



College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Student Success and Advising Center

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

2021 Annual Report

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Overall Health of Unit

The Student Success and Advising Center (SSAC) entered 2021 with a focus on engaging and supporting students as the pandemic continued to impact the academic landscape. Academic advising, experiential learning, student leadership opportunities, student organizations, and FACS 2000/2000E remained focus areas in 2021. The SSAC also continued to utilize the FACS 2025 Strategic Plan and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan as guides when developing ideas and strategies to elevate the FACS student experience.

Highlights for the Student Success and Advising Center in 2021 include a continuation of our enhanced social media presence; continuing the SSAC internship experience in a hybrid/virtual model to promote flexibility for students; a continued focus on prospective student recruitment in a virtual/hybrid landscape; and a continuation of virtual academic advising formats to serve students.

Student Success and Advising Center Staff

Professional Staff

Director: Cara Simmons, Ph.D.
Assistant Director: Melissa Garber
Administrative Associate: Kassie Suggs
Academic Advisor: Anne Allen
Academic Advisor: Aimee Dowd (Hired October 2021)
Academic Advisor: Beverly Hull
Academic Advisor: Julie Patterson
Academic Advisor: Debra Peavler (Resigned July 2021)
Academic Advisor: Christie Sanders
Academic Advisor: Ahmaud Templeton

Student Staff

The Student Success and Advising Center understands and values the importance of providing career and learning opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students. As a result, student staff are an integral component of daily operations and the overall success of the SSAC. The range of student responsibilities in 2021 included front-line management, assisting with prospective student recruitment, content creation for various communication mediums (e.g., *FACS Connection* and *FACS Connection News Digest* and *The InSTALLment*), and facilitating the SSAC online chat feature. Student staff provided significant support to virtual events, social media, and publication content.

Student Assistants

Spring 2021 – April Bullard, Jasmine Jones, Carl “Sam” D’Alba, & Kenya Wilson

Summer 2021 – Jasmine Jones and Thomas Charyton

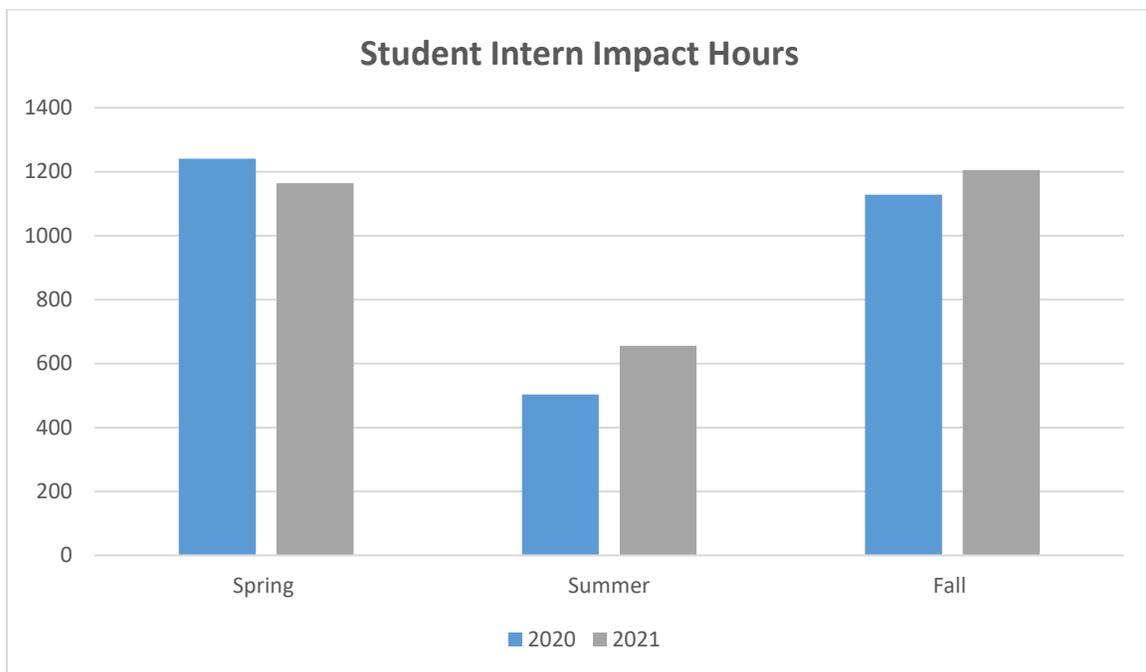
Fall 2021 – Jasmine Jones, Kyumin “Kevin” Ahn, De’Mona Reid, & Kiara Underwood

