

Digest

► **May 20, 2009**

A newsletter for North Georgia College & State University

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New technology for math, science majors

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Take note...

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Campus In Action

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capturing the 2009 Southeast Super Regional Championship in Dahlonega this past weekend, when the team defeated Carson-Newman College 6-3 in the first game and 1-0 in the second game.

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The Digest is published weekly by the Office of University Relations for North Georgia's faculty, staff, students and community.

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Saints headed for College World Series

By David Beall

The Saints softball team at North Georgia College & State University is headed for the NCAA Division II College World Series after capturing the 2009 Southeast Super Regional Championship in Dahlonega this past weekend, when the team defeated Carson-Newman College 6-3 in the first game and 1-0 in the second game.

Supporters cheered the Saints in a special send-off when they departed campus via bus on

May 19 to travel to Salem, Va., for the team's first-ever NCAA National Championship appearance.



The Saints enter the first-round of the championship as the #1 team in the nation with a record of 48-3 overall, winning 40 of their last 41 games and holding the nation's best winning percentage at .940. North Georgia is just two wins away from the school record for wins, a mark posted in 2003 with 50 wins and eight losses.

The Saints will compete against Dixie State in the first round of the championship in Salem, Va., at 2 p. m. on May 21 at the Moyer Sports Complex. The 19th-ranked Dixie State squad is 41-11, winning six of their last seven games coming into the national tournament.

The Saints have had a historic season through the playoffs, winning 25 consecutive games after capturing the Peach Belt Conference regular season and tournament championship, the NCAA Southeast Regional, and the NCAA Southeast Super Regional to earn one of eight spots in the Division II College World Series.

For details and tournament updates, visit www.saintssports.com.

Garden gives home to Appalachian seeds and stories

By Rosann Kent

Many heirloom seeds, such as plumgrannies and Boxcar Willie tomatoes, have been passed down through generations of mountain families. But finding open-pollinated seeds that have been in a family for more than 50 years is becoming an increasingly rare occurrence. Also rapidly disappearing are the stories that go with them.



Karrie Ann Fadoski and Barbara Howerton (right) exchange SAGAS seeds and stories at Dahlonega's Farmers Market.

Now, both will have a new home thanks to Saving Appalachian Gardens and Stories (SAGAS), a project of the Georgia Appalachian Studies Center at North Georgia College & State University.

"The center is housed in the historic Vickery House, which is part of the campus, yet adjacent to the community," Dr. Alice Sampson, the center's director, said. "It is on the National Historic Register and is a perfect place for demonstration and teaching gardens."

The SAGAS project is designed to promote cultural and environmental education through seed and story preservation, according to Karrie Ann Fadoski, SAGAS

project manager and biology professor. She outlined its three main goals:

- Preserve local heirloom seeds, distributing seeds to community members for non-commercial use.
- Serve science by stocking seeds with the state seed bank and using the garden as a teaching tool.
- Gather the memories that go with the seeds, collecting the stories of family food traditions and practices.

"Heirloom seeds will be planted and interpreted by master gardener and biology professor volunteers," Fadoski explained. "Visitors and students will learn of historic gardening practices and listen to oral histories attached to the vegetables planted."

Volunteers are invited to assist with a variety of activities, including collecting seed stories. To volunteer, contact the Appalachian Studies Center at 706-864-1540. Volunteers are encouraged to register for the oral history class offered through the university's Continuing Education Center, 706-864-1918.

Web revision project continues to evolve

New site to launch in late fall

By Kate Maine

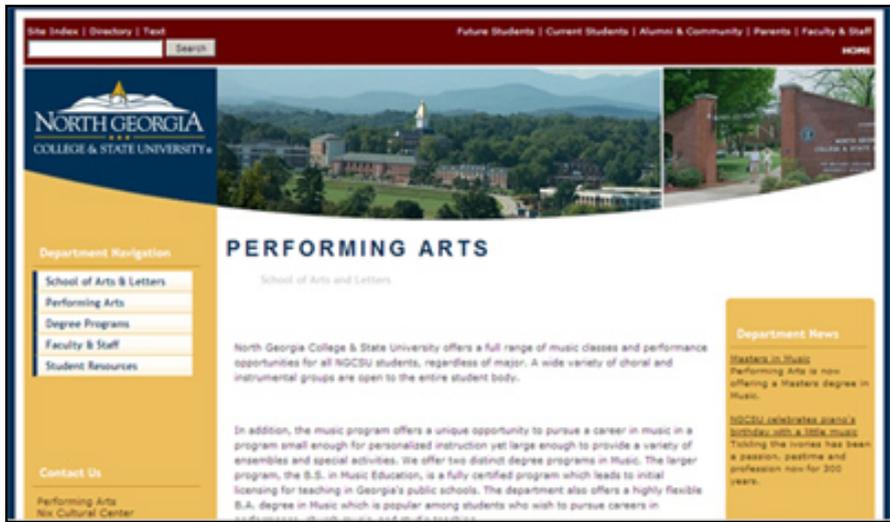
The university's Web site transition to a content management system is nearing its final stages of planning and gaining momentum toward completion. Members of North Georgia's IIT department received specialized training on the new software in March and have been working behind the scenes this spring to set-up the hardware and software for the system.

