AAFCS Accreditation Summary

The University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences has been accredited by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences for over 40 years, receiving and continuing accreditation since 1979. The previous ten-year accreditation was granted in 2009. The college leadership considered the pros and cons of accreditation review and voted in September 2018 to commit to the process. As associate dean for academic programs, Patti Hunt-Hurst is the coordinator and responsible for the self-study documents, schedule, and processes prior, during, and following the majors steps of the review: self-study which was completed September 1, 2019, via Jura® Accreditation Management Software Systems; scheduling three-person site-review team February 23 – 26, 2020; and follow-up communications and implementation of recommendations after the site visit.

The AAFCS Council for Accreditation voted to accept the self-study and schedule a three-person site visit team to come to campus. Their bios are attached.

The College is poised to close out the current ten-year strategic plan 2010 – 2020 and will soon embark on the internal and external stakeholder input processes to develop the next strategic plan, 2020 – 2025. Ideally, the AAFCS accreditation self-study and recommendations from the site visit will also inform the College’s DRAFT 2025 Strategic Plan due April 1st. Integrating the UGA Program Assessment Review (PRAC) department reviews and recommendations with a focus on student learning outcomes are also articulated within the AAFCS Accreditation self-study.

The following is a summary Q&A for faculty, staff, students, alumni, stakeholders, advisory board and employer representatives.

**Question: What is accreditation?**
**Response:** Accreditation is a voluntary, peer-review process that evaluates program curricula, faculty expertise, facilities, instructional support and other important factors. Accreditation results in a to-do list of recommendations and identifies areas in which to improve. Targets or goals are set and reported against every two years to the Council of Accreditation, AAFCS.

**Question: Why is FACS College at UGA seeking AAFCS accreditation?**
**Response:** UGA FACS has been accredited by AAFCS since 1979. We also have multiple accreditations, discipline-specific, which the graduates recognize more readily than AAFCS. Those additional accreditations are listed on our web page.

- The Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center is NAEYC accredited by The National Association for the Education and Advancement of Young Children accreditation system, which has set professional standards for early childhood education programs.
- The dietetics major is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- The Bachelor of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences Education (B.S.F.C.S) is a Georgia Professional Standards Commission approved program offered jointly by the College of Education and FACS. Students completing this program fulfill the requirements for a teacher’s certificate in family and consumer sciences to teach in grades seven through twelve.
- Fashion Merchandising, Product Development Design emphasis is one of 13 fashion departments endorsed by the American Apparel and Footwear Association.
- The Furnishings and Interiors program is accredited by the National Kitchen and Bath Association.
- The Financial Planning Program is CFP® Board Registered.
- At the graduate level, the Marriage and Family Therapy program is accredited by American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) through 2022. The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education is a specialized body that assures master’s degree, doctoral degrees, and post-graduate degree clinical programs meet and maintain the highest standards of the profession.

Question: Why accreditation important?
Response: Accreditation, defined by the AAFCS Council for Accreditation (CFA), is a system for reviewing family and consumer sciences (FCS) units to meet or exceed stated criteria of educational quality. To maintain accreditation, a college or unit of family and consumer sciences must undergo a rigorous internal review at intervals of three, five, and seven years. Accreditation is granted for a maximum of 10 years. It is strictly voluntary. Accreditation identifies flaws or areas for improvement as well as areas for which FACS can be commended; and ideally, accreditation is a transparent process.

Question: What are the set "standards" for AAFCS accreditation articulated in the self-study?
Response: The Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) Body of Knowledge (BoK) is the current framework that serves as the foundation for the field. Click here for an overview and explanation of the FCS Body of Knowledge This accurately represents the essence of UGA FACS and is still relevant and in action today. The BoK represents how we integrate core concepts of all the departments’ degree programs and sub-disciplines to address basic human needs, individual well-being, family strengths, and community vitality life with course development and human ecosystem theoretical context. In brief terms, the AAFCS four (4) Standards focus on the following areas of the College:

**Standard 1: Institutional Environment, Mission and Resources of the College**
Our mission is to advance the well-being of individuals and families over their life span and strengthen communities through the generation and dissemination of knowledge, education of professionals, and provision of research-based programs.

**Standard 2: Programs of Study; and Student Performance and Achievement**
Infusion of Core Concepts of the BoK into the Curriculum: All family and consumer sciences students are expected to understand and comprehend the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge. The Body of Knowledge consists of core concepts, integrative elements, and cross-cutting themes.

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<th>Core concepts</th>
<th>Integrative elements</th>
<th>5 cross-cutting themes</th>
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<td>Basic human needs</td>
<td>Life course development</td>
<td>1. Capacity building</td>
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<td>Individual well-being</td>
<td>Human ecosystem</td>
<td>2. Global interdependence</td>
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<td>Family strengths</td>
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<td>3. Resource development and</td>
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**Standard 3: Unit (College) Discovery, Research, Scholarly, or Creative Activities**
All faculty are engaged in scholarly and creative activity, pursuing the discovery, integration, and application of knowledge as guided by the mission and goals of the College.
Standard 4: Faculty, Staff and Students
All faculty members (part-time and full-time) have the educational preparation and professional experiences appropriate for the Unit’s mission, goals, and curricula. Assessment of diversity goals for faculty, staff and students.

