

Georgia College collaborates with three universities for students to pursue pharmacy school

With demand expected to increase for pharmacists in Southern healthcare settings like hospitals and clinics—Georgia College is pleased to announce a new accelerated Pathways Program for chemistry majors to transfer to one of three Doctor of Pharmacy schools in the United States.

Agreements were recently signed with the University of Georgia (UGA), Auburn University and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). Students who meet criteria can utilize these pathways—giving them an early start, streamlined admission and guided route into the field of pharmacy.

“Georgia College is committed to providing our students with an outstanding education as well as opportunities to expand their careers,” said Dr. Costas Spirou, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “Our new Pharm.D. partnerships are just some of the ways we can provide more opportunities for our students to be successful.”

These new Pathways give chemistry students a chance to earn their Bachelor of Science (B.S.) from Georgia College and a Doctorate of Pharmacy degree from UGA, Auburn or PCOM. Students admitted into pharmacy school under a “3+4” agreement complete three years of chemistry at Georgia College, then four years at pharmacy school. In their first or second year of pharmacy, students receive their B.S. from Georgia College with transferred credits earned in the Pharm.D. program.

This helps students save on tuition, while beginning their careers early—completing both degrees in seven years, instead of eight.

“I’m very pleased that the chemistry program has taken the initiative to develop these innovative Pharm.D. Pathways,” said Dr. Eric Tenbus, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgia College.

“This means our chemistry majors will have even greater options ahead of them,” he said, “including the ability to earn a Doctorate of Pharmacy degree in less time in what is a high-demand field. In addition, this is a positive recruitment, retention and graduation initiative for our university.”

Planning for these Pathways began more than a year ago. Administrators hope this attracts a diverse group of aspiring pharmacists to respond to market demand. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook handbook, employment of pharmacists is projected to decline 3 percent from 2019 to 2029. However, demand for pharmacists in hospitals and clinics is projected to increase, particularly in rural areas.

About 21 percent of Georgia College chemistry majors declare a concentration in pre-pharmacy. This year, Georgia College is experiencing a three-year peak at 24 percent, said Dr. Chavonda Mills,

chair of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy.

“We’re excited to introduce these accelerated Pathways for our students,” she said. “By reducing the total time required for the B.S. and Pharm.D. degrees, our students will be able to save both time and tuition dollars and begin their careers earlier.”

UGA, Auburn and PCOM were “strategically” identified to help attract a broad audience of prospective students to Georgia College, Mills said, while ensuring chemistry students multiple pathways to pharmacy school. The three programs represent a varied choice for students, giving them a wide selection of curriculum, reputation of school, location and cost.

Freshman year, chemistry majors declaring a pre-pharmacy concentration will receive structured guidance from their pre-pharmacy coordinator at Georgia College and a representative from their Pharm.D. program of interest. They’ll discuss the admission process and requirements for pre-requisite courses, grade point average and the PCAT (Pharmacy College Admissions Test).

Junior year, students apply for admissions to their chosen Pharm.D. program. Following completion of their first or second year pharmacy school, their credits transfer back to Georgia College for a B.S. in Chemistry. Students then complete their Pharm.D. degree.

“Georgia College’s liberal arts curriculum teaches students to think critically, become skilled communicators and mature into service-orientated professionals dedicated to excellence,” said Mills. “It is my hope that the partnering of a liberal arts education with professional pharmacy schools will produce 21st-century pharmacists dedicated to serving all members of the community and that some of these students will return to rural Georgia to practice pharmacy.”



Dr. Chavonda Mills in lab with a chemistry student.

Carolyn Forché selected as Inaugural Darugar Scholar

Carolyn Forché celebrated the release of her latest collection of poems, “In the Lateness of the World,” on March 10 of last year. The country went into lockdown three days later, throwing her planned readings and book signings out the window along with events planned around the paperback release of her debut memoir, “What You Have Heard is True.” What should have been a year of touring after the launch was instead a year of isolation and virtual readings met with political and social upheaval that is somewhat ironically well-suited to the subject matter of both books.

This not only makes her memoir and poetry “of witness and resistance” all the more prescient for the year 2021, but makes her the perfect inaugural writer for Georgia College’s Dr. and Mrs. Barry Darugar Distinguished Visiting Scholar program. During her time at the university, she’ll embark on an eight-week virtual residency, teaching workshops and meeting with scholars in the English Department’s MFA program.

Kelly Piggott, a second year MFA student, is one of many students who are excited to have Forché on board, “Carolyn Forché sees the politics in the art, and the art in politics and in the history of the world, in all its complexities, beauties and ugliness,” Piggott said.