Ektron is the Content Management System (CMS) the university selected for the new Web site. The Ektron system will give content managers the ability to edit information on the Web site anywhere there is Internet

access, without the need for specialized design software.

"The new content management system will provide our unit Web coordinators – and visitors and users – with exciting new Web tools for communication and collaboration that our existing site is not able to offer," Judy McHan, Web resources administrator, said. "However, there is still much work to be done before we launch the new site."

On April 29, members of IIT and University Relations presented a project migration plan to the unit Web coordinators, department heads and directors, and deans. The proposed plan outlined the project steps for development, training, and time line for completion during the next six months.



The plan calls for IIT to have the necessary servers and hardware installed and the Web services team to develop two to four new departmental Web pages by May 31. These first pages have provided the Web services team with an opportunity to establish consistent navigation, templates and structure for the remainder of the site. To ensure that academic and administrative needs are addressed in this phase, the initial pages include [performing arts](#) and undergraduate admissions.

Training for the university's unit Web coordinators will begin in June and continue through the summer into fall, as the Web services team works with individual offices to develop new pages.

"We'll work with each department and office to develop basic content for the new pages," Barbara Seaton, Web content developer, said. "Then, we'll train them on how to edit their pages and develop additional content."

The goal is for all departments to have their new pages complete by the end of October, at which point the university will switch from the existing server to the new CMS server.

"While we originally thought we would transition to the new server department-by-department, this new approach provides a much cleaner shift without the risk of numerous broken links and outdated materials," McHan said.

With the new Ektron system, the university will also be able to develop an Intranet for employees to share those internal resources that are now commonly stored on a shared campus network or may be on departments' externally-focused Web pages.

Math and science majors get new computing technology

By Joshua Preston

Eleven students in the School of Science and Health Professions have already signed up to be the first participants in a new course designed to prepare them for future engineering and science careers.

Computing for Scientists and Engineers, part of the core curriculum beginning this fall, will teach undergraduates the requisite skills to solve sophisticated math problems using advanced computational software.

Computer Science 1371 will align the course content with Georgia Tech's introductory computer science course. As a result, North Georgia students in any dual degree program, which combines a physics, chemistry or math degree from North Georgia and an engineering degree from Georgia Tech or another engineering school, will be better prepared when they transfer. Students in the Regents Engineering Transfer Program, who transfer to their choice of any engineering school after two years at North Georgia, will also benefit.

Students will learn to use MATLAB, one of the most commonly used math and science problem-solving software packages in those communities. The software will be housed in one of Newton Oakes' computer labs and give students first-hand experience to compute complex science-related problems they may have previously bypassed.

"The math-based software packages are critical tools to solving the mathematical problems that arise in physics and engineering," Dr. Richard Prior, department head of physics, said.

MATLAB, which is also used at Georgia Tech, is a high-level language and interactive environment that enables students to perform computationally intensive tasks faster than with traditional computer programming languages.

"We'd still solve the problems if we had to write the programs ourselves, but this is a more convenient and faster way of getting there," Prior said.

"The course is particularly appropriate for students going into engineering and for all the science majors," Dr. John Cruthirds, head of the mathematics and computer science department, said. "We expect biology, chemistry and math majors to take the course. That's what we need at a school like this, a course that covers a broad range of valuable skills in a number of majors."

The Board of Regents Council on General Education recently approved North Georgia's request to add the 4-credit-hour course to the core curriculum. The addition will help to advance the University System's initiative in the STEM disciplines — science, technology, engineering, and math — to increase the number of college students who pursue the disciplines and the number of teachers who are prepared to teach them in the public school system.



Students in the physics lab pour over calculations. Through a new course, Computing for Scientists and Engineers, students will have access to powerful software to solve science-related problems.

(Photo: Joshua Preston)

Take note...