Student Interns

Spring 2021 – April Bullard (Lead Intern), Kaitlyn Godfrey, Averi Hill, Shicoyia Morgan, Anthony Rodriguez, Olivia Sawyer, Hailey Steuer, Anna Claire Stietenroth, Yafei Xi, & Jennifer Zhu (Impact Hours = 1163.5)

Summer 2021 – Nicholas Beckham, Kristin Brinkley, Michelle Browning, Carlie Gambino, Hannah Huff, Olivia Sawyer, Hannah Stanton, Sydney Veilleux, & Jennifer Zhu (Impact Hours = 655)

Fall 2021 – Olivia Sawyer (Lead Intern), Nicholas Beckham, Jacee Baldivid, Michelle Browning, Carlie Gambino, Shanise Johnson, Zachary LaRoche, Taylor Rosin, Hailey Steuer (Impact Hours = 1205)



Staff Accomplishments, Training, and Professional Development

Professional development, engagement, and training is an important focus for all SSAC staff in order to advance their personal and professional growth. During 2021, staff attended a variety of courses sponsored by UGA Human Resources Training and Development Department.

Advisors regularly participate in departmental curriculum committees. Bev Hull served on the FACS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

The annual SSAC staff retreat offered an opportunity for the group to reflect on the previous spring and fall semesters. SSAC staff welcomed the opportunity to spend time together virtually to discuss the previous semesters and to prepare for summer orientation.

Staff Accomplishments

Several SSAC staff members received awards and accolades during 2021. Ahmaud Templeton was selected as the FACS Advisor of the Year. Recognition was included in the *Celebrating Excellence* video released in the fall. Melissa Garber received the Nettie Marie Nickols Outstanding Staff Award.

Dr. Cara Simmons was a nominee for the FACS Alumni Association's Creswell Award and was named to two 40 under 40 lists, UGA Alumni Association and Georgia Trend Magazine, in 2021. Within FACS, Dr. Simmons was appointed as Assistant to the Dean for Leadership Development and Diversity to lead the development of a 5-year plan. Dr. Simmons was nominated by UGA to participate in the Class of 2022 LEAD Athens cohort sponsored by the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce.

Leadership Roles & Committee Service

Staff hold membership and leadership responsibilities in the college, across campus, and the state of Georgia. Both Dr. Simmons and Melissa Garber are members of the FACS Curriculum Committee. Dr. Simmons holds a state officer position as President of the Georgia Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and serves as the Chair of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion. At UGA, she serves on the TEDxUGA Advisory Council. Dr. Simmons is also on the Athens Area Diaper Bank Board of Directors.

Dr. Simmons continues her service on the university's Staff Grievance Committee and is a new member of the Council of Academic Diversity Leaders. Dr. Simmons and Melissa Garber are both members of the Office of Instruction's Academic Advising Coordinating Council (AACC) and Melissa continued to serve as AACC Chair during spring semester 2021 and on the AACC Executive Board during summer and fall 2021. Melissa serves on the AACC Advisor Awards Committee, the AACC Retention Committee, and co-chairs the AACC Orientation Committee. In addition, Melissa is also a member of the Office of the Registrar's Graduation Clearance Officer Committee. Dr. Simmons is a member of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) and served on the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee and is a member of the National Coalition for Black Development in Family and Consumer Sciences.