“So the books are all published at some point of the various crises,” Forché said, “The poetry was written over a period of 17 years so it wasn’t written with that in mind. But interestingly, when you read the poetry book, it eerily seems to have been addressing the times that we’re in, and I can’t explain that. I think it’s just something that sometimes happens.”

In 2019, Forché’s memoir was released to great critical acclaim and was a finalist for the National Book Award. The book recounts her visits to El Salvador between 1978 and 1980, during a time just before the country broke out into civil war.

“The events of the memoir took place 40 years ago, and it’s really a young person’s book in that the main character, myself at the age of 27, took a journey. And what I wanted to do was replicate that journey, for others, take them on the same path I took at that age,” she said. “It was a journey to a certain kind of opening of consciousness, having to do with the world and our position in it, and having to do with its injustice and political awakening.”

Dr. Barry Darugar, whose journey into writing began after immigrating from Iran to practice surgery in Middle Georgia for nearly 40 years before entering into GC’s MFA program, created the program to give students similar interactions with contemporary writers as he did with the poet and essayist Robert Bly. On that score, the English Department could not have picked a more immanent poet than Forché.

Piggott, who had the opportunity to meet with Forché virtually during a poetry workshop last semester, said, “she was articulate, well-spoken, good-humored and had wonderful, valuable things to say about the process of writing poetry and its significance as a form of playing witness to the world around us.” Forché’s work has been described by the New Yorker as “chilling and unique.”

So far, public readings and craft talks have been scheduled, as well as a poetry workshop and a collaborative event with the Andalusia Institute throughout March and April.

“I’m very excited to be working with graduate students in poetry again, which I haven’t done in a while,” Forché said.

She teaches a seminar on the convergence of human rights and literature for the Lannan Center for Poetics and Social Practice at the Department of English at Georgetown University, which has gone entirely virtual during the pandemic.

“I’ve been very impressed the more I’ve learned about the Georgia College program. It’s set up the right way. It’s fully funded for all of the students who enroll, for one thing. So they’re able to attract the best students, they’re able to support them well and that’s really the way to do it!”



Did you know?

With the safety of student-athletes and fans and adherence to NCAA protocols at the forefront of every facet of the decision, the Georgia College Department of Athletics has announced its plan for reduced spectators at outdoor home events this spring.

Fans will be required to wear masks covering their nose and mouth at all GC Athletics facilities—and be expected to follow social distancing guidelines as recommended by the CDC. Hand sanitizer will be available at all athletic facilities, and concession stands will not be open for any Bobcat Athletic event.

There will be limited seating in bleachers, with roughly 30 percent of seats available and marked off for social distancing. This will apply for John Kurtz Field [baseball], the Peeler Complex [softball], Bobcat Field [soccer], the Centennial Center Tennis Facility [tennis] and Bobcat Golf’s home tournament at Cuscowilla on Lake Oconee until further notice.



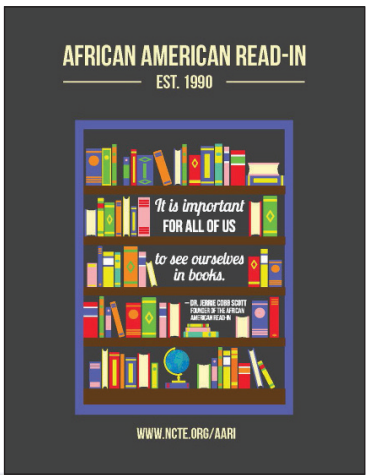
African American read-in takes place Friday

The annual African American Read-in will be held Friday, Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 241 of Russell Library.

The African American Read-in is a Black History Month event sponsored by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). The main purpose of the read-in is to make “the celebration of African American literacy a traditional part of Black History Month activities.”

The event will be an “open mic” style in which participants will read/perform/recite a 5-7 minute selection by their favorite author. Selections may include poetry, dramatic monologues, fiction or creative non-fiction.

This event will be free and open to the public.



What’s going on in Bobcat Territory?

Visit frontpage.gcsu.edu/calendar

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday/Sunday
9 4 p.m.- GC Baseball vs. West Georgia.	10	11 7:30 p.m.- A Georgia College evening of percussion music, “Snare Drumming in Solitude,” will feature world premiere compositions for snare drum—an instrument with stiff wires on the side that creates a piercing staccato sound when struck. Please follow us on facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment to view this live-steamed concert.	12 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.- African American Read-in at Russell Library Room 241. 2 p.m. GC Tennis doubleheader vs. Southern Wesleyan.	13 1 p.m.- GC Tennis doubleheader vs. Columbus State. 1:30 p.m- GC Basketball doubleheader vs. Georgia Southwestern. 7:30 p.m.- Valentine’s Day Rendezvous: Max Noah Singers. This concert will be live-streamed at facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment.