

# Digest

► **Sept. 9, 2009**

A newsletter for North Georgia College & State University

## North Georgia to host Family Weekend

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## Take note...

Dating Doctor visits North Georgia

USG news available

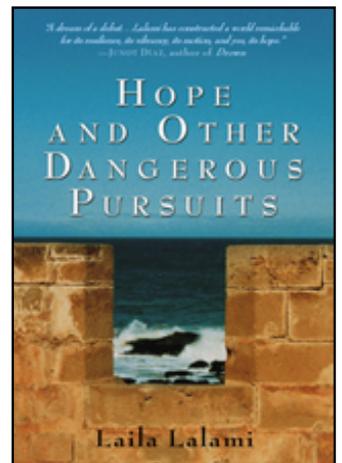
Take Back the Night

Honor stoles orders

## Campus In Action

## Freshmen expand horizons with common reader

North Georgia's efforts to provide students with a global learning perspective have extended this year to the use of a common reader that introduces students to a part of the world that is likely unfamiliar to most of them, yet has a significant impact. All new freshmen will be assigned Laila Lalami's *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* book, which provides insight into the immigration experience and what it is like to travel and integrate into a new country or culture.



## Board of Regents to visit campus in October



North Georgia College & State University will have a rare opportunity to showcase its students and programs with those who manage the University System of Georgia when the Board of Regents visits campus, Oct. 13 and 14. Because the Board of Regents, which oversees the state's 35 public colleges and universities, visits only a couple of campuses each year as part of its meeting schedule, it is an especially important occasion to make an impression on leaders who allocate state resources.

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

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**Make submissions to [digest@ngcsu.edu](mailto:digest@ngcsu.edu).**

The next scheduled publication date is Sept. 23. The deadline for submissions is Sept. 18.

## Freshmen expand horizons with common reader

North Georgia's efforts to provide students with a global learning perspective have extended this year to the use of a common reader that introduces students to a part of the world that is likely unfamiliar to most of them, yet has a significant impact.

Laila Lalami's *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*, published in 2005, is a collection of short vignettes about several Moroccan characters, some who struggle to survive in contemporary Morocco and some who are emigrating from Morocco to Spain to find a better life.

Her book was inspired by an incident in which 15 Moroccan immigrants drowned while crossing the Straits of Gibraltar on a fishing boat.

"As I started to research this subject, I learned about illegal immigration – what it represents, how it works, who benefits from it," Lalami said in describing the book. "The research, however, amounted to a lot of facts and figures; it didn't tell me what I wanted to know. I had been writing fiction for many years, and I thought that the answers to my questions might lie in creating a story about a group of *harragas* [migrants]. I set the action on a lifeboat, at sea, in the middle of the night."

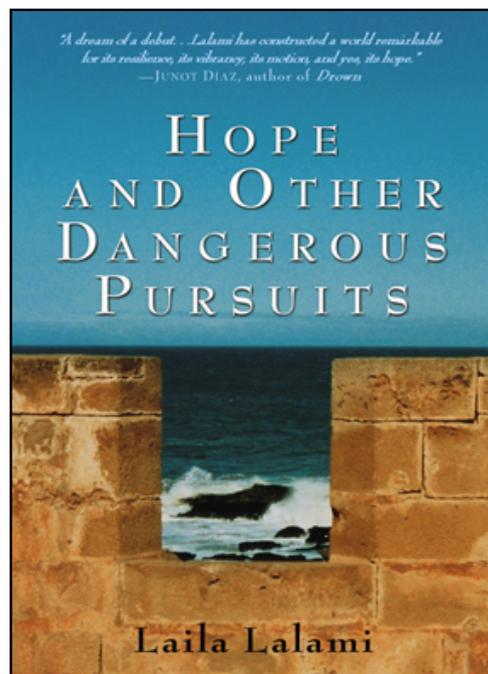
All new freshmen will be assigned Lalami's book, which provides insight into the immigration experience and what it is like to travel and integrate into a new country or culture.

"The idea of a common reader is to provide a context in which we can examine important subjects and build community around significant issues," Dr. Tanya Bennett, English department chair, said. "We chose this book because it provides an opportunity for students to read a very important contemporary author and because immigration issues impact us in our region, and this book gives us a chance to explore their effects."

Lalami said, "The characters grew over the course of several months. There was Murad, an unemployed young man who feels emasculated by his sister's ability to provide for the family; Faten, a fanatically religious girl on the run from the law; Halima, a mother who takes her children with her on the boat; and Aziz, a mechanic who leaves his wife behind to try and find a job."

Lalami was born in Rabat, Morocco, and she was educated in Morocco, Britain and the United States. In addition to her popular literary blog, *Moorishgirl*, her work has appeared in many national newspapers.

"In following several characters and their lives in Morocco, we learn about their desires and trials," Bennett said. "Two characters leave for Spain to find a better life. It's moving that those who stay behind in Morocco find the most happiness, while the two that leave end up in unfulfilling careers, losing themselves along the way. The story shows it is important to hold on to your cultural identity."