Question: Are there any particular courses in the College on which AAFCS accreditation will focus?
Response: The Student Learning Outcomes for all courses are important in accreditation. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs has assured three years of SLO are being assessed, in particular the four identified above as fulfilling the profession of family and consumer sciences’ Body of Knowledge. The course considered AAFCS Accreditation core courses are:
- FACS 2000 Introduction to Family and Consumer Sciences
- FACS 2000E (online) Introduction to Family and Consumer Sciences
- HDFS 2100 Development Within the Family
- FHCE 2100 Family Economic Issues through the Life Course

Question: How does UGA accreditation align with AAFCS accreditation and recommendations for continuous improvements?
Response: UGA is preparing for its 5th year interim report for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). An important part of that accreditation is focused on Student Learning Outcomes and the credentialing of faculty. Preparing for the AAFCS accreditation helps us as a college in anticipation of UGA’s efforts now and over the next 12 to 16 months.

Question: Why now?
Response: Timing is good. UGA expects a draft College Strategic Plan 2025 in April 2020, and the final plan by Fall 2020. The UGA self-study report is due to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in September 2021. The College’s five-year plan is expected to be more dynamic 2020-2025, including more explicit but fewer benchmark goals relative to the previous plan, and we hope to incorporate any recommendations received from the AAFCS site visit team.

Question: What are the costs associated with accreditation?
Response: Costs for AAFCS are minimal compared to Engineering, Law, Journalism and Veterinary Medicine. In addition to the $3,500 fee, the three-person site visit team is really the only financial commitment for the college to pay.

Linda Kirk Fox, Dean
Patti Hunt-Hurst, Associate Dean

For more information about accreditation, contact the FACS Associate Dean for Academic Programs, Dr. Patti Hunt-Hurst.
Byrd served as chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Tennessee-Martin until her retirement in 2016.

She currently serves as a consultant for Tennessee 4-H Family and Consumer Sciences - clothing and textiles and line and design projects along with curriculum development.

Byrd also is a UT-Martin Peer Enabling Program Leadership Development Facilitator and co-leader of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Leadership Academy.

She received her Ph.D. in Human Ecology (Textiles and Apparel) from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 1986.

Byrd began her career as an associate/assistant Extension agent with the UT Agricultural Extension Service in Jacksboro, Tenn., in 1975.

She served as professor of Textiles, Clothing and Fashion Merchandising at UT-Martin from 2000-16. Byrd, who served as president of AAFCS in 2010, was named a AAFCS Leader Legend in 2016 and received the Friend of 4-H Recognition in 2010.

Byrd also led numerous international study trips, including tours of Scotland, Paris, Brazil, London, Kenya and Japan, among others.
Giddings serves as associate professor and chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University in Greensboro, N.C.

In this role, she provides leadership to an academic unit comprised of program areas including Child Development and Family Studies, Consumer Sciences, Fashion Merchandising and Design, Food and Nutritional Sciences and a Child Development Laboratory.

Giddings also teaches undergraduate core courses and courses in fashion merchandising and design; manages a team of 28 faculty and staff employees; serves as project director for all Evans-Allen projects (with total funding of over $1 million); facilitates revision of departmental curricula and courses as needed; conducts performance planning and performance reviews for faculty and staff; facilitates operations related to graduate and undergraduate programs; provides leadership in ensuring the department is in compliance with AAFCS accreditation guidelines and coordinates efforts for reaccreditation of the unit.

She received a Ph.D. in Clothing and Textiles from Virginia Tech in 1991.

Giddings began her career as an instructor in the Department of Human Ecology at Hampton University and has served on the faculty at North Carolina Central University, Virginia Tech and Winston-Salem State University.

She joined the faculty of North Carolina A&T State University in 2008 and served as interim associate dean for research from 2015-2018, where she provided leadership and strategic management for the Agricultural Research Program.

Giddings received the Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences in 2019.
Pope is a professor of nutrition and dietetics and serves as associate dean for undergraduate and graduate studies in the College of Applied and Natural Sciences at Louisiana Tech University.

Pope received her Ph.D. in nutrition science from the University of Tennessee in 1991 and joined the faculty of Louisiana Tech’s School of Human Ecology as an assistant professor of nutrition and dietetics that same year.

From 1997–2006 she served as director of the School of Human Ecology and later as associate dean for undergraduate studies in the College of Applied and Natural Sciences from 2006–12.

She is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and a member of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Pope received the Outstanding Teaching Award from the College of Applied and Natural Sciences and the Mary Belle Tuten Outstanding Advisor and Mentor Award from the School of Human Ecology in 2012.

She has served as reviewer and associate editor for the Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences and has been an accreditation site team reviewer for the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences since 2001.