Melissa Garber serves as a Hearing Administrator for the Office of Student Conduct and Student Judiciary, as an Academic Honesty facilitator for the Office of Academic Honesty and Student Appeals, and as a Title IX panelist for the Office of Student Conduct.

Budget

Kassie Suggs and Dr. Simmons maintained over \$34,000 in combined SSAC State and UGA Foundation monies. Funds support staff professional development, student programming, Bulldog Basics, the Faculty and Student Ambassador Programs, promotional material purchases, recruitment giveaways, and prospective student recruitment. Additional funds were also allocated to the SSAC by the dean to support emerging leaders in policy, teaching, interns, and student leadership.

Academic Advising and Orientation

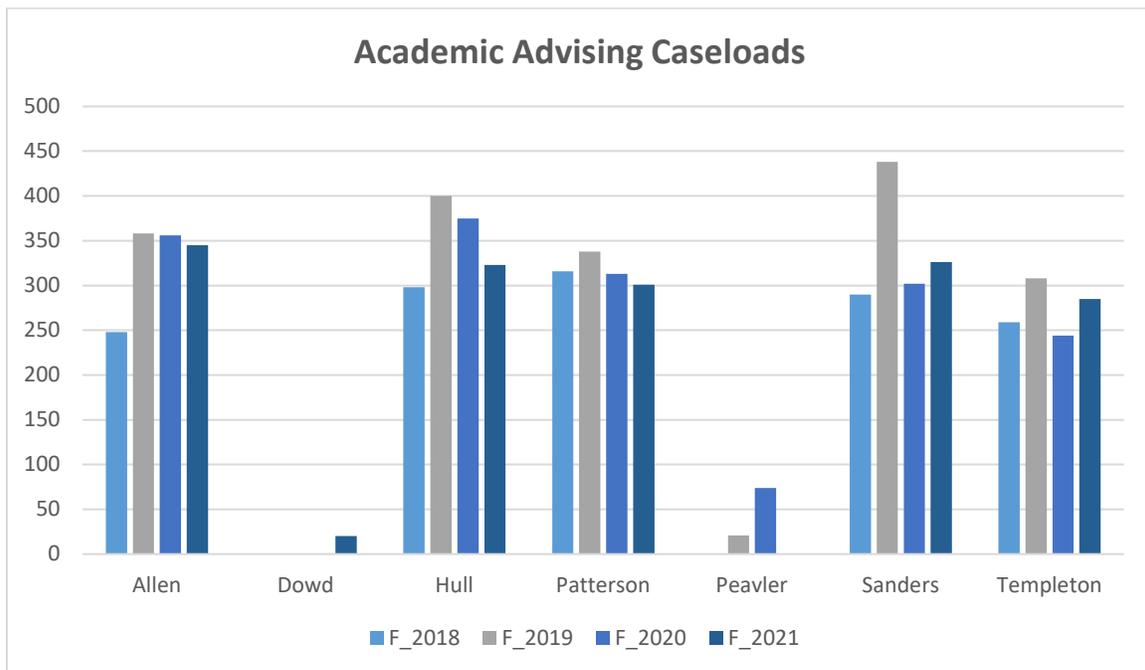
Academic advising is a key component of the student experience in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences. Several FACS degree programs continued to see enrollment growth in 2021 which continued to impact advisor caseloads.

Due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, advising successfully continued in virtual and electronic platforms.

