A Greeting from the Provost

Dr. Margaret H. Venable

My apologies to those who have heard me say this already, but it bears repeating. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and our students at Gordon State College as the first Provost. I could not be more pleased and proud to be joining such a fine institution, surrounded by what I call “kindred spirits.” As I studied this institution before I even applied for the position, I saw all of the right signs. I found the right kinds of messages (both stated and unstated). I found the right kinds of activities. And when I came to visit the campus, I found the right kinds of people. I found people sincerely interested in students and in teaching. I found people committed to supporting this community as well as each other. Some of you have also heard me say that I never intended to become an administrator. I never wanted to leave my classroom. In time, I came to see that an administrative position is still an opportunity to help students. In many ways, I am able to impact more students in an administrative role than I was in the classroom. Although I miss those daily classroom connections with our students, I never forget that students are the reason I come to work every day.

With your help and support, I am committed to leading us through wisely chosen but often challenging pathways while keenly aware that leadership does not come from a title or position. I am inspired by each of you and hopeful that I will not disappoint you too often. I am reminded of a story attributed to Father James Keller:

A high-school girl, seated next to a famous astronomer at a dinner party, struck up a conversation with him by asking: "What do you do for a living?" "I study astronomy," he replied. "Really?" said the teenager, wide-eyed. "I finished astronomy last year." (Source: Three Minutes by James Keller, M. M., 1950)

Many days, I feel like that wide-eyed teenager. I have much to learn from you. Please continue to share your talents and expertise with me and the Gordon State College community and let me know how I can serve you.

CAMPUS WATCH

Please take some time to visit the USG Faculty Resources website where you will find a number of valuable resources such as this year’s monthly professional development series, some “Just-In-Time” training modules, general teaching and learning resources and even a link to an extensive list of upcoming conferences (some in Georgia). I recommend you bookmark this website and visit it periodically to check for updates.

Although the GSC Academic Affairs website is in need of some additional updates, please visit the site for details of how to apply for the President’s Faculty Development Initiative summer research funds (choose the link on the left for President’s Faculty Development Initiative). Preference will be given to faculty who have not received support in the past. Faculty are limited to two consecutive awards. Application deadline for this year is Monday, November 4, 2013.

Also on the Academic Affairs website, notice there is a link to the form and information about how to apply for approval for outside work activities. If you are engaged in any compensated work outside of Gordon State College, our statutes require you to disclose that information to us and obtain permission. This helps us ensure that you have adequate time to fulfill your professional obligations to Gordon.
More News and Updates from Academic Affairs

Dr. Richard Baskin

Complete College Georgia Status Report: This week, President Burns is submitting to the University System of Georgia our status report on progress with the Gordon’s Completion Plan. You will find the status report on the Academic Affairs web page, and I encourage everyone to read this short report. You will find updates on retention and graduation efforts, including initiatives in advising, instructional delivery, and partnerships in our service area. I appreciate the excellent effort that you all continue to make on behalf of our students.

Students in Transition National Conference is being held in Atlanta on October 19-21. The conference will include some First Year sessions (there is an interesting-looking FYE pre-conference workshop), but Dr. Venable and I are especially interested in ideas and contacts that will help Gordon support students transferring into or out of the college. There should be quite a few sessions on issues specific to sophomore and transfer students, and last spring we saw the need for enhanced support of students transferring to Gordon to complete a BA/BS with us.

Dr. Venable has participated in a previous STC and thought it definitely worth the time. The website for this year’s conference is at http://www.sc.edu/fye/sit/. We encourage interested faculty members to consider attending, especially those for whom a significant portion of advising work is devoted to students moving into baccalaureate programs.

Next New Faculty Orientation Meeting:

New faculty members will meet again on Wednesday, September 11 at 2:00, in the Foundation Room (Student Center 229). We will focus on advising at Gordon State College: policies and best practices. Dr. Alan Burstein, Coordinator for the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, will be on hand to talk about supporting you and to answer questions.

