Celebrating more than 10 years of student success

What do you know about University College?

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY
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In this inaugural edition of Make the Connection, you will learn some of the reasons why University College (UC) is nationally recognized college. Throughout the publication, you will be introduced to aspects of UC that make it a model university college.

UC is nationally recognized for its innovative approach to academic and student support. It houses KSU’s First-Year Experience, which US News and World Report consistently rates as one of the best first year programs in the United States. University College is also a college of research-based practices offering the nation’s first Master of Science in First-Year Studies.

Our highly esteemed faculty and staff are dedicated to promoting student leadership and enhancing the global engagement of our students.

UC Magazine will be published three times during the calendar year in January, April, and September. A special “Year in Advance” issue will be distributed each December.

Please join us in successfully promoting the UC Magazine!

Loretta Daniels, MSCM
Instructor, Leadership and Integrative Studies
Communication and Marketing Director
University College announces a new dean
Following a national search, Dr. Keisha Hoerrner was named Dean of University College by President Papp in May 2015. Hoerrner previously served as interim dean of the college since January 2014 and has worked in various positions at the university since 2000. As the Associate Dean, Hoerrner served as the primary architect of the MS in First-Year Studies degree.

The new Department of Leadership and Integrative Studies
Effective July 1, the Department of University Studies will officially become the Department of Leadership and Integrative Studies. The department’s name now recognizes the growth of both the Integrative Studies degree program and the interdisciplinary certificate in Leadership Studies.

Orientation designs a new online experience
Orientation and Transition Programs is set to launch an online or Web-based experience for students and parents to complete prior to Ignition.

UC launches its first fully online undergraduate degree program
University College announced the launching of its first fully online undergraduate degree. The fully online B.S. in Integrative Studies supports a new initiative of the Governor of Georgia, the Go Back-Move Ahead campaign. The campaign seeks to make it easier for prospective students to go back to college.
University College — MAKE the connection
University College — MAKE the connection
Q. Can you give me a brief history of the NEST?

A. The NEST is a new name for First-Year and Undeclared Advising. It was originally created to serve students coming to the university without a declared academic major. The idea was to serve those students who were brand new to the university and hadn’t chosen a major.

We’ve expanded the definition of what the NEST is and isn’t and who we serve by including students not just in their first year but anyone who is undecided or exploratory or in transition from one major to another. Of course, with the consolidation and so many new majors coming onboard, there will be a lot of students who have all these new options, and we want to be effective guides for them.

Q. How does the NEST specifically help first-year students?

A. Students hopefully have a number of advising contacts. If a student has an identified major, he or she will certainly want to work with an advisor in that major since that advisor is the specialist on the academic requirements for that degree. We think of ourselves as generalists, just like in the health care system where you have a bunch of specialists you go to depending on your issue but you also have a primary care physician who hopefully coordinates a lot of that care. We are the primary care physicians for the first-year students who choose to use our office. We help direct them toward the people who can best meet their needs if they cannot be met in the NEST.

Q. What is the most common question students ask – or information they are seeking – when they come to the NEST?

A. Students will come in just needing help with “what classes do I take next semester?” That question is often kind of the doorway allowing our advisors to ask them lots of questions about other needs they might have that they aren’t even aware of yet. The most common question is “What do I need right now?” or “What do I need for next semester?” but these questions open the door to helping the students in a lot of different ways.
Q. Approximately how many first-year, sophomore, junior, and senior students come in typically?

A. Primarily, we see first-year students. I do not have an exact breakdown, but I'd say about 70-75% of the students we serve are in their first year. The NEST metaphor is to have students feel like this is a good place to start. Hopefully we are creating a nurturing, welcoming, and helpful environment, but ultimately, we want the students to leave the NEST to find their academic home and academic college.

Q. Are there any specific students or student populations that the NEST helps?

A. At the NEST, we see a lot of good students who are having a hard time getting into some of the university’s gated programs. In these cases, we help students find similar programs that allowing them to consider alternatives.

Q. How will advising be different this year (summer)?

A. We have to meet the challenge of offering advising in two physical places and serving what we think will be two distinct student populations.

Q. What are some major milestones the NEST has achieved in your two years as the director?

A. One of the things the NEST has been responsible for is creating an advising network that has hopefully opened lines of communication between advisors across the colleges, so we’re sharing more information than perhaps we did before. I believe that the NEST has become the information hub not only for students, but advisors as well. Of course, another major milestone in January was our move from Student Success Services to University College.

Q. What have been some of the changes from making that move in January?

A. We are now solidly rooted in an academic college in the same way that all the other advising centers are at KSU. Hopefully this gives us a seat at the table and parity with the advising centers in the other colleges. Now that we are in University College, I believe we will be more visible at Orientation. Of course, prior to joining University College, we were in Student Success with Orientation and partnered with them there. However, our move to UC brings together orientation, advising, and the first-year seminars of First-Year and Transition Studies together under one roof, all of which play a large role in students’ first-year experience. Having all three of these in one college will hopefully create a more integrated experience for our students.

Q. What advice do you have for first-year students who will be starting fall 2015?

A. I would tell them that it’s very important to find someone on campus - whether it’s an advisor, a professor, a mentor, or a student organization leader - who is invested in their success and who can advocate for them.

“Our whole idea of the NEST metaphor is to have students feel like this is a good place to start.”
Innovative, interdisciplinary, and unique are all words that describe the programs offered in the Department of Leadership and Integrative Studies. This distinctive department has transformed over the past 12 years, evolving from an academic support services unit to a academic degree-granting department.