Advisor Caseloads

Advisor	Percent Time	F_18	F_19	F_20	F_21
Allen, Anne*	1.00	248	358	356	345
Dowd, Aimee		N/A	N/A	N/A	20
Hull, Beverly	1.00	298	400	375	323
Patterson, Julie	0.75	316	338	313	301
Peavler, Debra	1.00	N/A	21	74	N/A
Sanders, Christie	1.00	290	438	302	326
Templeton, Ahmaud	1.00	259	308	244	285
Total Caseload		1411	1863	1664	1600

** Previous Percent = 0.75



Dawson Drop-Ins

Dawson Drop-Ins allow students to meet with an SSAC advisor to ask degree program questions, discuss a major change, inquire about FACS resources, or address other topics that do not require a scheduled advising appointment. Dawson Drop-Ins offer availability two days per week to allow for general drop-in hours on a designated day and for advisor-specific drop-in hours on the other. Academic advisors continued to assist students with their current degree

programs and to provide information about other academic programs and opportunities available to FACS students. Due to continuing impacts of COVID-19 Dawson Drop-Ins were conducted virtually during 2021.

Orientation

SSAC staff welcomed 275 new students (143 first year & 11 transfer) over the course of spring, summer, and fall 2021. Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, in-person orientation sessions were not required for incoming first year or transfer students. Academic units contributed information to online orientation modules, which were accessed by each student. The Assistant Director contacted each incoming FACS student directly with instructions for academic advising.

Students were able to schedule virtual academic advising appointments conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. In contrast to previous in-person orientation seasons, appointment times were able to be extended as advising was not limited to a one-day window. SSAC staff and interns also hosted virtual drop-in hours for new students to address additional questions or concerns.

Academic Status

The majority of FACS students are classified in good academic standing. A small population of FACS students are either on scholastic probation or dismissal. Students on scholastic or continued academic probation must meet certain academic benchmarks in order to maintain enrollment eligibility.

During 2021, Melissa Garber continued as a member of a working group of campus colleagues assembled by the Division of Academic Enhancement to refine the proposal to update UGA’s probation and dismissal policies. The Connect and Complete Persistence Framework was approved by the University Council in fall 2021 and will be implemented in fall 2022.

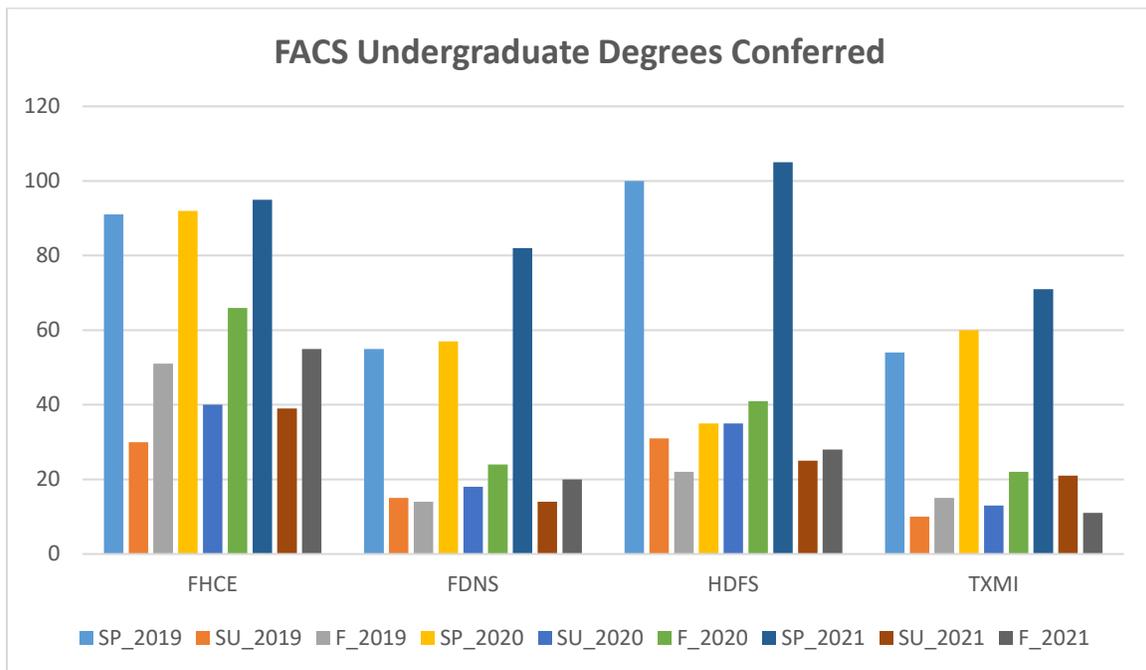
Academic Status	SP_21	SU_21	F_21
Scholastic Probation	18	17	10
Continued Probation	21	20	19
First Dismissal	3	5	2
Second Dismissal	2	5	
Total	44	47	31

