FROM ASSOCIATE PROVOST, DR. BENJAMIN WITHERS

Greetings! In this edition of the UGE Newsletter we will share many of the projects and activities conducted, sponsored, or facilitated by Undergraduate Education. This has been a productive and very busy year; I am proud to work with colleagues who contribute so much to the University of Kentucky.

Over the last year, our Division has continued efforts toward restructuring our units in order to foster collaboration on activities that support undergraduates in all colleges. The staff and faculty in the Academy of Undergraduate Excellence have seen tremendous success through their combined efforts. Applications to Honors have set another record, with over 3200 high school students seeking a spot in the Fall 2015 cohort.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The University of Kentucky first was classified in 2006 and 2008 by the Carnegie Foundation for exemplary work in Curricular Engagement and Outreach & Partnerships. This winter UK received the highly competitive Community Engagement Classification – only 361 institutions now hold this commendation for “alignment among campus mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement.” Dr. Katherine McCormick, the Stuckert Endowed Professor for Service Learning, led the team that developed the Carnegie report. She is now spending nearly a third of her time here in UGE’s Academy for Undergraduate Excellence to promote the best pedagogies and research strategies in service learning at UK.

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see success.

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Starting on December 1, 2014, Dr. Karen Badger became the Associate Dean for Career and Exploratory Advising and Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education. As Associate Dean (for the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Ben Withers), she will be responsible for leadership in both Undergraduate Studies and the Stuckert Career Center. By combining these two units after going through exhaustive external reviews in 2007 and again in 2012-13, UGE is bringing together two sets of professional staff from different backgrounds to work collaboratively on both advising and career counseling strategies. Combining them under an Associate Dean with senior faculty rank will focus and deepen those programs that facilitate students who are making their transition to college. As the students explore academic and career options, they will be more efficiently served because the two units will understand how each other’s professional standards support student learning.

As Assistant Provost, Dr. Badger will help the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education lead campus conversations to evaluate and strengthen advising and career services for all undergraduate students. In her new role she coordinates University-wide curriculum processes by leading the Undergraduate Council and the UK Core. As a faculty champion for exploratory students transitioning from high school as well as from other institutions to UK, Dr. Badger brings a wealth of knowledge to the review committees for curricular proposals.

**Programming in Undergraduate Studies & the Stuckert Career Center that Cross between Career Counseling & Academic Advising**

- Academic Preparation Program
- BCTCblue+ Program
- BTAP (transition from B&E) and ETAP (from Engineering)
- Career Fairs
- Dual Credit Programs
- Experiential Education Program
- KCTCS Transfer Pathway Guides
- Living Learning Communities
- National Student Exchange
- UK-prefix Orientation Courses
- Pre-professional advising
- Re-Start Program
- UK150 – Major and Career Exploration Course
The ACT median of all the applicants was 30; those accepted in the programs averaged a 32 on the composite ACT score. This growth in both quantity and quality is quite impressive and is a testament to the hard work of the staff and the appeal of the new Honors curriculum and residence hall. Similarly, the Gaines Center for the Humanities witnessed a 25% increase in the number of applicants, thanks to the energy of the new Director, Dr. Phil Harling, and the increased communication with Honors, Chellgren and the colleges. Equally impressive is the accomplishment of the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards where Pat Whitlow and Jennifer Strange once again assisted over ninety applicants for various scholarships.

Our newest area, Transformative Learning, combines Academic Enhancement’s long record of campus impact with the potential for Presentation U! to take written, oral, and visual communication to a new level. This year saw Academic Enhancement open the much needed The Study North in a prime spot in Champions Court I. This state-of-the-art facility helped Academic Enhancement provide over 23,000 peer-to-peer tutoring sessions, serving over 4000 distinct students. Presentation U! completed its first full-year of operation by working with its third faculty cohort. These faculty will teach courses supporting the Graduation Composition and Communication Requirement that Assistant Provost Deanna Sellnow, along with Dr. Matt Giancarlo from A&S, helped implement in nearly 90 undergraduate majors this year.