Laila Lalami

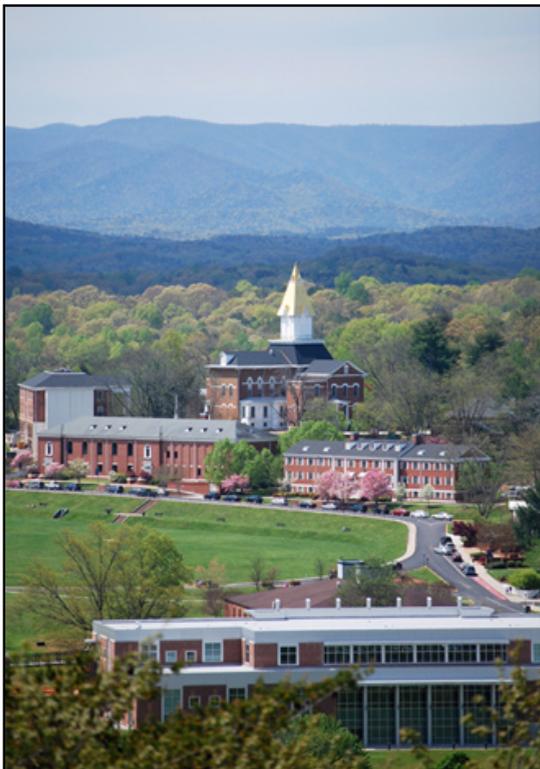
In addition to students discussing the book in one or more of their classes, the university has been hosting discussion group sessions to give students, faculty and staff an opportunity to talk about the issues raised in the book. The next discussion group meeting is scheduled for Oct. 8, at 12:45 p.m. in the Library Technology Center.

Lalami, who currently lives in Los Angeles, will be visiting the campus March 1 and 2, 2010, as a visiting author and guest lecturer for the university's annual Hoag Lecture. In addition to the lecture, Lalami will conduct a reading of her work and a book signing in the Library Technology Center.

During Lalami's stay, she will also visit Lumpkin County High School to speak with students and instructors there.

The university is also sponsoring an essay contest focused on Lalami's book. Essays submissions should relate to and address issues raised by the character's experiences in *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*. Contest entries must be submitted by Nov. 18, and the winners of the essay contest will receive lunch with Lalami. For details, please contact Dr. Tanya Bennett.

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"North Georgia's designation as the Military College of Georgia and as a leadership institution for the state of Georgia lend a distinctive flavor to our campus and programs of study," Dr. David Potter, university president, said. "During the board's visit, we hope to show them why we believe North Georgia offers an unparalleled education of value and experience."

The regents will meet in the university's Library Technology Center. Also, during their visit, regents will be guests of honor at a Corps of Cadets military review.

The Board of Regents, appointed by the governor, is composed of 18 members, five of whom are appointed from the state-at-large, and one from each of the 13 congressional districts. Chancellor Erroll Davis, appointed by the Board of Regents, serves as the chief administrative officer of the University System.

In addition to the regents, many members of the USG staff and representatives from the state's other colleges and universities attend the meeting.

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"North Georgia recognizes families as important partners in the educational process and their significant role in bringing students to this point in their education and their lives," said Laura Whitaker-Lea, dean of students. "Though the roles will change, families will continue to play an important part in supporting students as they continue their education."

Family Weekend events include intercollegiate soccer games, a student art show, a musical performance, a military review to honor distinguished military students, a Doubles and Mixed Doubles Tennis Tournament, information sessions, a picnic lunch, and a movie on the drill field.

Registration includes all events on campus and is \$15 per person and \$10 for children 10 and under. Details and registration form are available [online](#).

## Take note...

### Dating Doctor visits North Georgia

The Dating Doctor (a.k.a. David Coleman, America's Real-Life Hitch) will speak to students on campus Sept. 9, in a lecture sponsored by the Student Activities Board. Coleman's program, "Making Relationships Matter," teaches how to create and maintain healthy relationships. Coleman has been honored numerous times as National Speaker of the Year by national campus activity groups. The Chronicle of Higher Education is currently preparing an article on Coleman, and a photographer will accompany him on this visit to North Georgia.

### USG news available

The August issue of the System Supplement is available [online](#). This newsletter is produced monthly by the University System of Georgia's Office of Media and Publications.

### Take Back the Night

Peer Health Educators, a student group working with Student Health Services, is sponsoring Take Back the Night on Tuesday, Sept. 15. This event, designed to raise awareness of sexual assault and violence, will feature live music, a guest speaker, and a march and vigil around the drill field and the Dahlonega square. The event is open to the community and begins at 8 p.m. on the drill field. For details, contact Laura Balkcom in Student Health Services at 706-864-1948.

### Honor stoles orders

Students who are graduating this fall at the baccalaureate or higher level and who are eligible for honors, are invited to order honor stoles. Honor stoles are not required; however, they do denote the honors and are a keepsake. Honor stoles are white and are embroidered with the university seal. Note that honor stoles are not the same as hoods for academic honors that are available through the campus bookstore.

For details, contact Valerie Fambrough in 303B Dunlap Hall. [Orders](#) should be submitted by 4 p.m. on Oct. 14. Honor stoles are sold to benefit the NGCSU Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa, the National

Leadership Honors Society.

## Campus in Action

*North Georgia faculty and staff are invited to submit news of professional accomplishments for the Campus in Action section to [digest@ngcsu.edu](mailto:digest@ngcsu.edu).*