FACS Convocation and Graduation

Spring 2021 commencement ceremonies were held over three days in Sanford Stadium to allow for COVID-19 safety precautions. An in-person convocation ceremony was not held in May. The College of Family and Consumer Sciences hosted a socially distanced convocation ceremony for fall graduates on December 17, 2021 at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

Honors Conferred	SP_21	SU_21	F_21
First Honor Graduate			2
Summa Cum Laude	26	4	8
Magna Cum Laude	59	12	13
Cum Laude	78	13	19
Total	163	29	42

Degrees Conferred	SP_21	SU_21	F_21
Total BSFCS	382	100	117



Data Reporting

The SSAC continued maintaining the FACS centralized data storage location housed on OneDrive, allowing administrators, department heads, and designated departmental contacts convenient access to the information. The OneDrive houses the most requested types of information (e.g., enrollment, student demographics) from departments related to undergraduate and graduate enrollment.

Information on the OneDrive is updated at designated points during the semester with reports from the ARGOS Reporting System. At the end of each semester, information is updated from reports provided by the Office of Institutional Research's FACTS & FIGURES portal to provide consistency with information accessed and utilized by the Office of Instruction.

Recruitment

The SSAC continued partnerships with multiple organizations and exhibited virtually at several events and conferences. FACS Info Sessions continued in a virtual format which allowed flexibility for prospective students and guests as travel to campus was not required. We were able to continue utilizing PowerPoints and videos to connect with students. Virtual exhibits continued to allow the SSAC was to enjoy a larger reach without as much direct contact.

Each interaction with a prospective student is an opportunity to encourage them to choose FACS. As FACS Info Sessions continued in a virtual format, we were able to continue to utilize our Faculty Ambassadors, Student Ambassadors and interns more frequently due to increased flexibility. We continued to connect with Extension and Outreach to discuss our partnership and ability to serve as a resource.

The continued use of virtual platforms remains very beneficial to our recruitment efforts. We continued to find new ways to connect with prospective students and reach large groups through video presentations. The versatility of meeting options gives prospective students and their supporters the opportunities to connect with FACS without a trip to campus.

Virtual events or events submitted as presentations do not have direct contact numbers. Direct contact numbers were lower due COVID-19 and alternate presentation formats.

Prior the beginning of fall semester, Debra Peavler accepted a job outside UGA. The subsequent search and hiring process contributed to limited recruitment efforts for several months during the fall. After a successful hiring process, Aimee Dowd joined the SSAC in October and efforts resumed.

Spring 2021 Events	Format	Audience
Grayson High School	Virtual Tour	50+ students
Commerce High School	Virtual Tour	60 students
TSA	Video presentation	
FCCLA	Video presentation	
Georgia School Counselor's Association	Virtual booth	
GATFACS	Virtual video	
Southeast District Extension Meeting	Virtual-Live	10 agents
Northeast District Extension Meeting	Virtual-Live	10 agents
FACS Info Sessions (ongoing)	Virtual and In-Person	
Prospective Students	Virtual and In-Person	68 Individual Visits
Virtual New Dawg Event	Virtual	

Summer 2021 Events	Format	Audience
GATCE Lunch and Learn	Zoom	40 attendees
Prospective Student Virtual Visits	In-Person	5 visitors

