Committee updates faculty on focus areas for improved undergraduate experience

Final report due next month

Dan Treadaway
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Recent student and faculty focus on improving the undergraduate experience will culminate next month with the completion of a report by the Committee on Quality Undergraduate Education.

Committee member Bob McMath, vice provost for Undergraduate Studies, presented a draft version of the report to the Academic Senate at the group’s April 20 meeting. The Committee plans to complete the final report in May and present it to the Executive Board over the summer.

McMath said the impetus for forming the Committee, empanelled by the Institute’s Executive Board, stemmed from faculty discussions of how to address the issue of grade inflation. “That ultimately evolved into a discussion of how best to provide a high-quality education for our students,” McMath said.

Key areas covered in the draft report include:
- Student-faculty interaction, teaching approaches, and course management (effective lecturing, creating rapport with students individually, improving preparation of teaching assistants, fostering closer interaction between faculty and their teaching assistants, and creation of unit-based faculty-student advisory boards for continual examination of unit issues);
- Curriculum (greater use of problem-based and experiential learning, better explanation of how general education requirements and major courses fit together as a comprehensive whole);
- Support for students outside the classroom (more broadly based academic advising that goes beyond satisfying course requirements to encompass career choices and other issues, more emphasis on identifying and assisting students at risk, creating a central advising system to augment and support school- and college-based advising); and
- Physical infrastructure (teaching spaces and educational technologies that promote effective teaching and learning, more efficient utilization of teaching spaces, continued strengthening of the Library, construction of the Undergraduate Learning Center).

“Much of what we will be recommending is not revenue neutral,” McMath said. “We are kidding ourselves if we think that we can make major improvements of this kind for free. Our final report will make recommendations about the resources that will be required.” McMath said the Committee welcomes faculty and administrative input.

Following McMath’s presentation, the Academic Senate heard a proposal from the Student Regulations Committee to swap the dates for course withdrawal and mid-term grade reports. “Under the current system,” said Committee Chair Paul Benkeser, “information from the mid-term grade report comes too late to be useful in advising for the next semester and well after the final date to withdraw from a course.” Benkeser noted that the Committee’s research revealed that Tech’s course withdrawal date comes much earlier in the term than that of most universities.

Under the new academic calendar, course withdrawal will be allowed until 50 percent of the term is completed. Mid-term grade reports will be released prior to withdrawal, and will be submitted when 40 percent of the term has been completed.

Committee member Joseph Hughes noted that faculty concerns related to project-oriented classes have been addressed via a Registrar’s Office policy that allows schools and colleges to “block” dropping from certain courses that are heavily project or team oriented.

The Senate unanimously approved the proposal, which becomes effective with summer term.

Two students named as Goldwater Scholars

David Terraso
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Two Georgia Tech roommates are winners of this year’s prestigious Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship. Mathematics major Thomas Callaghan and Materials Science and Engineering student Mark Oliver will both receive up to $7,500 for next year’s tuition, fees and room and board at Tech.

The pair met the summer before their freshman year at a retreat for President’s Scholarship winners and lived down the hall from each other that first year. They’ve been friends ever since. “We joke that we’re going to go to Stanford together, although Mark has been getting more interested in Berkeley lately,” said Callaghan.

Being so close, it was a bit intimidating applying for the same scholarship, said Callaghan. “I was kind of scared that I had to compete against him,” he said. Mark, however, was a bit bolder. “I was confident that we’d both get the Georgia Tech nomination,” he replied. They both agreed that Tech’s emphasis on undergraduate research has been key to their success.

Oliver has been busy researching composite materials for the next generation of space vehicles in Materials Science and Engineering Professor Steven Johnson’s lab. Using plastics reinforced with carbon fibers instead of metal saves a lot of weight, but the trick is that they have to perform well in extreme conditions. “We’re studying how the materials perform at cryogenic and elevated temperatures,” he said.

Johnson said Oliver has been a Goldwater scholars, page 3

WWW.WHISTLE.GATECH.EDU
Robert Haley, who has guided Georgia Tech’s diversity programs since 1992, will now lead another organization focused on minority education and mentoring. Haley has been sworn in as president of 100 Black Men of Atlanta, a group of influential Atlantans who act as mentors to some of the city’s youth, with a particular emphasis on education.

Haley, who is a special assistant to the president and director of Special Projects at Georgia Tech, was inducted at 100 Black Men of Atlanta’s President’s Dinner April 22. He will serve as president for two years.

“It is truly an honor to be president of 100 Black Men of Atlanta and to follow such a long line of distinguished gentlemen who have led this organization,” he said.

One of his first priorities as president will be exploring the possibility of creating an all-male, charter elementary school in Atlanta.

100 Black Men of Atlanta, which was founded in 1986, also plans to expand its signature program, Project Success, to adopt a larger number of students into the program, Haley said.

“I am going to honor our deepest commitment to education. It is grounded in our history and our strategic mission,” he said.

Before coming to Georgia Tech, Haley served in the U.S. Army, was honorably discharged as a first lieutenant and had a successful 25-year career at IBM.

