered to lead a task force to study this new faculty rank and draft a proposal for Gordon to consider. Ed Whitelock (Interim Dean of Arts & Sciences) and Brenda Johnson (Business & Public Service) have volunteered to assist. If you would like to work with this group, please contact Jeff White right away. The group is working on an ambitious timeline and hoping to have a proposal for faculty to review this spring.

Snow Days

After much discussion, we are hearing that there is no pressing desire by faculty to extend our semester to make up for the missed days during our snowy weather. Apparently, faculty were either pro-active in creating assignments for their students or have managed to create make-up opportunities since the lost days. Extending the semester is never an ideal solution. Therefore, with no overwhelming need, there is no plan to alter the calendar to recover the missed days for Spring of 2014.

Accel Update

Dr. Richard Baskin

Accel student numbers: In last month’s GSConnect, I mentioned that “the number of bright and engaged students from the ranks of dual-credit high school students” has been on the rise at Gordon State. More specifically:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Total Credit Hours</th>
<th>Number of High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Library Director Position: The screening committee for hiring a director for library services is being formed, with the goal of having that person in place by July 1 or soon after. Ms. Brenda Rutherford continues to serve the college admirably as Interim Director, and we all owe her our gratitude for her leadership.

Adult Learning Consortium (ALC) Meeting: On February 24, the Executive Committee for the ALC held their quarterly meeting on our campus. Consortium representatives from 13 USG institutions met, and Co-Director Mary Ellen Dallman asked me to express her appreciation to the college at large. She and many members of the committee complimented us on the attractiveness of our campus and of the Nursing and Allied Health Building, as well as on the friendly help that they received from our employees and students. A group of adult learners at Gordon State gave a strong presentation on the college’s mentoring program for adult learners. My thanks to Ms. Tonya Moore, our Adult Learner Coordinator, and the students for giving their significant time and effort.

15 To Finish: Many students hear the term “full load” and think 12 hours, since that number constitutes a full load for financial aid purposes. Of course, taking 12 hours a semester soon adds another full semester to a student’s degree program. Some students need a 12-hour load, at least in their first term, to become acclimated to college work. Too many, however, are capable of handling 15 hours but do themselves and, perhaps, their parents and other taxpayers a disservice by being content with a 12-hour load.
Samantha H. Bishop, MN, RN, CPNP, CNE and Patricia Stewart MSN, RN, CPNP, CNE have written an Educational Innovation manuscript that will be published in the Journal of Nursing Education in March 2014. It is entitled Simulation: A Day in the Life of a Pediatric Nurse and provides a synopsis of the creativity employed to construct a “Children’s Hospital” on our campus from the beginning of the creation in a historic building to the finalization of a true simulation lab in our brand new state of the art facility. The manuscript takes the reader through the trials and tribulations experienced in order to succeed in providing students with an experience that assist them to employ critical thinking and maximize clinical competence in the healthcare setting.

School of Nursing students, along with Ms. Samantha Bishop as faculty, assisted with Hearing and Vision screenings on 2/6/14 at the Lamar County Middle School. They screened as many as 200 students at the 2/6/14 screening alone. The students were:

- Ashley Duke
- Hannah Baity
- Casey Foster
- Shannon Kee
- Kerri Womack
- Lois Wagy-Gilham
- Melissa Dingler

On February 7, 23 Gordon State Faculty participated in a Workshop on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning led by Dr. Bill Buskist from Auburn University. We will follow up the workshop on Wednesday, March 29, at 2:00 with a meeting to discuss what we learned and how we can move forward with our SOTL efforts both as individuals and as a community. Please join us, whether you attended the workshop or not.

We have a very exciting Teaching Matters program taking shape for April 4-5. Remember that your department or school will pay for your registration, so please come share your ideas with colleagues not just from Gordon State, but from throughout Georgia.

Midterm Instructional Feedback is confidential process by which a colleague meets with your class and obtains anonymous feedback from your students. The feedback is shared only with you, and no record of the session is maintained other than the fact that it occurred. The next few weeks present an excellent opportunity to receive feedback well before the end of the semester. Peter Boltz, Qi Zhou, and Alan Burstein have volunteered to serve as facilitators this semester. Contact Alan Burstein for more information or to set up a session.
Dr. Jeff Knighton

Dr. Melinda Hawley and Prof. Bethany Johnson and attended the Georgia Association of Women in Higher Education conference held at Kennesaw State University on February 27th-28th. Dr. Hawley presented a seminar on Friday morning entitled “Contents Under Pressure: Redefining Stress Management.”