Updates on the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)

Dr. Alan Burstein

Cortney Grubbs has enthusiastically agreed to serve as CTLA Associate with responsibility for organizing the Spring 2014 Teaching Matters Conference. One of our first tasks will be to decide on a theme for the 2014 conference. If you have suggestions on a theme, or any other ideas regarding TM, Dr. Grubbs will be happy to hear them.

As we continue to put together our CETL program for this year and next, please share your ideas with me or with any member of our CETL Advisory Board: Mark King, Andy Osborne, Sarah Rosario, Frank Winters, Kimberly White-Fredette, Amy Yarbrough, and Qi Zhou.
Update from the School of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Edward Whitelock

While we’re well on our way in getting fall 2013 up and running and we’re all settling in to the new organization of our college departments, I’d like to take this moment nonetheless to introduce our new School of Arts & Sciences.

I’m honored to have been asked to serve as Interim Dean to the new School of Arts and Sciences.

Our main office is located in IC 206. Ms. Nancy Goodloe is our Administrative Assistant, and our contact number is X-5680.

The School of Arts & Sciences is made up of the following departments:

- Biology: Department Head, Dr. Theresa Stanley
- Special thanks to Dr. Mustapha Durojaie, who served as Interim Department Head for month of July
- Math & Physical Sciences: Interim Department Head, Dr. Allen Fuller
- Business & Public Services: Department Head, Dr. Jeffrey Knighton
- History & Political Sciences: Interim Department Head, Dr. Thomas Aiello
- Humanities: Interim Department Head, Dr. Stephen Raynie
- Programs in Fine & Performing Arts

Here’s to a great new academic year for all!

News from the Department of Humanities

Dr. Steve Raynie

On June 29, Dr. Rhonda Wilcox presented a lecture on the 2013 film of Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing, adapted, directed, and produced by Joss Whedon. Titled “Much Ado About Whedon: ‘Better Than Reportingly,’” it was the keynote speech for the Joss in June conference held at Cleveland Community College in Shelby, North Carolina.

Dr. Joan A. Ashford published her book Ecocritical Theology: Neo Pastoral Themes in American Fiction from 1960 to the Present. It was published in late 2012 by McFarland Publishing and explores a range of contemporary novels from the perspective of biosystems, the natural world and spirituality.

Dr. Cortney Grubbs co-authored a novel entitled A Mile in His Soul, which is available on Kindle and in paperback; the book is part of a larger project that hopefully will be adapted into a film. She also published a poem entitled “Across the Railroad Tracks” in Seed, a zine.

Robert Perry Ivey’s poem “Letter to Tally Bryant Ivey” will appear in the next issue of the Blue Lyra Review. The issue, issue 2.4, will feature literature on the theme “Stories we would rather not tell” and will come out this October.

Dr. Steve Raynie, together with Lamar County High School teacher LeslieAnne Williams, addressed the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders conference on July 16. They discussed the importance of aligning high school English/Language Arts standards and expectations with those of colleges in the University System of Georgia. In a group that also includes Dr. Wesley Venus and Ms. Susan Hendricks, they are developing unit plans that will help students make a smoother transition to college-level work. The work is funded by a $10,000 grant.

Position Announcement: Library Director

Look for the posted position announcement soon for the Director of the Hightower Library. Please share the position announcement with any contacts you may have at other institutions or libraries. As we prepare to renovate the library, we need a visionary leader who understands the future of higher ed libraries and will help lead these renovations for our expanded mission as a baccalaureate degree granting institution. Thank you for your support of our library and thanks for the continued leadership of Brenda Rutherford, Interim Director of the Library.

Celebrity Alert: Faculty to guest star on Jeopardy!

This fall, Dr. Marc Muneal will appear as a contestant on the television game show Jeopardy! Dr. Muneal will appear on the 10 October 2013 episode, which was filmed in late August.
It’s time for students to apply for the Honors Program!

The next Honors Program application deadline is Oct. 10. Please announce to your students and encourage those who are eligible to apply.

Minimum criteria for new students: 3.2 high school GPA and math/verbal SAT score of 1100 or ACT of 24. For returning students: 3.5 GPA and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member.