Perhaps no units have seen as much change as Undergraduate Studies and the Stuckert Career Center. The staff in both units have responded wonderfully to the call to help pull together advising and career planning for exploratory students. Even as they worked together to identify new programming, they continued to provide key student support including an array of workshops, two successful Career Fairs, and participation in the academic major fair. The advisors in Undergraduate Studies have worked diligently with their students, as evidenced by the impressive 1.4% increase in priority registrations in the first-year cohort. Associate Dean Karen Badger and Advising Network President Susan Herrick have also provided key leadership in campus discussions that promise to further strengthen our campus approach to undergraduate advising.

This short summary captures only a small part of the UGE’s work over this last year. Our staff have also helped the campus approve nearly 300 new courses and programs through Undergraduate Council and the UK Core Education Committee. The Office of Student Success, particularly Dr. Bethany Miller, has facilitated discussions with colleges that have, to date, put us almost one percent ahead in priority registrations even as we’ve seen new all-time records for several colleges, including CAFE, B&E, Health Sciences, and Nursing. There’s clearly a great deal of work still to do. I look forward to sharing the journey ahead with you.
THE ACADEMY FOR UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE

The Academy for Undergraduate Excellence was established last year to craft meaningful collaborations among UK's premier academic enrichment programs for the benefit of all undergraduates. Through the Academy deeply committed students can extend and enrich learning within academic majors, minors, living learning programs, and the UK Core.

For example, sophomores mentored by Chellgren professors (see the list at http://www.uky.edu/academy/chellgren_people) in a scholarly project are eminently poised to succeed in applying for a Gaines Fellowship for their junior year and complete a major independent study project in their senior year (http://www.uky.edu/academy/gaines-fellowships). The Student Outreach Team includes the Chellgren Student Fellows Program, First Generation Initiatives, Nationally Competitive Awards and SPUR (from Undergraduate Research), representing the Academy at both on-campus and off-campus events. The Honors Residential College offers many resources to its students but primarily emphasizes peer-to-peer interactions strengthened by a series of co-curricular activities conducive to learning and discovery.

Many of the faculty and staff from across campus who teach, mentor or offer support for extracurricular activities in the Honors Program also serve as Gaines Seminar faculty, Chellgren Professors or sponsors for Undergraduate Research students. This year all the units in the Academy supported the Undergraduate Research Showcase in Spring 2015. Emphasizing the interconnections among the constituent programs, the Academy affords all students individualized paths to academic excellence.
The recent increases in student success at UK reflect the collaborative, campus-wide approach undertaken to monitor early alerts, midterm grades, financial balances, preregistrations and more. Outreach efforts to individual students combine with strategic efforts targeting those students who are showing they are at-risk of dropping out but also have strong indicators for success at UK (the “700” initiative). These efforts are led by the Office of Student Success in partnership with many central units who are represented in the Campus Retention Advisory Committee (CRAC).

CRAC meets regularly to advise University leadership in the design, implementation and assessment of UK’s student success initiatives. There are several other, smaller teams working on strategic efforts to improve student retention and graduation rates. These groups also communicate regularly with Bethany Miller, Director of Retention and Student Success. See more information on the CRAC website: www.uky.edu/studentsuccess/retention-advisory-committee.

RETENTION UPDATES
The Retention Updates are provided to inform and assist colleges and central support units in their student success efforts. We hope the online format will both facilitate communication and foster collaboration regarding student success. Retention Updates are sent regularly during registration windows and through the first week of classes (http://www.uky.edu/studentsuccess/retention-update). If you have announcements, events, success stories, relevant readings, or research related to student success to include in the Retention Updates, please send your information to Larissa McLaughlin, Student Success Project Manager.
The UK Core Program is finishing up the fourth academic year of implementation, and broad faculty involvement across all colleges serving undergraduates has been critical to its success. UK’s general education program is overseen by the UK Core Education Committee (UKCEC) who assure that course offerings address all four student learning outcomes. All courses each semester require students to upload an assignment for assessment purposes via their course in the MyUK portal. UGE and UKCEC oversee the program evaluation process which by this point has included all of the ten content areas. See more information on the UK Core website: http://www.uky.edu/ukcore/Evaluation_Data.

