

**UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA  
ANNUAL REPORT TEMPLATE (NONACADEMIC)  
FY 2010 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)**

Department \_\_\_ Honors College \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Completing Report \_\_\_ Dr. Michael Hester & Melanie Hildebrandt \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENTAL MISSION & ASSESSMENT**

**1. Departmental Mission & Goals**

Departmental Mission/Vision Statement :

The mission of the Honors College is (1) to attract and (2) to retain academically well prepared and intellectually gifted undergraduates. (1) Honors College personnel assist the University's admissions processes by designing and distributing recruitment materials for potential Honors students including Advanced Academy students and students interested in intercollegiate Debate. (2) The Honors College provides an enhanced and supportive learning environment for its students by regularly offering small Honors sections of regular curriculum courses, interdisciplinary Honors courses, special Honors seminars, and opportunities for research and the presentation of that research in appropriate venues. The active involvement of faculty known for their excellence in teaching and support for student research is necessary for this latter objective to be accomplished. In addition, personal one-on-one advising concerning registration, scholarship opportunities, and opportunities for research presentations are regularly conducted by Honors College personnel.

The mission of the Advanced Academy of Georgia is to provide an enriched, residential, early-entrance-to-college program for carefully selected, bright, and motivated high school students who are interested in accelerating their academic careers. The Academy seeks to provide opportunities for educational advancement in an environment that also supports students in developing the skills that will help to ensure their success, both in the Academy and as future leaders.

Departmental Goals [*Align with institutional goals in 5 below*]

Goal 1: Provide educational opportunities and learning experiences in smaller, seminar-based classes for exceptional Undergraduate students (*SPG i, ii, viii*)

Goal 2: Provide educational opportunities and learning experiences outside of the classroom for exceptional Undergraduate students. (*SPG i, ii, v*)

Goal 3: Increase enrollment in the Honors College while maintaining its diverse makeup. (*SPG ii*)

Goal 4: Increase student participation in Undergraduate research. (*SPG i, ii, v*)

**2. Assessment Summary: Results of Student Learning Outcome Goals Addressed This Academic Year**

Forty-four Honors courses were offered with 653 students enrolled. Student evaluations of Honors courses were uniformly positive.

Participation was high and feedback was positive for all 3 of the Honors events hosted by the student Honors Council.

Total enrollment for the Honors College, including new Freshmen, Academy students, and continuing students increased from 465 in Fall 2008 to 481 in Fall 2009.

Honors student participation at one state and three national research conferences increased from 30 students in 2008-2009 to 47 students in 2009-2010. This is an increase of 36.2%.

The Advanced Academy of Georgia's (AAG) enrollment was 85 students. The cumulative grade point average for the AAG student body was 3.61, with 35% of the students earning a 4.0 gpa.

### 3. Changes/Improvements Made as a Result of Assessment

Based on student evaluations and student demand, as based on enrollment in particular courses, some new Honors course offerings will now be offered each academic year.

Similar programs will be offered in the future to provide Honors students, faculty, and staff social and learning experiences outside of the classroom.

Marketing and recruitment efforts will continue in attempt to attract exceptional students to this program.

Honors students will again be encouraged to participate in these 4 conferences and additional opportunities will be researched and communicated to the students in order to increase participation even further.

The AAG conducted a search for a new director, hiring Nicole Worthington. A new Academy Residential Coordinator, Adam Robertson, was also hired. These hires were informed by assessment of the program, with the goal of bringing in qualified staff dedicated to increasing enrollment while maintaining academic excellence and a quality residential experience.

## STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

The Strategic Plan (2010-2015) is designed to shape the University of West Georgia for the next five years in such a way as to place it as a **destination university**, particularly among peer universities in the state of Georgia and among those universities in the nation granting doctoral degrees in programs that balance liberal arts education with professional preparation.

### 4. What are your targeted expectations by 2015 for the strategic plan?

With a new Director of Undergraduate Research, the Honors College will be coordinating undergraduate research across the entire campus. Thus, our goals for undergraduate research will reflect university-wide participation. Our goals for undergraduate research are a 20% increase from 2009-2010 for the number of students participating in undergraduate research conferences.

For Honors enrollment, our goal is to continue an approximate 5% rate of honors enrollment as measured against the overall undergraduate population. Thus, we expect an increase in honors enrollment over 2009-2010 of approximately 15%.

For the Advanced Academy, the enrollment goal is 100 students by 2015. Additionally, there is an expectation that by 2015, 50% or more of the Academy students will participate in undergraduate research projects during their time in the AAG.

### 5. Identify the strategic plan goals pursued by your department during this academic year:

No.	Institutional Strategic Plan Goals (SPG) (2010-15)	Check the SPG pursued	Indicate your Departmental Initiatives that correspond to applicable institutional SPG
i	Every undergraduate academic program will demonstrate a distinctive blending of liberal arts education, professional competencies, and experiential learning, preparing students to be ethically responsible and civically engaged professionals in the global economy of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.	X	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offering of a wide-selection of small, seminar-based Honors courses.</li> <li>2. Offering at least 4 opportunities each year for students to present at research conferences.</li> </ol>
ii	Every undergraduate student will be advised to take advantage of one of multiple available learning communities. Learning communities that are available to students will include communities organized by living arrangement, by year in program, by other co-curricular associations – Honors Program, Advanced Academy, Band, Athletics, Debate, or	X	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marketing and recruitment efforts of new and continuing students regarding the Honors College.</li> <li>2. Honors College freshmen</li> </ol>