Fall 2021 Events	Format	Audience
First Look Events	In Person and Virtual Presentations	Prospective Students
Georgia School Counselor's Association Conference	In Person	School Counselors
Oconee County Schools 8 th Grade Career Fair	In Person	Middle & High School FCCLA Students
Bear Creek Middle School Career Fair	In Person	Middle School Students
Weekend in the Classic City	Virtual	High School 4-H Participants
Cedar Shoals High School	Virtual Presentation	Small group students
Prospective Student Visits	In Person & Virtual	Prospective High School and Transfer Students

**Numbers of direct contacts/meetings recorded, submitted and live presentations do not have exact general event attendance numbers.*

Instruction and Outreach

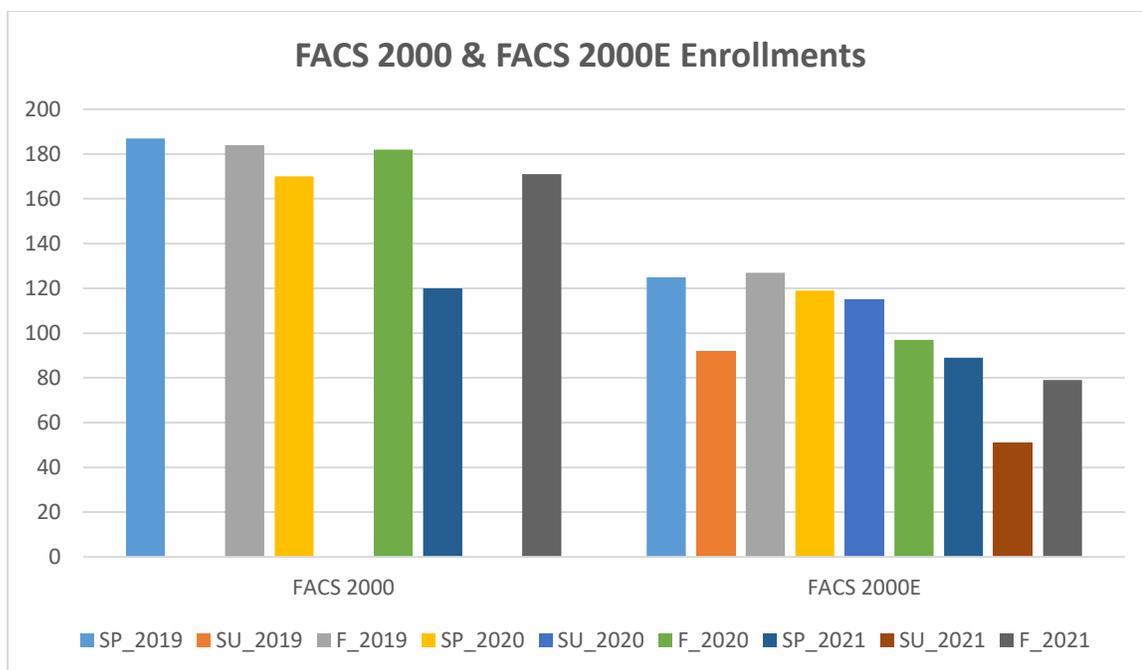
Outreach and promotion opportunities during 2021 allowed SSAC staff to enhance the profile of FACS both on and off campus through engagement with internal and external audiences.

FACS 2000

FACS 2000: *Introduction to Family and Consumer Sciences* continues to be an enjoyable course for new students. In 2021, three sections of FACS 2000 (in-person/hybrid) were offered for spring and two sections in the fall. FACS 2000E was taught each semester including summer. Improvements will continue to be made from student evaluation feedback. A sampling of student feedback on the course is below:

- *Her positive attitude truly elevates everyone's mood! She is clearly very involved in FACS, and it inspires us!*
- *The many guests she had come in were extremely helpful and beneficial to get a better understanding of FACS. The Agenda slides were also helpful at the beginning of the class.*
- *My instructor was really well organized and this made it easy to learn and stay on top of things.*
- *My instructor was well-organized, kind, and did a lot to keep students on track with everything in this course.*

Dr. Cara Simmons and Dr. Clair McClure completed their Sweaney Innovation Fund Grant project. The deliverables included a FACS 2000 website with 6 modules aligned with class sessions and a Body of Knowledge video.