Dr. Rebecca Casey, chair of the department, explained that the evolution of the department was driven, in part, by KSU’s decision to raise its admissions requirements and reduce its focus on students requiring remediation, instead directing them to two-year or technical colleges.

The departmental shift was influenced by recommendations from the first Foundations of Excellence report in 2004. In response to the findings presented in that report, Dr. Betty Siegel, Kennesaw State University’s president at that time, charged Casey with the task of redefining and re-imagining the blueprint for excellence in the first-year of college, which included the hiring of 10 new faculty positions to teach the first-year seminar course.

“The impetus for this was primarily that a sufficient number of full-time faculty from across campus could not be convinced to teach the course, so Dr. Siegel decided to give me the faculty I needed to meet demand,” shared Casey. Eventually, those 10 faculty would be reassigned into what is now First-Year and Transition Studies, a spin-off of University Studies.

University Studies is a multidisciplinary, student-focused, student-friendly department offering two successful academic programs: the Integrative
Studies bachelor’s degree (INTS) and the Leadership Studies Certificate program. The INTS degree provides students with the flexibility to customize a curriculum to meet their personal, educational, and career goals. The Leadership Studies Certificate helps students develop a competitive edge in the pursuit of their chosen careers.

When asked about the department’s plan for growth and advancement, Casey replied, “Our main goal must be to develop our Leadership Certificate into an undergraduate degree program. We have the courses, the students, the faculty, and the infrastructure in place to make this happen.” The numbers are impressive; more than 300 students participate in the program, and this number is growing. The department has begun the process of seeking curricular approval for the proposed degree.

“Our faculty and staff are experts in a number of disciplines, including Leadership Studies, English, Math, Psychology and Statistics. We have found it to be extremely beneficial to our department for our faculty to be multidisciplinary,” Casey proudly stated. Although there are several staff members who contribute to the success of the department, Paulette Black stands out. Black is the senior staff member of the department and knows everyone well. “She is an ethical leader in her own right. In my opinion, she represents us with distinction and value, training, delegating, and setting a high bar for other staff members to follow. She would not want this mantle but it carries anyway.”

Effective July 1 of this year, University Studies will officially be renamed the Department of Leadership and Integrative Studies. Casey notes that the decision to change the department name was twofold. “First, there were obvious changes as a result of consolidation and reorganization, and second, we wanted to emphasize our degree and certificate programs.”

"Quite simply, most students and faculty had no idea what University Studies did. I was strongly supportive of the name change; however, I had some concerns about disenfranchising some of our faculty and their roles. However, it was a good decision since INTS and Leadership Studies are the focus of the future, and other programs were subsumed in various other structures. We are busy now purchasing new signage, stationary, business cards, and the like. I truly believe the impact will be significant, greatly contributing to the visibility and growth of our degree and certificate programs,” said Casey.

The total number of enrolled INTS degree program students continues to increase. "We currently have 155 active INTS majors, which is an increase of more than 50 percent from the same time last year," Dr. Michael Keleher, degree program director, said.

“Our main goal must be to develop our Leadership Certificate into an undergraduate degree program.”
Welcoming our New Owls

Interview by Kelsey Gulledge

It is a busy year for the Department of Orientation and Transition Programs (OTP). In January 2015, as a result of the SPSU/KSU consolidation, OTP officially joined University College. Starting this summer, the department will launch efforts to enhance the new student and transfer orientation experience, manage multiple orientation dates, and navigate between two campuses. These OTP initiatives will be spearheaded by the department’s director, Dr. Jake Gross, who has been managing operations for the past six years.

Q. How does Orientation and Transition Programs specifically help first-year students?

A. Students get what they need out of orientation. Some students are first-generation students and do not understand the credit hour system, so we try to engage those students in conversations about basic academic issues. We try to be all things to all students as much as we can, but, ultimately, our mission is to assist students and their family members in making a successful transition to Kennesaw State. This will allow them to meet their goals and eventually graduate from KSU. We always try to be open, evolving what we do to meet the ever-changing needs of students and parents, and we try to anticipate what those needs might be.

Q. What is included in the transfer student orientation?

A. Transfer student orientation has been an encouraging experience for our staff over the past two years. Previously, we made excuses for transfer students in that we would say, "Oh, they are too busy; they do not want to be here, so let's just give them the basics." However, two years ago, we realized that they need just as many programs and services as the first-year students. The only difference is in the academic advising of the first-year requirements. We had some conversations in our small groups and developed a more specialized academic advising session because each student comes in with his or her individual needs. Transfer students are in a period of transition in life and academically, not the high-school-to-college transition but rather an institution-to-institution transition.

Q. What aspects of your job do you find most rewarding?

A. It is always rewarding to assist students with special needs, be it someone with a physical disability who requires a wheelchair or maybe someone who has broken her leg playing soccer and is on crutches. We are happy to accommodate them by providing transportation in a golf cart or having an Ignition Leader push them around all day. Things like that are always rewarding.
Q. How will Orientation be different this year?

A. We are excited for this year. It’s going to be profoundly different, not just because we are hosting it on two different campuses, but because we have created more of an engagement model that includes both academic and faculty engagement as well as socially engaging experiences for the incoming students. Research indicates that what truly matters is not whether incoming students hear compelling information about financial aid but, rather, that they connect with faculty, a friend, or a peer group. It is this connection that really makes a difference in whether or not they will succeed.