Your help in identifying our best and brightest students is invaluable to the growth and vitality of our Honors Program.

Education Abroad

Sheryl O’Sullivan presented her research on Teaching Dispositions at the National Conference of the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE).

Sheryl also presented this work in Greece this summer to the International Conference on Teacher Education.

Math and Physical Science News

Dr. Alan Fuller

Dr. Henry Gore served as a Reader for the Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus Examination conducted by the College Board and the Educational Testing Service in Kansas City, Missouri, June 2013. Dr. Gore also served as a workshop consultant for High School AP Calculus Teachers in Henry County, Georgia, July 2013.

Richard Schmude, Jr. gave the following talks:


“Wideband Photometry of Uranus” a five minute talk given at the OPAG meeting in Alexandria, Virginia on July 15, 2013.

“The North Polar cap of Mars: 2012-2013” a 40 minute talk given to the Atlanta Astronomy Club on July 19, 2013 in Atlanta, GA.

“The Remote Planets Uranus and Neptune” a 20 minute talk given at Alcon 2013 at the Fernbank Science Center in Atlanta, Georgia on July 25, 2013.


Richard Schmude also had one paper published during this time:


Dr. John George served as a referee for the Journal of Combinatorial Mathematics and Combinatorial Computing over the summer, and also attended the Second International Symposium on Ranaviruses and a meeting of the Wildlife Disease Association in July, in Knoxville, TN.
New from the Department of Business and Human Service

Dr. Jeffrey Knighton

Our newest baccalaureate, the Bachelor of Science in Human Services, is now officially up and running. Over 50 students have now declared HUSV as their major. A special thank you goes out to all the BPS faculty for the hard work necessary to make the degree possible.

Dr. Joe Mayo has had article accepted entitled, “Socially constructed knowledge: Using cooperative learning in assessment instruction,” to appear in the next issue of the Journal of Pedagogy and the Human Sciences. The article relates to his examination of the cooperative portfolio assessment, which is an assignment that he’s designed and used successfully in teaching junior-level educational assessment to our early childhood education majors.

Students Go Abroad

Karen Guffey reports that she took a group of 15 students to study in Barcelona for four weeks. She also says: “More importantly, I brought 15 back.” She has included three pictures: one of the whole group and one of 4 of our English majors (B.A. Students) reacting to the stairs behind them – both in Güell Park. The one of five students & a statue is in Labyrinth Park.
The Department of Biology is pleased to report that we have 75 declared majors, and many more that need to be corralled into changing majors from the AS-Biology. We have an unduplicated headcount of at least 88 students in our upper-level courses. Not bad numbers, considering we graduated more than 20 students last year, and look forward to a strong showing at our first Fall graduation ceremony.

Our faculty members were busy over the summer months, Here’s just a sampling of their accomplishments.

Dr. Amanda Duffus has published the following:


Dr. Duffus presented the following at the Second International Symposium on Ranaviruses, where she was also given the first Outstanding Service Award from the Global Ranavirus Consortium of which she is the Secretary/Treasurer:


Dr. Duffus had been one of the Lead Organizers with Drs. M. Gray and D. Miller from the University of Tennessee for the Symposium and was glad to see that the meeting was enjoyed by the participants as well as being successful scientifically.

Dr. Amanda Duffus also presented the following paper and workshop at the 62nd International Conference of the Wildlife Disease Association:


Dr. Cathy Lee was an invited discussion panelist in 2013 **KWiSE-KOFST Outstanding Women Scientist Special Seminar, titled Molecular Nutrition for Better Health.** KWISE (Korean-American Woman in Science and Engineering) and KOFST (The Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies) hosted this special seminar at the Annual International Conference, UKC 2013 (US-Korea Conference on Science, Technology, and Entrepreneurship) in New York/New Jersey hosted by KSEA (Korean-American Scientists and Engineers Association), Aug 7-11, 2013.

Dr. Lee also helped organizing Harmonious symposium BE (Bioengineering/Medical Engineering) and chaired the sessions. She also presented Gordon State College Biology Student Research Poster at the conference.