	program in the major.		are encouraged to live together in 2 designated floors of one residence hall.
iii	The University will endeavor to increase enrollment in and graduation from graduate programs, including doctoral programs, that have as their mark a practical professional purpose, experiential learning opportunities, and an intellectual program informed by a foundation of liberal education.		
iv	The University will maintain an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.		
v	The University community will provide a balanced variety of cultural, recreational, leisure, and informal education programming opportunities for faculty, staff, and students that enhance the quality of campus life.	X	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Honors Council will offer at least 3 events or programs each year for Honors students, faculty, and staff.</li> <li>2. Honors students are encouraged to participate in the council and in campus and community service activities.</li> </ol>
vi	All units will strive to improve the compensation and working environment of faculty and staff in order to recruit and retain the best individuals.		
vii	The University will endeavor to increase our overall enrollment to 14,500 by the year 2015.		
viii	With our enrollment growth, West Georgia will remain committed to the following targets of academic quality: faculty-student ratio of 18 to 1; average class size of 29; full-time to part-time faculty ratio of 4.4 to 1.	X	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offering of a wide-selection of small, seminar-based Honors courses.</li> </ol>
ix	West Georgia will develop several new facilities to improve quality along with meeting capacity demands due to enrollment growth		
x	Capital Campaign: The Development Office will prepare for a capital campaign to assist in meeting the long-term needs of the University of West Georgia.		
xi	Communication and Marketing: The Office of University Communications and Marketing (UCM) will internally and externally promote the missions and goals of the strategic plan. This will be achieved by aligning the institution's integrated marketing plan (advertising, visual identity standards, web presence, media relations, etc.) with the strategic plan.		
xii	Community Relations: The University will engage the local community educationally, culturally and recreationally.	X	UWG Debate performs public debates for the local community, in 2010 conducting a debate on global warming for the Georgia Leadership Conference held on campus.

6. How did you measure successes/failures toward your expected goal(s)? What metrics are being used?

Every honors course is assessed through end of term student evaluations.

Attendance and participation in social programs and research opportunities is tracked each year to determine whether or not programs are successful and beneficial for our students.

Registration for honors courses, completed honors contracts, and the number of honors graduates are recorded and tracked to determine if enrollment and graduation is indeed increasing, or at least being maintained.

7. Describe some notable achievements toward selected goal(s) during this academic year.

Honors student participation in undergraduate research conferences was increased by 36.2%.

The number of Honors College graduates was on par with the average from the past few academic years:

2009-2010: 43 graduates      Average from 2007-2009: 44.33 graduates

There were a substantial number of honors contracts completed, which indicates increased honors participation and should lead to increased graduation numbers in the future. Fall 2009: 127    Spring 2010: 140    Summer 2010: 31

8. What resources could have helped you achieve or exceed your goals for the year? How would you have used them to facilitate/improve the work of your department?

Additional funding for certain initiatives could have helped us achieve or exceed goals, such as:

1. Offering additional sections of Honors courses. If we are able to provide more honors courses each year, this would reduce the number of honors contracts that students and faculty complete. Additionally, we could use this extra funding and honors courses to establish an Honors Learning Community, where a group of Honors Freshmen would take the same set of Honors courses together during their first year.
2. Offering additional social programs and activities for honors students, faculty, and staff to interact with one another outside of the classroom. Some initiatives would be:
  - I. Mentoring Program: Set-up with faculty who would mentor new Honors freshmen during their first year at UWG. Funding could be provided to the faculty to support social gatherings, such as a dinner club, or travel to special events, such as museums, theatres, etc.
  - II. Reinstating the Annual Spring Break Trip: For 17 consecutive years, Honors College staff traveled with honors students to Washington, DC for Spring Break. This trip was a great educational experience for the students and an added "bonus" for all of their hard work. The trip was canceled in 2009 and 2010 due to budget constraints.
3. Expanding student research activities. This could include:
  - I. Providing funding for faculty and students to conduct research projects.
  - II. Expanding the number of conferences that honors students can attend and present at each year with Honors College support, funding and supervision.
  - III. Increasing the number of students who receive at least some monetary support from the Honors College to attend and present research at conferences. For example, for the 2010 NCUR conference there were a total of 25 research projects and 35 UWG students accepted to present. However, the Honors College was only able to fund the travel for 21 students and with an additional 3 students securing funding from other university sources, 23 of the 25 projects were represented at the conference.
  - IV. Expanding marketing and recruitment for research presentations to students outside of the Honors College. Many other UWG students participate in undergraduate research and often are not able to secure funding to support travel to research conferences.

## 9. Departmental Accomplishments

Two UWG undergraduate research papers tied for “Best Student Paper” at the 2010 NSSA conference. “The Border vs the Grillage” by Ameen Kazerouni, Adam Szaruga, and Chelsea Briant tied with “Through the Looking Lens: Modernity & Identity in German, Mexican, and Spanish Film” by Natasha Godwin.

For the second year in a row, a UWG Honors student, Charles Bauch, was named a Fulbright Scholar.

UWG Debate qualified for the National Debate Tournament for the 38<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> longest streak in the nation, surpassed only by Harvard, Dartmouth, University of Kansas, and the University of Southern California. UWG Debate finished the season as the 8<sup>th</sup> ranked team in the country, marking the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive season UWG Debate has finished in the top 10.

### UPON COMPLETION

Please email completed report to the **Vice President of your Division & to:**

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