We’ve created some space, and we are working with a marketing and branding production company called Between Pixels. We are launching a preimposed orientation online experience or Web-based experience.

A lot of things we’ve traditionally done face-to-face will be introduced to students before they ever get to campus. It will create a little bit more margin on Orientation Day, and we will not have to cover every single piece of information. Providing too much information at orientation sessions is overwhelming. The more you give students, the less they are able to retain. Therefore, instead of having 10 speakers back-to-back in the morning, we are going to have two panel sessions and an introduction to academic advising. The first panel session is called “Maslow’s panel,” providing an opportunity for parents and students to discuss those lower order needs of college students (i.e., safety, food, and health). The second panel will be led by two or three faculty members who will answer basic questions about academics during the first year. They will discuss what life is like in the classroom and what students can expect. It is going to be challenging, but I am excited about this new format. The introduction to academic advising is at the end of the day. We are going to provide students and parents the opportunity to attend the type of presentations given in the past, but those will be offered in breakout sessions so they can choose their adventure. They can continue to engage online after they leave campus at the end of the day.

Q. What are some major milestones?

A. Our Ignition Leader program is one of the things we are excited about. The first is the establishment of the Ignition Leader program. It’s gone from just an idea to one of the top leadership development programs for students on campus, and departments often seek out our students for things that are not orientation-related. Because we’re the first department to interact with a dual campus model, we really get the chance to set the tone regarding what it means to be a KSU student and an Owl at the New U.

Q. What is your vision for OTP?

A. We’re making a lot of decisions regarding what we think is going to be right for the New U and for our department. I think some of the national trends focus on finding ways to engage students continually and “be in their pocket” via their cell phones. If we want to be relevant and effective, we’ve got to find a way to be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – before they get to campus, while they’re on campus, while they are sophomores, juniors, and seniors – so I think that’s where Orientation is going. Finding ways to connect students with people who care about them and matter to them will make a difference in their ability to succeed.

Gross and his team are prepared to welcome approximately 8000 incoming students for the Fall 2015 orientations. That number includes an 8 percent increase in the number of first-year students compared to the previous year.

“...ultimately, our mission is to assist students and their family members in making a successful transition to Kennesaw State.”
What is University College
by Catherine Bradford

Ask the new Dean of University College, Dr. Keisha L. Hoerrner, about her vision for the college, and her answers will be seasoned with words like “excitement” and “potential” and “growth opportunities.”

Indeed, Hoerrner appears to have good cause for optimism. The degree-granting UC, perhaps best known for its nationally recognized first-year experience programs, is going through a tremendous growth spurt. With the recent addition of a graduate degree, the addition of two departments, and the expansion of existing programs and services, UC is poised to welcome, advise, instruct, tutor, and graduate far more students than ever before in its almost 11-year history.

UC, academic home for all new and undeclared undergraduate students at Kennesaw State University (KSU), “is similar but also different” from other academic colleges, Hoerrner said. “We interact with students inside and outside of the classroom. This gives us a broad perspective on the student experience, and we are able to impact a significant number of students, not just our own majors,” Hoerrner said.

The college grants Bachelor of Science degrees in Integrative Studies, the university's custom-designed degree program. The number of graduates has steadily increased each year. The recent addition of the general studies track is expected “to enhance students’ opportunities to graduate,” said Hoerrner, explaining that it will be marketed as an online option for adults returning to college as part of KSU’s commitment to the state’s Complete College Georgia goal of a more educated workforce. A trend toward exit GPAs in a variety of majors has also fueled the need for a general studies option. “The general studies track may be the only way these students can graduate” in a timely manner, she said.

UC also offers an undergraduate certificate in leadership studies. Additionally, this fall, UC welcomes its first graduate student cohort with the launch of the fully online Master of Science in First-Year Studies program, housed in the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies. The department also offers credit-bearing seminar courses and academic learning communities for first-year, transfer, and sophomore students. Hoerrner noted that one of the defining strengths of UC is the multidisciplinary background and the interdisciplinary focus of its faculty and staff. UC's professional and administrative staff have wide-ranging backgrounds and bring a wealth of experience and knowledge. For example, Lisa L. Bauer, UC office manager and former administrative professional in the Coles College of Business, has been an invaluable resource, in part, because of a diverse perspective gained from working in another college. UC’s faculty are experts and scholars in diverse fields. “Take a look at our roster of faculty, and you will see scholars in the humanities, education, business, social sciences, mathematics, and the arts. As higher education moves more and more toward an Interdisciplinary focus, we have the opportunity to model 21st century teaching and learning.”

Hoerrner said that one of UC’s remarkable strengths is its concern with the entire student experience, from matriculation to graduation. Bringing the Department of Orientation and Transition Programs and the NEST (New and Exploratory Students) Advising Center under the umbrella of UC was strategically advantageous, creating the synergy and expertise needed for a comprehensive first-year experience and the totality of support needed by transfer students and students who transition in and out of majors. The Center for Student Leadership has been an integral part of the college since the UC’s inception.

Lisa Bauer and Dr. Keisha Hoerrner
Created in 2004 following an extensive self-study, University College also offers a substantial number of other academic support services and student engagement opportunities. One of the primary purposes of the college is fostering programs that have been empirically proven to enhance student success. These services include the first-year experience, supplemental peer instruction in high-risk courses, academic advising, new student orientation, peer leadership opportunities, math tutoring and co-curricular leadership experiences, including domestic exchanges and engagement abroad opportunities with a civic engagement focus, to name a few.