FACS 2001

Leadership in Family and Consumer Sciences was taught for the first time spring 2021 with six students. The course helps to build a pipeline and culture of leadership in the college. In addition, the course has been added as a required course in the curriculum for FACS Education majors.

Bulldog Basics

Bulldog Basics offers toiletry and personal care items to the UGA student community with a temporary or long-term need on the Athens campus. In 2021, the organization launched a redesigned eStore, hired two staff members, and expanded to five pick up locations. An article highlighting the impact of Bulldog Basics can be found [here](#).

Throughout the year, Bulldog Basics received items, monetary donations, and support from many individuals and units on and off campus. Bulldog Basics also continued to partner with the Athens Area Diaper Bank.

2021 also marked the 5th birthday of Bulldog Basics. The organization collaborated with the Paw Print Agency for birthday celebrations.

Experiential Learning, Leadership & Student Involvement

Learn. Grow. Go. Showcase

FACS continued to increase student awareness of experiential learning and student leadership opportunities by offering the *Learn. Grow. Go. Showcase*. Due to COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, the showcase was an in-person grab-n-go style event featuring the various

experiential learning opportunities within the College. Separated into two days in September, tables displayed flyers, pamphlets, giveaway items, posters, and other promotional materials. Students were able to collect information for each featured program. The topics covered on both days featured student organizations and experiential learning opportunities including internships, the Legislative Aide Leadership Fellows Program, departmental EL opportunities, the Career Center, the UGA mentor program, UGA certificate programs, and FACS Study Away opportunities.

Experiential Learning and Student Leadership opportunities were promoted by a variety of outlets including *The (Virtual) inSTALLment* monthly newsletter; the *FACS Connection* e-newsletter; and social media postings of events, other experiential learning offerings, and student leadership opportunities. The center will continue work in this area with a college-wide experiential learning infographic and website update.

Student Success and Advising Center Internship Program

The Student Success and Advising Center Internship Program continued to be a popular experience for undergraduate and graduate students seeking to develop career competencies or exposure to student affairs work in an academic setting. Interns relayed the following about their experience in the Student Success and Advising Center:

- *Interning at the SSAC has been an invaluable experience. Through this internship, I have been immersed in a supportive, feedback-driven environment and connected with prospective students. This has allowed me to refine my presentation and interpersonal skills. I would recommend this opportunity to any student looking to improve their professional skills, regardless of their major.*
- *My experience as an SSAC intern made me feel as if I made a difference both in the college and within the Athens community. Assignments were given based on my personal interests that allowed for growth as an individual, student, and future professional. Getting to work with staff and other students of the college was great for networking, and being able to have a role in event planning was impactful. Additionally, the program promoted civic engagement through volunteering in the local community, which I highly appreciated. Overall, I loved the experience and would recommend to anyone looking for an engaging internship in a welcoming environment.*

Family and Consumer Sciences Day at the Capitol

The 2021 Family and Consumer Sciences Day at the Capitol was held virtually on February 11, 2021. Participants joined interactive sessions hosted by Legislative Aide Leadership Fellows, the UGA Office of Government Relations, and FACS partners. Attendees also participated in a trivia game in order to “tour” the Capitol.

Legislative Aide Leadership Fellows Program

Five students applied and were accepted into the program for 2021. Four continued for the duration of the program. They were placed with four legislators at the capitol where they had an opportunity to expand their knowledge related to legislation in Georgia and assist with Family and Consumer Sciences Day at the Capitol. Aides were paired with a mentor to facilitate their support during the fellowship.