Veteran Success Center to open

The university will celebrate the grand opening of the new [Veteran Success Center](#) on Wednesday, May 27, at 2 p.m. The center, coordinated by the Office of Financial Aid, is located in Price Memorial Hall, room 109. The Veteran Success Center will be a place where veterans and active duty personnel at North Georgia can get information about educational benefits and financial aid. Additionally, it will be a resource center for other on-campus programs that can assist veterans in their transition from soldier to student.

University monitoring H1N1 virus

North Georgia administrators continue to monitor information about the spread of H1N1 virus and are in close contact with local and state public health officials, who currently recommend approaching this strain as a typical seasonal flu. Outbreaks of the virus have not been as severe or widespread as originally feared, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has modified its original guidance regarding testing for the virus, event cancellations and school closings.

North Georgia has established an [online resource](#) with information about preventive measures, treatment procedures and links to the CDC's information. Recommendations, most likely, will continue to evolve as fall and the normal flu season approach.

North Georgia honors cadet scholarship recipients

The Office of Cadet Admissions sponsored a luncheon on May 1 to honor incoming cadets who have been awarded ROTC scholarships, the Georgia Military Scholarship, and the university's Leadership Scholarships. The students and families who participated in the luncheon witnessed the commissioning of a North Georgia graduate as Col. Michael Pyott administered the oath of office. Pyott, who also served as the keynote speaker for the event, congratulated students on their decision to come to North Georgia. His motivational message emphasized that they had committed to a difficult task, but that nothing worthy ever came easy. As one of only six senior military colleges in the United States, North Georgia has many [scholarship opportunities](#) available to students who are interested in participating in the Corps of Cadets.

Regents authorize furloughs, if needed

The [Board of Regents](#) approved a plan May 12 that gives University System of Georgia presidents the authority to equitably furlough all employees, including faculty, should the need arise due to further budget reductions. New faculty contracts, which begin Aug. 1, will contain specific language that outlines the possibility of furloughs. North Georgia has no plans to implement furloughs at this point. The university has more than 540 benefited employees who could be impacted by furloughs.

Campus in Action

Webb selected as faculty associate

Dr. Shane Webb, associate professor of biology, has been selected as the university's 2009-2010 faculty associate. The many responsibilities of this role include coordinating the scheduling of classes, events and activities associated with developing the annual and term schedules, coordinating updates to the undergraduate bulletin and academic handbooks, serving as an advocate for faculty in representing concerns to the vice president for academic affairs, and coordinating the annual Board of Regents report.

Webb came to North Georgia College & State University in 2004 as assistant professor of biology, after having previously taught at William Woods University in Missouri and the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He earned his doctorate and master's degrees in biology from the University of Michigan. Since coming to North Georgia, Webb has served on the Faculty Senate and several of its committees.

Adams receives promotion

Melissa Adams, academic affairs, has been promoted to administrative assistant to the vice president and coordinator of faculty information. She has worked in that office as an administrative specialist since January 2008.



Henderson assists with service learning

Nancy Henderson, assistant professor of academic support and a volunteer with the Lumpkin County Family Connection, presented learning manipulatives to Amy Blackstone, a teacher at Lumpkin County Elementary School recently. Henderson has been a volunteer in Blackstone's math class this year, and the manipulatives promote a deeper understanding of math formulas. Education majors in Henderson's Math Models class made the manipulatives as a result of a service learning project they conducted. *Pictured: Nancy Henderson (right) with Amy Blackstone.*

Housknecht and Tonner present poster

Julie Housknecht and **Shawn Tonner**, library services, presented a poster on "Collaboration Collection Development" on May 8 at the Georgia Academic Library Research Forum held at Georgia State University.

May's book translated and published

Dr. Timothy May, history and philosophy, had his book "The Mongol Art of War: Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Military System" translated into Korean and published by the Daesung Group.

New members elected to serve on Staff Council

The university's **Staff Council** promotes leadership and learning opportunities for staff and provides a voice to the university administration regarding policy decisions that impact staff. Staff members elected to serve on the council for the 2009-2011 term are Deborah Adams – continuing education, Todd Bermann – physical plant, Anna Brown – student center/student activities, Audrey Bush – financial aid, Jared Goodall – global engagement, Melissa Lach – learning support programs, Steve McLeod – IIT, and Tiffany Yeoman – career services. Those elected as alternate members for the 2009-2010 term are Megan Georgia – undergraduate admissions, Susan Hughes – library, and Susan Miller – recreational sports.

Returning members of the Staff Council are Melissa Adams – academic affairs, Elayne Dowdy – military science, Wendy Evans – alumni affairs, Carol Huczek – IIT, Linda Smith – biology, and Pam Stoffel – institutional advancement.

North Georgia faculty and staff are invited to submit news of professional accomplishments for the Campus in Action section to digest@ngcsu.edu.