Without a doubt, Hoerrner is optimistic about the future of UC. The college appears to be uniquely positioned to offer new interdisciplinary degrees. There is a sense of excitement and synergy that comes with the infusion of new energy and talent. And, the college has a unique strength not to be underestimated: a truly multidisciplinary faculty and staff with an ethos for innovation and improvement.

“We interact with students inside and outside of the classroom. This gives us a broad perspective on the student experience, and we are able to impact a significant number of students, not just our own majors.”
Cultivating Tomorrow’s Leaders

University College houses one of KSU’s best-kept secrets—the Center for Student Leadership (CSL). Strategically located on the first floor of the Student Center next to the OWL Radio station, CSL offers programming to all KSU students.

CSL was designed to empower students to affect positive change in our local communities, in the lives of the students and those they touch, and in our global community. To realize its vision of developing the next generation of leaders, CSL is housed within University College and the Division of Student Affairs.

Judy Craven, director of the center, has been a part of the center for eight years. CSL provides weekly, semester-long, and year-long experiences to a broad range of students in leadership development and community engagement venues.

According to Craven, all programming is grounded in leadership theory and is inspired by CSL’s values: authenticity, collaboration, diversity, experiential learning and student-centered focus. Programs and initiatives are assessed using standards prescribed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

Craven explains that CSL uses various nationally recognized leadership models and that staff members design programs and initiatives to expand the scope of leadership development across the KSU campus. “Our staff is passionate. They are always learning and exploring and looking for new ways to deliver content. They recognize that they cannot be knowers of everything, so they seek out resources,” Craven said.

Staff and students are encouraged to pursue certifications in leadership, such as StrengthsQuest (a program that affords participants insight into using their talents to achieve academic success, explore careers, and promote leadership development), DISC (a behavior-assessment tool based on the DISC theory of psychologist William Moulton Marston), and True Colors (a model of personality identification).

Additionally, Craven understands the value of partnering and collaborating with other university programs. “The center looks to bring in experts in various areas,” Craven said. Craven appreciates her staff members, and when asked to identify one who stands out in terms of leadership, she quickly explained that she could not choose just one. “Each person brings great gifts to the Center and contributes to the mission and vision of the CSL. To highlight one person excludes the great work of others. I really would not know how to choose,” Craven said.
For example, she views Laila Smith as her “go to” person for operational concerns, such as budget management and marketing, while she turns to Karen Boettler for big ideas on advanced leadership initiatives.

Students are encouraged to participate in any of CSL’s programs—including its Student Leadership Development Workshop Series, through which they will learn to lead effectively in various environments, strengthen their written and oral communication skills, and explore domestic and international travel opportunities.

Earlier this year, CSL partnered with the Year of the Arabian Peninsula in the Division of Global Affairs to learn about that region of the world, with a focus on Oman. During the year, leadership students participated in a Women in Oman Conference, a scholarly symposium in Washington, D.C., Year of the Arabian Peninsula events and lectures, and helped coordinate the annual film festival. The experience culminated in a two-week trip visiting historical sites in Oman and meeting students and faculty at Sultan Qaboos University.

One of the students, Brittany Pallaschke, shared her thoughts on Facebook: “It is bittersweet leaving Oman. I’ve created so many memories and have learned so much. About my views, my beliefs, the world. I have a whole new outlook on everything. I have been solidified. I am so sad to be leaving this beautiful country and beautiful people, but I am ready to come home and share my newfound look on life.”

The center is positioned for growth and is currently conducting a search for an executive director. The new executive director will help to connect CSL with external communities. “We are looking for someone to help us with grant writing and fundraising. We are also looking for someone to champion the use of undergraduate research opportunities for our students,” explained Craven. "I would like us to connect better with academic programs.”

“The center looks to bring in experts in various areas to the staff and students.”
University College’s uniquely student centered focus extends beyond its nationally recognized academic programs. This academic college also houses five distinct student resources: Supplemental Instruction, the SMART Center, the ESL Study and Tutorial Center, the Senior Seminar and the Learning Support Program.

1. **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** is a free academic assistance program offered to all students in select courses with high DFW rates. “SI targets high-risk courses, not at-risk students,” said Nancy Burney, the SI program director.

The purpose of SI is threefold: to increase retention within targeted historically challenging courses, to improve student grades in those courses, and to increase the graduation rate of students.

Burney states that all students in a targeted class are encouraged to attend two SI sessions a week, which are led by a student who has previously earned an A in the course.

The program’s mission is to provide an environment that increases the learning and retention of all students enrolled in courses supported by the SI program. The program is led by student academic facilitators (SI Leaders) whose purpose is to provide structure to the study sessions.

The following link presents a two-minute video of an SI session: [http://youtu.be/JNnsf6OIrUQ](http://youtu.be/JNnsf6OIrUQ)

2. **The Science and Math Academic Resource and Tutoring (SMART) Center** offers free tutoring and support services for all KSU students. With centers on both the Kennesaw and Marietta campuses, the SMART Center offers support for all mathematics, chemistry, physics, and engineering courses that are part of the general education curriculum.

“The SMART Center gives students an opportunity to ask questions about a subject in a somewhat one-on-one environment that they may not be able to get answered during a class period. The variety of tutors on staff also gives students exposure to many different teaching styles that they may not normally see,” shared Robert Jordan, the center’s director.

3. **According to Director David Schmidt, the ESL Center** offers KSU international students English tutoring, general education academic advising, and mentoring. They can also receive assistance with ESL grammar and oral communication, as well as tutoring in the areas of writing, reading, pronunciation, and presentation skills.