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<tr>
<th>UK Core Content Area</th>
<th>UKC Course Name</th>
<th>Dept (College)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inquiry – Arts &amp; Creativity</td>
<td>Information Literacy and Critical Thinking</td>
<td>ICT (C&amp;I)</td>
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<td>Lens Art</td>
<td>Art&amp;VS (FA)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>BioArt: Creativity, Experimentation &amp; Methodology</td>
<td>Art&amp;VS (FA) + Biology (A&amp;S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inquiry – Humanities</td>
<td>Facebook Social Media</td>
<td>WRD (A&amp;S)</td>
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<td>Arches to Engines: A History of Tech</td>
<td>History (A&amp;S)</td>
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<td>Global Shakespeare</td>
<td>English (A&amp;S)</td>
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<td>Inquiry – Social Sciences</td>
<td>Public Health and Nutrition, 21st Century</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
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<td>Historic Preservation: How the Past Informs the Future</td>
<td>HP (Design)</td>
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<td>U.S. Citizenship</td>
<td>Rhetorics of Citizenship</td>
<td>WRD (A&amp;S)</td>
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<td>Food Ethics</td>
<td>Phil (A&amp;S)</td>
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<td>Info Communication Technology in Society</td>
<td>ICT (C&amp;I)</td>
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This year, under the leadership of UGE Assistant Provost Karen Badger, the Undergraduate Council has been working with UKCEC, Graduate Council and Senate Council to reduce the amount of time it takes for a proposal to move through the review/approval process. The UGC has found that the most common issues that faculty encounter with problem proposals are that they are missing required items that can be found in the UK Syllabus Template, and that students learning outcomes may be missing or written in ways that show they are not measurable. A consultation with CELT staff will help strengthen a course or program proposal - http://www.uky.edu/CELT.
This was another record-breaking cycle for Honors, with 3,225 applicants to be part of our Fall 2015 cohort; those applicants were overwhelmingly talented, with an average ACT of 32.9 and an average unweighted high school GPA of 3.94. We were also excited to partner through this process with three pathway programs: Global Scholars (Gatton College of Business and Economics), Social Enterprise (Gatton College of Business and Economics), and Scholars in Engineering and Management (SEAM; Gatton College of Business and Economics and College of Engineering). We look forward to welcoming the Scholars in Nursing Honors Pathway program from the College of Nursing, beginning in 2016.

As the 2014-2015 school-year comes to a close, the Honors Residential College (RC) faculty, staff and peer mentors can look back upon a banner year for participation and student engagement. The Honors RC enriches UK Honors students’ collaborative learning in a supportive and close-knit environment. Honors Program Peer Mentors are the lifeblood of the Honors RC—they plan and carry out great programming, get to know students individually and help foster a true sense of community within Central I, II & starting in fall 2015, Haggin Hall. As the Honors RC expands over the coming years, we hope that through excellent programming, staff/faculty involvement, and an evolving peer mentoring program, the community we have built will continue to feel like “home” for our Honors students.

This spring the Honors Program selected ten incoming freshman as recipients of the 2015-16 T.W. Lewis Scholarship. Representing Fayette County and twenty-nine Appalachian counties in Kentucky, these “Lewis Scholars” will serve as the second cohort of Honors students to receive this prestigious scholarship. From a pool of approximately 120 applicants, 25 were interviewed before selecting our ten new scholars for next fall. The recipients were selected on the basis of their academic achievement, demonstrated leadership potential, and financial need. They will each receive $5,000 toward the cost of tuition, room and board. For more information on the T. W. Lewis Scholarship Fund, visit www.uky.edu/academy/honors-incoming-scholarships or contact the Honors Program at 859-257-3111, or honprog@uky.edu.

The first-year recipients of the Otis A. Singletary Scholarship, and their upperclassmen service-learning mentors continued to impact UK and other local communities through shared service work. This year, students partnered to provide service with The Learning Center at Linlee, The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, UK Fusion, The Nest, Campus Kitchens, Lexington Public Library, Catholic Action Center, and more. These activities highlight the academy’s newly adopted focus on Service Learning.

New this year to Honors, the Snow Storm Series is a brainstorming event with Honors students and faculty from all corners of campus. One night each month in a casual setting, Honors students talk with Dr. Snow and faculty guests about significant issues. The roster for 2015-16 is currently being formed; if interested in serving as a faculty guest, contact Dr.Snow (dsnow@uky.edu).

In May 2015, Honors launched 146 new graduates who set off on exciting new paths to professional programs, graduate study, medical school, and other career opportunities. Congratulations new graduates!