Dr. Melinda Hawley attended the Ben Franklin Institute Summit for Clinical Excellence in Chicago, March 7-8. The conference focused on addiction, trauma, neuroscience, and mindfulness interventions.

Dr. Kalisha Smith attended the 26th annual Southeastern Conference on the Teaching of Psychology, February 21-22, in Atlanta.

We are happy to announce that Ashley Travis’ “Bahama Mama’s Pepper Pot” was the 3rd place winner of Gordon State College cancer Crushers 2nd annual Chili Cook off. Ashley’s was one of 17 pots of chili donated to kick off the fund raiser for the Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society. The Department of Business and Public Service congratulates the 1st and 2nd place winners, Wendy Martin and Dr. Ed Whitelock, and every participant of this fun event!

Dr. Qi Zhou received a President’s Faculty Development Initiative grant to study the effectiveness of Schema Based Instruction (SBI) in mathematical algebra problem solving at college level this summer.

About 50 Gordon State College Criminal Justice and Human Services students and additional visitors participated in an informative presentation on Criminal Justice and Substance Abuse March 4 in the Student Center Auditorium. Guest speakers were Ms. Chandra Fussell, Program Director of Substance Abuse Services in the Risk Reduction Services Unit for the Georgia Department of Corrections; Mr. Antonio Johnson, who supervises all aftercare services in the state of Georgia, and Ms. Dawn Collinge, State Director of Clinical Services, Spectrum Health Systems, Inc., who is a service provider for the state Department of Corrections. Dr. Melinda Hawley and Gordon Police Chief Jeff Mason sponsored the event.

Dr. Alan Burstein and Dr. Christy Flatt, along with Dr. Robert Vaughan from Clayton State University, are presenting a panel entitled “Interdisciplinary Adventures” at the Teaching Matters Conference in which they’ll share their experiences in guiding their Finance, Poverty, and American Literature classes in working together on interdisciplinary, intercampus projects designed to foster students’ appreciation of interdisciplinary linkages.


Twelve Gordon students who are currently taking Dr. Flatt’s Poverty course will be in Selma, Alabama from Sunday, March 9 to Tuesday, March 11. While in Selma, the students will be taking part in activities that are both educational and service oriented. Sunday will be the 49th anniversary of when 600 civil rights activists attempted to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama but were blocked by state and local lawmen. The students will be participating in the re-enactment of the bridge crossing, a Civil Rights tour, non-violence training, and community service in Selma schools.

Congrats to The Claymore!
Dr. Pam Bell (Education) has had a book published, "A Little PDA Goes a Long Way" (cover image is to the left).

Dr. Sheryl O’Sullivan (Education) has had an article accepted for publication. This is a continuation of the presentation from last year in Athens, Greece. The publication will be in the Athens Journal of Education. The article is titled: Becoming a teacher in the United States, Are Attitudes of Incoming Candidates Malleable?

Ms. Bev Wolfe (PHED and Challenge Course Coordinator) has been accepted to become a Climbing Wall Instructor Provider in Training. This is through the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA) and only six people in the US are accepted each year. The program will take about one year.

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 will run through the summer of 2014 and will encompass Lamar County, Butts County, Thomastston-Upson County teachers.

The Gordon State College School of Education took four junior candidates to the Statehouse in Atlanta for the legislative session on education. The students attended the "Day on the Hill" and met area legislators and watched the Georgia House in session.

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 will run through the summer of 2014 and will encompass Lamar County, Butts County, Thomastston-Upson County teachers.