The center houses Conversation Partners, a free, fun program open to students, faculty, and staff at KSU.

4. **Senior Seminar (KSU 4401)** is coordinated by Dr. Joan E. Leichter Dominick, an award-winning college educator. Developed in 1990 by President Emeritus Dr. Betty Siegel, this course is an innovative experience for students preparing for the transition out of college.

The Senior Seminar assists students as they move to post-university life, providing them with the opportunity to reflect on their collegiate experience. Through this course, students are able to revisit the proficiencies they acquired through their academic careers, develop the skills necessary to successfully transition to and navigate post-university life, gain greater understanding of the civic and social responsibilities of being college-educated global citizens, and connect with KSU as they become alumni relationship.

According to Dominick, “Students develop the life-long learning habit of archiving, assessing, and sharing their learning by creating a portfolio to honor, understand, and connect their learning from self to global society for the betterment of both.”

5. **The Learning Support Program** provides academic support to students whose entrance and placement scores indicate that they may benefit from focused instruction before enrolling in credit-bearing courses.

According to Tonya Jones, learning support program coordinator, “The program offers academic assistance to those students whose test scores suggest they might benefit from additional support in English and mathematics.”
The Office of Admissions. Learning support includes both foundation-level instruction and co-requisite support classes. Foundation courses are single semester, stand-alone classes focusing on preparing students for success in entry-level college courses. Students in these courses participate in co-requisite instruction that provides academic support and assistance while they are taking the entry-level courses in English or mathematics. Some students place directly into co-requisite coursework. Students exit learning support when they successfully pass the entry-level course.

Academic Support Services Faculty and Staff:

Nancy Burney  
Tonya Jones  
David Schmidt  
Robert Jordan  
Joan Dominick

“...in fall 2014, the Conversation Partners Program had record participation: 286 native English speakers and international students from 39 countries.”
Though the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies (FYTS) – formerly, First-Year Programs – was established in 2007, KSU began offering first-year seminars in 1983, when it was introduced as part of the university’s first-year experience program. The program has had a positive impact on student success and retention, and the launch of the program is one of 60 events highlighted on the timeline showcasing KSU’s rich 50-year history.

Over the years, the department expanded its offerings to better serve first-year students by introducing academic learning communities and developing different versions of the seminar course. Most recently, the FYTS department has extended its reach beyond the first year by providing opportunities to students as they transition through college. This has led to the development of a transfer course, a sophomore career exploration course, and several initiatives designed to support targeted populations of students. Additionally, the department collaborates with Student Affairs on events that celebrate and honor student transitions, such as First-Year Convocation, the Academic Extravaganza, and the President’s 4.0 Luncheon.

Dr. Ruth Goldfine, chair of the FYTS department, was one of the original faculty members when the department was established. Having worked at KSU since 1997 and been part of both University College and FYTS from their respective beginnings, Goldfine is committed to promoting student success. “Our department offers many high-impact practices that contribute to the university’s efforts to increase student retention, progression, and graduation,” she said. “Through our programs, we attempt to make meaningful connections with students and help them navigate the transitions they face during their years at KSU.”

The FYTS department serves more than 3500 students each academic year. The department would not be able to serve this many students if it weren’t for the dedication of its faculty and staff. One such staff member, Shannon Shaw, is central to the smooth functioning of the department. Shaw, a front office staff member, joined FYTS in January 2012. She assists full-time and part-time faculty members, provides administrative support to the learning communities program, and aids in organizing campus-wide and department events. Praised by her colleagues for her commitment to serving students and the high quality of her work, Shaw is quick to return the compliment, noting that “although our programs have proven to be successful, faculty and staff members strive to go beyond what is currently offered and seek new ways in which to better and more efficiently serve our students.”

Thanks to the dedication of its faculty and staff, FYTS has become a national leader in the emerging discipline of First-Year Studies, and has been recognized statewide and nationally for its award-winning work with first-year students. Goldfine attributes much of this success to the vision of President Emeritus Dr. Betty Siegel, who devoted significant resources to promoting the success of first-year students during her years at KSU. “Dr. Siegel’s decision to develop and support first-year programming laid the foundation for what we have become today,” explained Goldfine. “Furthermore, we have worked with national leaders, such as John Gardner and the National Resource Center, to assess our programs and gather data to help determine the best ways to serve our students.”
Because the department is considered an expert in First-Year Studies, many other institutions have visited the KSU campus to learn more about the functioning of the FYTS department and its offerings. According to Goldfine, “While a great number of our campus visitors come from nearby colleges and universities, we have had the pleasure of hosting groups from as far away as Japan.”

Whether students are fresh out of high school, transferring from another college, or returning to college after a break in schooling, they are the top priority for the department. “FYTS employees at all levels, including Dr. Goldfine, drop whatever they are doing to help students who come to our office,” Shaw explained. “A student, whom I had previously helped, returned for additional assistance with registration. This isn’t uncommon, but this particular student stands out to me because he wheeled his bike, which obviously meant a great deal to him, right into the office. It was rewarding knowing that this student was satisfied with our first interaction enough to come back to me for additional help. We want them to feel comfortable and welcome in the FYTS office. Not the bikes, just the students!”