Haley joined Georgia Tech in 1992 to help coordinate diversity programs in engineering. Since then, he has overseen FOCUS, Tech’s minority recruitment program held each year during Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. The program attracts more than 500 African-American undergraduate students from across the country to learn about graduate degree programs. Currently, Georgia Tech is ranked first in the number of master’s and doctoral degrees in engineering granted to African-Americans, according to Black Issues in Higher Education.

But Haley said he couldn’t have done it alone.

“I attribute my success at Georgia Tech and the FOCUS program to the support that I have received from our president, Wayne Clough, and our provost, Jean-Lou Chameau,” he said.

Thomas Callaghan
Mark Oliver

For more information...

Composites Education and Research Center www.cerc.gatech.edu

Monkey Math www.math.gatech.edu/~mucha/BCS

Robert Haley directs FOCUS, Georgia Tech’s minority recruitment program held annually during the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend. His tenure as president of 100 Black Men of Atlanta will run two years.

Georgia Tech

Whistle

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Students try their hand as auteurs

Tech student Christina Morton shoots a scene during spring semester for her team’s Campus MovieFest submission, a music video shot to a cover of “Girls & Boys” by Blur. Morton, a Tech freshman majoring in international affairs, was among 500 students on about 70 teams that signed up to create entries for this year’s Campus MovieFest, sponsored by Delta Air Lines. They shot their five-minute films during the week of March 15, with each film revolving around the theme “Lift the World.” Delta provided students with all of the technology and training to shoot their submissions.

“It’s really a project that tries to create community among the students,” said Cart Stuart, associate director of the Library and Information Center and faculty advisor to the Campus MovieFest group.

Student teams from eight Atlanta-area universities submitted entries. During an April 19 gala at the Fox Theater, a team from Georgia Tech earned the 2004 Platinum Award for first place. Their film, “Diametric,” shows how imagination lifts the world and that going in the opposing direction is sometimes necessary. Retired International Student Services and Programs Director Miller Templeton stars as “a sort of god-like homeless man,” Stuart said. He called “Diametric” extraordinary.

In addition to a keepsake trophy, the entire team will receive a three-day trip to Hollywood, courtesy of Delta.

To see the winning entry, visit www.campusmoviefest.com. For more information on Tech’s MovieFest group, visit imoviefest.gatech.edu.

IN BRIEF:

Upgrade of HR system nears completion

The process of converting to a new Web-based Human Resources system is scheduled to be completed on April 30. An e-mail will be distributed to all users of the HR system as soon as the system is available. The Georgia Tech Administrative Services Center (GTASC) home page, www.gtasg@gatech.edu, will provide a link to the new system, HRMS 8.8. A valid GT Account user ID and password must be specified to access the system.

Complete information about the upgrade is maintained on the System 2000 Upgrade Information Web site, www.trainsweb.gatech.edu/HR/Upgrade%20Info%20Center.htm. If you have any questions about the upgrade, e-mail kara.tillman@success.gatech.edu.

May honored by ASEE

The American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) has given its 2004 ASEE Minorities in Engineering Award to Gary May, executive assistant to the president and Motorola Foundation Professor of Microelectronics in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

The award will be presented at ASEE’s Annual Awards Banquet on June 23 in Salt Lake City. May is also chair of the National Advisory Board of the National Society of Black Engineers.

Library exhibit looks at ads aimed at Tech students

The Library and Information Center’s Archives and Special Collections have put together a new Web exhibit that provides a unique insight into the lives of Georgia Tech students — courtesy of the companies that advertised to them.

The Web resource, called “Georgia Tech Advertisements,” displays various ads printed during the first half of the 20th century that have been selected from such student publications as the Blueprint, T-Book, The Technique and many others.

To access the collection, visit www.library.gatech.edu/archives/ads/index.htm. Email archives@library.gatech.edu with any questions or comments.

For more information...

Faculty Assemblies and Committees
www.facultysenate.gatech.edu
Academic Calendar
www.registrar.gatech.edu/calendar.htm

Apply for Parking
April 15–June 30
CAMPUS EVENTS

Arts & Culture
Apr. 30
The Ferst Center for the Arts welcomes classical pianist Awadagin Pratt, at 8 p.m. Faculty and staff are eligible for a 10 percent discount. For tickets, call 894-9600.

May 1
The Ferst Center for the Arts hosts an evening of jazz music featuring Freddy Cole and Paula West, at 8 p.m. Faculty and staff are eligible for a 10 percent discount. For tickets, call 894-9600.

May 7-8
The Ferst Center for the Arts hosts two nights featuring the Atlanta Ballet, at 8 p.m. Faculty and staff are eligible for a 10 percent discount. For tickets, call 894-9600.

Brown Bags/Conferences/Lectures
Apr. 29
The School of Industrial and Systems Engineering’s Natural Systems Speaker Series welcomes Karl Henrik Robert, founder of The Natural Step and author of “The Natural Step Story: Seeding A Quiet Revolution,” at 5:30 p.m. in the Ferst Center for the Arts.