A former Legislative Aide was hired as a liaison to help support the program. Five students were interviewed and offered positions for the 2021 Georgia General Assembly with Georgia legislators.

FACS Leadership Symposium

The first leadership symposium was held spring 2021 to highlight leadership in FACS. Participants included Emerging Leader in Policy Scholars and FACS 2001 students. The event website is available [here](#).

Emerging Leader in Policy

Dr. Simmons worked with Meredith Farnsworth, a 2021 M. Josephine Martin Emerging Leader in Policy Award Scholar. The purpose of the fund is to provide financial support to a FACS student who has a demonstrated interest in policy, with a preference for students interested in policy centered on health and nutrition. The funds can provide support to conferences, Educational forums, Internships within state, national government, or other agencies, and school systems. Meredith interned with the National Military Family Association (NMFA), an organization specializing in policy advocacy to enhance the quality of life of military-connected populations. NMFA boldly serves and supports military families to ensure every family is empowered, resilient, and thriving through focusing on legislative priorities such as enhancing child development, improving family health care, and expanding spouse employment and education. Engaging in a role at NMFA provides experience to build your skillset in informing policy and policymakers with the most recent research on military-connected populations. NMFA is a founding and active member of the Military Coalition, which is a group of 35 organizations that works to create a unified voice for military-connected populations when engaging with Congress.

FACS SGA Senator

Dr. Simmons worked with FACS senator Mary Nichols Lollis (fall 2021) in her Student Government Association role to serve as a voice for FACS students. The FACS SGA Senator also serves on the college's Student Leadership Advisory Council.

Student Organizations

During 2021, Kassie Suggs and Dr. Simmons continued to work with the FACS Business and Finance Office on the student allocation and reimbursement process. Kassie Suggs also provided guidance to individual student organization members as they navigated the allocation and reimbursement process or had questions or concerns related to expenditures.

Led by Dr. Simmons and supported by interns, the Student Leadership Advisory Council, continued to meet in 2021 with a focus on how to best utilize the group.

Career Development

Dr. Simmons worked closely with Marla Ebert, the FACS Career Consultant, through spring 2021 to continue the deep connection and understanding of National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career competencies with the SSAC Internship Program and Legislative Aide Leadership Fellows Program.

SSAC staff continued to recommend Career Center resources to FACS students throughout 2021, including many virtual workshop and presentation options. Dr. Simmons also updated the FACS specific questions for the Class of 2022 Career Outcomes survey.

FACS Ambassador Programs

Student Ambassadors

Interviews for the 2021-2022 FACS Student Ambassadors were held virtually during March and April. During spring and fall 2021, Student Ambassadors assisted with prospective student recruitment through participation in virtual meetings. During fall semester, Student Ambassadors participated in a focus group facilitated by the UGA Office of Assessment that gathered information regarding students' perspectives on the general education core curriculum.

Faculty Ambassadors

The role of the Faculty Ambassador Program is to help increase the profile of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences by engaging prospective students, current students, and other guests. Five Faculty Ambassadors were named to assist with these efforts. Departmental representatives were Sherle Brown (FHCE), Melissa Kozak and Jennifer Georgia (HDFS), Clair McClure (TXMI), and Rob Pazdro (FDNS). Faculty Ambassadors participated in virtual and in person prospective student events. Faculty Ambassadors meet with Dr. Simmons twice an academic year to provide feedback on prospective student recruitment, current student engagement, and their role as faculty ambassadors. Additionally, during the spring Dr. Simmons hosted two check-in/professional development meetings for the group.

University Mentor Program

The center continues to work with the UGA Mentor Program. It is a component of both the SSAC Internship and the Legislative Aide Leadership Fellows Program and is also included on the FACS website to promote awareness among students, faculty, and staff.