“Through our programs, we attempt to make meaningful connections with students and help them navigate the transitions they face during their years at KSU.”
The Michael A. Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality

by Loretta Daniels

The Michael A. Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality offers a unique approach to the study of culinary and hospitality management, transcending the traditional culinary arts and hospitality management curricula to incorporate and infuse the study of sustainable best practices employed around the world, emphasizing areas such as food science, nutrition, agroecology, and resource conservation as well as essential business skills/abilities. This highly relevant degree program offers graduates a competitive advantage through experiential learning in the epicenter for teaching, research, and best practices in sustainable culinary and hospitality management.

“Regardless of their major – whether it’s the World Cuisines, Basic Skills, Beverage Management, Nutrition, or Viticulture and Vinification [winemaking] – students find that the knowledge, skills, and abilities they learn in our classes are transferrable to their own fields. It is exciting to have students from all over the campus in our classes; the diversity makes for a richer learning environment for everyone and builds the sense of community among our students,” said Dr. Christian Hardigree, professor and director of the Leven School.

In addition to traditional internship opportunities, students may also complete internships in KSU’s award-winning, Gold-LEED-certified dining facility – The Commons – as well as eight other retail establishments on campus. Awarded the National Restaurant Association’s “2013 Innovator of the Year Award” and the Operator Innovations Award for Sustainability, The Commons farms more than 65 acres of farmland for KSU’s farm-to-campus-to-farm program and maintains 28 honeybee hives for honey production. The Commons regularly implements new practices and technologies in sustainable food production, including composting, vermicomposting, hydroponics, recycling cooking oil for bio-fuel, water reclamation, and more.

According to Hardigree, the partnership with Culinary Services is a unique and unparalleled collaboration giving students experiential learning opportunities in a facility that is a leader in sustainable food service. “This provides our graduates with a competitive advantage when seeking jobs, since they will already have experience with a variety of sustainable technologies and will be familiar with how to implement those practices in a variety of food service and hospitality careers,” said Hardigree.

This unique program infuses sustainable business practices into all facets of culinary and hospitality management, educating leaders with the skills, knowledge, and abilities to maximize efficiency, productivity, and profitability. The Leven School is committed to providing a quality education that equips students with the skills to succeed in their future careers.

from left to right: Ophelia Santos, Thorir Erlingsson, and Jessica Avasthi
“... students find that the knowledge, skills, and abilities they learn in our classes are transferrable to their own fields.”
When Dominque N. Simmons, the 2015 Integrative Studies Student of the Year, started Kennesaw State University five years ago as a first-year biology major, she had never heard of University College, nor the Bachelor of Science in Integrative Studies. However, when a volleyball court collision with a teammate resulted in a second concussion for the student athlete, she had plenty of off-court time to rethink her academic and career plans. That process led her to her new academic home and degree in University College.

“After my injury, I had to figure out a new way of learning. I found myself having to use flashcards, and I started studying in groups for the first time. I had to put in the effort. My progress made me appreciate having to work hard. It was all very motivating to be able to learn and help myself move forward instead of having to live in frustration,” Simmons said.

Simmons credits her physical and vestibular therapists with helping her recover. It was during this time period that she became intrigued with the idea of becoming a physical therapist herself, a career that would enable her to work with other injured and frustrated athletes as well as individuals who needed support to regain strength and flexibility for everyday chores. She did her homework and discovered that most graduate programs for physical therapy require a fair number of science and psychology courses.
“If it were not for Integrative Studies, I would have been here forever,” the graduating senior exclaimed, noting that an athletics advisor first told her about the Integrative Studies degree program.

The Bachelor of Science Degree in Integrative Studies, which has three separate tracks, allows students to customize a degree plan with the input and approval of advisors, course coordinators, and department chairs. Simmons selected the “Specialized Studies” track that offered the flexibility she wanted and the rigor she needed for graduate school applications. The other tracks are “Environmental Science,” which intertwines the study of policy and science, and “General Studies,” which helps students attain an integrative, multidisciplinary perspective.

Simmons is currently working with a University College Graduation Coach who is helping her with graduate school applications. She plans to spend the summer gaining observation hours and hands-on experience in a physical therapy office. Meanwhile, Simmons noted that KSU will always be close to her heart. Not only will she be a proud alumna, but she has two brothers on campus: one is an assistant coach for KSU’s baseball team, and the other is a sophomore in the nationally recognized and award-winning Thrive Program for HOPE scholars, also housed in University College.

“If it weren’t for Integrative Studies, I would have been here forever.”

-Dominque N. Simmons
The **Corporate Tuition Assistance** program (**CTAP**), which enables employers to enrich existing talent by sponsoring current employees during their studies at KSU.

The **Corporate Access to Student Talent** program (**CAST**), which enables employers to develop a talent pipeline within the existing KSU student body.

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**Employee Benefits**
Employees who participate in **CTAP** can access custom degree programs featuring:
- **Accelerated Time frames**
- **Campus-based or Online Courses**
- **Flexible Class Schedule**

Employers that participate in **CAST** can access forthcoming talent by:
- **Developing relationships with students slated for upcoming graduation**
- **Designing specialized Integrative Studies degree programs**
- **Grooming student talent with dedicated faculty oversight**
- **Working with students on “hands-on” employer projects**

**Students Benefits**
Students who participate in **CAST** will:
- **Receive a CAST Certification**
- **Engage in unique eight-week learning opportunities**
- **Build relationships with industry leaders**
- **Participate in sponsored on-site work experiences**

**Program Coordinators:**
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University College Communication & Marketing Director
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For more information, call us today at **470.578.6326** or visit us at [uc.kennesaw.edu/programs/ctap.php](http://uc.kennesaw.edu/programs/ctap.php)
Student success begins with Diversity and Global Learning

as reported by Loretta Daniels

“White police officer in South Carolina Charged in Fatal Shooting of Black Man.” That was Newsweek’s headline March 7, reporting on an event that took place in a South Carolina city that was hosting a conference with a focus on diversity and inclusion. This tragedy highlights the importance of the work educators are doing in the area of diversity and the value of resources from conferences such as AAC&U and AABHE,” said Dr. Linda M. Lyons, assistant professor of education in the department of First-Year and Transition Studies.