May 11-12
The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Mobile Wireless Technologies for Persons with Disabilities (Wireless RERC) is hosting its international conference on the State of Mobile Wireless Technology for Persons with Disabilities. The conference will be held at the GCATT building and is jointly sponsored by The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the National Center for Dissemination of Disability Research. For more information, visit www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu.

Faculty/Staff Development
Apr. 30
The Office of Organizational Development hosts a free brown bag called “Thinking About Going Back to School?” Deborah Covin Wilson, director of Career Development, will provide an overview of educational opportunities for employees, at 11:30 a.m. in room 308, Savant Building. To register, visit www.trainweb.gatech.edu/mastcal.

May 4
The Office of Organizational Development hosts a free brown bag on “Engineering a Poem,” featuring Professor Thomas Lux, at 11:30 a.m. in room 308, Savant Building. To register, visit www.trainweb.gatech.edu/mastcal.

May 6
The Office of Organizational Development sponsors a one-day seminar on “Polishing Your Presentation Skills,” beginning at 8:30 a.m. in room 306, Savant Building. To register, visit www.trainweb.gatech.edu/mastcal.

Miscellaneous
Apr. 28
The Georgia Tech Women’s Alumni Network welcomes Lara O’Conner Hodgson on “The Power of Creative Thinking,” from 7:30 - 9 a.m. in the Alumni Faculty House. Registration fee includes breakfast. For more information, visit www.gtalumni.org/women.

May 1
The undergraduate commencement ceremony, featuring keynote speaker Gov. Sonny Perdue, begins at 9 a.m. The master’s and doctoral ceremonies, with keynote speaker Bob N. Slaughter, begins at 3 p.m. For more information, visit www.gatech.edu/commencement.

May 14
A Fidelity representative will be on campus conducting confidential consultations concerning planning for retirement. To arrange a meeting, call 800-642-7131.

CLASSIFIEDS

Appliances
Boyer large capacity electric clothes dryer, beige color, new heating element, excellent condition, asking $150. Call 404-379-9570 or e-mail juststrong@excite.com.

Autos


Computers

Furniture
Steel daybed. Black and sturdy with mattress, like new. $150. Call 770-469-8220.

Matching dining room set (table, 6 chairs & china cabinet), $850 OBO. China cabinet, $500 OBO. Antique mahogany buffet. $250 OBO. See http://forsale.belfords.com or call 894-6174.

Contemporary wooden coffee table; rich brown/black finish with storage shelf, $225. Modern, brushed steel, three-seater dining table; glass table-top, $400. Call 678-596-8813 for details/photos.

Queen-size oak waterbed frame, headboard and mattress with matching chest and dresser with mirror, $500. Call 585-0492 or e-mail crix.ham-linsfoi.gatech.edu.

Moving sale: oak living room furniture w/lamps, $400; oak dining room table w/chairs, $100; book shelves, $100; beveled glass breakfast table w/chair, $300; cherry bedroom suite, queen size, perfect condition, $2,500. Will deliver. Call 678-252-5475 or e-mail david.gifford@gti.gatech.edu.

Real Estate/Roommates


2BR/2BA condo in Buckhead: 17th floor. 24-hour concierge, fitness center and swimming pool, assigned parking. Upgrades include Brazilian cherry wood floor, Corian countertop, priced at $215,000. Motivated! Call 404-931-9922.

3BR/1.5BA condo for sale in Marietta. Large bedrooms, nice patio. $78,000. Off Hwy. 41, close to I-75, Cumberland Mall. 20 minutes to GT, 5 minutes to Life College. Quiet community w/ pool. Priced at $215,000. Call Beverly 678-581-9701.

SPORTS/FITNESS/RECREATION
Men’s women’s bicycle, 27-inch, 7-speed, like new Pacific, $75 OBO. Call 894-3646 or e-mail william.robinson@gti.gatech.edu.

MISCELLANEOUS
1977 Kawasaki KE100 motorcycle. Only 955 miles, trail and street legal bike. Has high fender flaps but also lights, blinkers, etc. $400. Call 894-7185 or e-mail aisr26g@earthlink.net.

Spa bathtub, 5 ft. x 5 ft. corner unit, white, with fixtures. 60x32 interior dimensions. $200 OBO. E-mail allison@cc.gatech.edu or call 385-0395.

2004 Honda S99 “Naked” street bike. 600cc asphalt black/grey. This is a brand new bike. Must sell, baby on the way. $6,250 firm. For more information, e-mail sean.porter@cc.gatech.edu or call 678-805-8096.

May 12
The Office of Organizational Development hosts a free brown bag called “Fish!” on how to bring more energy and passion to your work place, at 11:30 a.m. in room 308, Savant Building. To register, visit www.trainweb.gatech.edu/mastcal.

Faculty and staff should send calendar items for events to editor@cpa.gatech.edu when available.

Ads will run for a maximum of three weeks in the order in which they are received. The Bulletin reserves the right to edit ads longer than 30 words.