The School of Education applied for an NSF grant from the Robert Noyce Scholarship Foundation for the purpose of assisting students to become science and mathematics teachers. The grant pays all expenses for two years of schooling at Gordon State. The total amount of the grant is $912,000 over five years.
More Exciting News from the Department of Humanities

Dr. Steve Raynie

Stephen Powers went to Seattle on February 26th to launch his second book of poetry, Hello, Stephen, at the AWP writers conference. He did a book signing at Salmon Poetry’s booth at the AWP bookfair on February 27th, and participated in a launch reading on February 28th at the Sheraton Seattle. He heads to Eureka, Illinois, on March 27th to read as the featured poet at Eureka College’s Writers Festival. http://www.eureka.edu/arts/writers-fest/

Dr. Jason Horn will be giving a presentation in Athens at “The University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference: Best Practices for Promoting Engaged Student Learning” on April 17-18. Dr. Horn’s presentation’s title is “Traveling and Writing along the Blue Highways.” This presentation describes Dr. Horn’s experiment teaching thematically in English 1102 around the travel material from one book: Blue Highways, by William Least Heat-Moon.

News from the Department of Math and Physical Science

Dr. Allen Fuller

Dr. Houng Park has applied for a provisional patent for a closeable petri dish. It is believed that this invention will change for what petri dishes are used as relates to the fields of life science, medicine, pharmacy, biology, microbiology, and numerous other scientific areas.

Dr. Marwan Zabdawi is presenting a research paper at the 2014 International Conference on Technology in Collegiate Mathematics (ICTCM) on March 20-22 in San Antonio Texas. On Saturday, March 22, Dr. Zabdawi will present “Strategy for Graphing Trigonometric Functions Using Mapping & Superposition” which will be published in the 2014 ICTCM proceedings.

Dr. Richard Schmude, Jr. did a presentation about the Sun and Sunlight to about 100 second grade students at Red Oak Elementary School in Stockbridge, GA on February 28, 2014. Dr. Schmude also supervised the Rocks and Minerals contest at the Science Olympiad on Saturday March 1, 2014.
News from the Henry County Campus

Dr. Ric Calhoun

The McDonough Campus at the Henry County Academy for Advanced Studies has 230 students choosing from 15 different courses this semester. The plans for the next academic year are to expand the course offerings, especially during the day. The campus will also have a number of offerings during the summer term.

From March 24th – 26th, a visiting team from SACSCOC will be on our campus. This site visit is to approve a "Substantive Change" to allow students to obtain 50 percent or more credits toward an Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degree at an off-site location, in this case, the Henry County Academy. The link to the document is: http://www.gordonstate.edu/Faculty/t_betkowski/SACS/. The team will be in McDonough on Monday, March 24th and on the GSC Barnesville campus March 25 through the morning of the 26th. Part of the preparation for this visit includes a redesign of the webpage for the McDonough campus which now has links to key resources for students taking classes on that campus. The page can be accessed at: http://www2.gordonstate.edu/henryco.

Finally, Dr. Ric Calhoun appeared on the Hometown Radio show on 92.5 the Bear on Monday, March 10th promoting Gordon State College and the McDonough campus.

GSC Staff News

Justin White

We’re excited to announce that Enterprise CarShare is coming soon to our campus. Enterprise CarShare is an exclusive car sharing service from Enterprise Rent-A-Car that is a refreshing alternative to maintaining our own fleet. The Enterprise CarShare vehicles will become part of our current fleet of vehicles. Reservation for these particular vehicles will be done so online. You will be able use your membership card to unlock the vehicle without the hassle of pushing paper.

How It Works:
Membership (with valid driver’s license) includes: fuel, dedicated parking spot, maintenance, physical damage coverage, etc. Enterprise CarShare is a totally automated rental process where, once you’re a member, all you need to rent an Enterprise CarShare vehicle is access to the internet. Once a member, go to EnterpriseCarShare.com which is mobile-friendly. Log in, and reserve the vehicle you want for the time you need. Use your Enterprise CarShare membership smart card to access the vehicle at Facilities. The keys are in the glove box and you’re on your way! Return the vehicle to Facilities put the keys back in the glove box. Use your membership smart card to lock the doors. Your rental has ended. More information will be provided at the March 31st training provided by representatives from Enterprise.

DEGREES and CERTIFICATIONS:
Congratulations to Connie Wade for earning the Certified Collegiate Retailer Certification (CCRC).

Congratulations to Jessica Yarbrough who earned her Associate of Science in Business Administration.