Lyons recently attended two conferences that focused on building student success through campus diversity efforts and global learning. The first of these, the Association for American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Network for Academic Renewal Conference, took as its theme Diversity, Learning, and Student Success: Assessing and Advancing Inclusive Excellence. The second conference, hosted by the American Association for Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE), concentrated on Pathways to Success in Higher Education: Moving from Enrollment to Employment. “AAC&U continues to advance and expand its longstanding commitment to quality of education, diversity, equity, and civic engagement. It is their goal to assist institutions of higher learning in creating campus climates and educational practices that evolve with today’s increasingly diverse population of students,” Lyons said.

The AABHE, whose mission is to pursue the educational and professional needs of Blacks in higher education, focuses on leadership, access, and vital issues impacting students, faculty, staff, and administrators. This year’s conference examined the path from matriculation to employment and career as well as best practices that promote student success in today’s global market.

Lyons’ take away from these national conferences was that educators have the responsibility to provide comprehensive learning. “Our role is not only to support academic success but also to mentor, direct, and guide all students toward being self-directed, committed to global citizenry, and well prepared for entering a diverse workforce,” she shared.

"Social issues, as illustrated by the tragedy in South Carolina, remain a concern in communities across the nation. Such events not only impact our students but all of our academic partners. It is imperative that educators continue to engage in dialogue and conduct assessment to advance equity and inclusiveness among campus constituents," Lyons said.

The work requires a commitment to addressing diversity, equity, learning, and student success as core values with measurable goals. By doing so, educators help ensure that all students reap the benefits of an engaged and comprehensive education as well as graduate fully prepared to succeed in a diverse and global society.

UC is committed to diversity and global learning in both curricular and co-curricular experiences such as the recent Selma, Alabama trip. Consequently, educators are encouraged to increase their knowledge and skill sets within these fields of study.
SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN:
“Next Generation Scholars in First-Year Studies”

In celebration of our 10-Year Anniversary we have officially launched the

Ten for Ten Campaign!

As a team if 10 individuals pledged $10 a month to the scholarship campaign for the next 10 months, we could ensure a graduate student receives a $1,000 scholarship.

If you would like to pledge $10/month for 10 months, please go to uc.kennesaw.donate and click on the "Donate" link on the top left. Please click on Next Generation Scholarship in the drop down menu.

Thanks again to those of you who support the university with your financial contributions. Together we can pave the way for the next generation of faculty members and student affairs professionals who dedicate their energies to first-year students and those in transition!

Kennesaw State University
University College
Master of Science in First-Year Studies
Supplemental Instruction Leaders named Birla Carbon scholars

This summer will be a busy one for two of our Supplemental Instruction leaders, Abdel Sharkasi and Eric Gabilondo. Sharkasi and Gabilondo are two of 10 students named as this year's Birla Carbon Scholars.

The Birla Carbon Scholars' Program was created in April 2014 to support research opportunities for Kennesaw State University’s College of Science and Mathematics students. The pledge of $250,000 ($50,000 per year) was designed to create summer research opportunities for undergraduates each year.

Sharkasi and Gabilondo will be conducting research with professors in the College of Science and Mathematics. They will present their research to a team of scientists from Birla Carbon's Marietta facility during the Birla Carbon Symposium 2015. The winner will receive $2,000 toward travel expenses to present his/her research at a national scientific conference the next academic year.

Sharkasi will be working with Dr. Michael Van Dyke to research protein functions and genes associated with the protein functions in E.coli.

Gabilondo, also named the 2014 Ed Brooks Scholarship recipient, will be working with Dr. Heather Abbott-Lyon to design and construct an effusive molecular beam that will launch methane gas, at temperature ranges from 300-900 K, into the sample chamber of Dr. Abbott-Lyon's Ultra-High Vacuum chamber. He will also be performing predictive modeling calculations to evaluate the sticking coefficients of methane on the vanadium sample.

As announced in KSU’s College of Science and Mathematics News (April 2014), Birla Carbon is the world's largest manufacturer and supplier of high-quality Carbon Black additives. Its customers include leading brands and companies from the Tires, Rubbers Goods, Plastics, Inks and Paints sectors globally. The company has 17 manufacturing facilities in 12 countries and two State-of-the-Art Research & Development (R&D) Centers, one of which is located at their operational headquarters in Marietta, Georgia, USA. The company has a history of many firsts among its accomplishments, including being the first to produce Carbon Black Beads and patent Dustless Carbon Black in 1927, and being the first Carbon Black Company to use an Industrial Electron Microscope in 1940. The focus on R&D continues to be relentless with resources committed to constantly enhancing the technical and environmental impact of its products and operations. Sustainable operational excellence is a key business driver for Birla Carbon, and the company is investing the required resources on its sustainability initiative.

Birla Carbon is a flagship business of the $40 billion Aditya Birla Group, an Indian conglomerate with a leading presence in aluminum, apparel, cement, financial services, retail and telecom sectors. The group operates in 36 countries with more than 136,000 employees belonging to 42 different nationalities.

Dr. Debbie Smith, professor of higher Education and assistant department chair in University Studies and director of Leadership Studies, authored "Effectively using discussion boards to engage students in introductory leadership courses," which was published in the spring 2015 edition of The Journal of Leadership Education.

In her article, Smith discusses the use of online asynchronous discussion boards as a valuable tool for connecting students to leadership concepts, theories, and models in introductory leadership survey courses.

Smith also gives recommendations for designing effective discussion boards that engage students and enhance their learning. Student outcomes include construction of knowledge, relevant connections between course material and personal lives, and critical reflection.

Dr. Hillary Steiner, professor of educational psychology and assistant director of learning communities, received an invitation by the University of Akron to lead a workshop for their learning communities faculty on "Creating Integrative Assignments."

The University of Akron is seeking to revitalize its learning communities program by making curricular collaboration and integration more intentional and identified KSU’s Learning Communities program as an outstanding example of faculty collaboration.

Steiner explained, "Integrative assignments, which enable students to make connections among their classes, help make learning communities a high-impact practice. The University of Akron recognized the work KSU’s learning communities program is doing in this area and invited me to facilitate a workshop for its learning communities faculty. I joined them for their day-long professional development institute, sharing research about curricular integration, and helping learning communities teams develop assignments that can be used in their fall courses."

Steiner presented May 14.
Congratulations to our
Spring 2015 INTS Graduates

Cassandra Archer
Paul Augustin
Rhonda Blacks
Kathleen Boehm
Sophia Brimm
Jason Brown
Michael Campbell
Collin Carlson
Rita Chhabra
Danita Constable
Diana Dowd
Zachary Drake
Alyce Evans
Devon Gay
Lyric Hayden-Lanier
Lorie King
Brice Lee
John Lewis
Tasia Limonious

Jessica Magee
Keturah Martin
Sahar Massad
Katherine McCauley
Shaquanda Mitchell
Tony Mosley
Timothy Mullen
Jamal Palmer
Christina Pitner
Jasper Preston
Veronica Rodriguez
Andrew Roesch
Dominique Simmons
Linda Sipp
Andrew Stamps
Lauren Tapp
Krista Verdelotti
Bianca White

Online Bachelor of Science in Integrative Studies

This fully online program is well suited to adult learners seeking an undergraduate degree to enhance career opportunities. The program provides learners with a single point of contact for the duration of their degree program. Adult learning and success resources are also available and include:

- an online orientation,
- peer mentoring,
- virtual advising, online tutoring, and
- an adult learner resources center.

For more information about the program, visit uc.kennesaw.edu/lis/programs/
Alumni from the graduating classes of 2007 through 2015 returned to visit their alma mater for the First INTS Alumni Luncheon April 18. Greeted by faculty, staff and the college’s Dean, the alumni were eager to engage in the program.

Rebecca Casey, chair of University Studies, started off the event by welcoming the new alumni and introducing Michael Keleher, director of Integrative Studies, who shared a recently produced video presentation highlighting the programs offerings and testimonials from current and former students.

This year's award recipients include Distinguished Alumna of the Year Johnell W. Woody (2012) and Distinguished Student of the Year Dominique Simmons (2015). In accepting their awards, both honorees expressed their appreciation.

Keleher shared, "We are very proud of our INTS graduates past and present, and will be inviting them back next year."

University College Dean Keisha Hoerrner congratulated the award winners on their achievements and discussed the importance of becoming active alumni and giving back.

Hoerrner also extended an invitation to the alumni to assist in the planning of next year’s luncheon as the event came to an end. Keleher announced plans to start an alumni newsletter. "On the heels of this successful inaugural Alumni/Awards Luncheon, we plan to start an INTS e-newsletter, so our alumni have a place to continue sharing and connecting," said Keleher.

Overall, the event was a huge success, and we look forward to honoring the next class of graduates.

"We are very proud of our INTS graduates past and present, and will be inviting them back next year."
Congratulations to 2015 THRiVE Graduate Students!

Ellen Adkins
Elise Anisko
Tanna Balke
Sarah Batzel
Raymon Buster
Rachel Cash
Kelly Cassidy
Brynn Crosby
Nakia Daniels
Jessica Dean
T'keyah Duke
Shannon Hawks
Amanda Henderson
Saysha Jackson
Petra Kornicer
Kaitlin Lange
John Lewis
Whitney Lince
Armel-Kevin Mamaril
Chaitin Maycott
Victoria McCrite
Faith Mohr
Ebony Ogork
Katherine Para
John Rice
Brooke Sapp
Emily Storey
Nicole Trocina
Gloria Vosilla
Cortlin Yancey

In its fourth year at KSU, the nationally award-winning THRiVE program helps qualified first-year students:
- Develop the academic skills required to maintain the HOPE scholarship,
- Integrate academically and socially to the university,
- Progress toward graduation, and
- Develop leadership skills.

University College is proud to honor the 2015 Award Recipients

Robert Jordan
2015 Professional Staff Development Award

Dr. Jennifer Purcell
2015 Faculty Development Award

Tyler Pede
2015 Professional Staff Development Award
Where Leadership...

transforms inspires grows develops Lives

Write one word or quote that describes LEADERS!

Come leave your mark and join our LEGACY!

“Every new day is a chance to change your life.”
Author unknown

Center for Student Leadership

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www.kennesaw.edu/csl
A Learning Experience in Italy

Kennesaw State University
University College
Michael A. Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality