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# Georgia Southern offers service through new Center for Survey Research and Health Information

*SEPTEMBER 19, 2006*

Recognizing the growing need for reliable decision-making data, especially in the healthcare field, researchers at Georgia Southern University have created the Center for Survey Research and Health Information. The center is available to provide services not only for the University, but also for the larger community.

'Surveys are common research methods in political, health, and social sciences, and in marketing,'" said Gerald Ledlow, associate professor of health services administration and director of the center. 'But creating and administering a survey and analyzing the results can be huge task. Because we have the expertise, the software, and the experience in this area, we can provide a very useful service, especially in the healthcare area. The center can do telephone and e-mail surveys, Web-based surveys, household visits, focus groups, and direct mail surveys. We are a full-service shop.'

The center grew from a project recently completed by biostatistics professor Robert Vogel and his colleagues and graduate students. At the request of the Southwest Georgia Cancer Coalition, Vogel, a faculty member in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, developed an extensive survey to get an accurate view of how adults perceive health and health care in their region. The survey, including both demographic items and questions about health care, insurance, and access to medical care, was administered as a pilot study in Baker County, Georgia.

'It was good to see that 80 percent of our respondents said their health was good or excellent,'" said Vogel. 'The survey respondents reported good access to health care, and most put a lot of faith in their primary physicians.'

Vogel trained a small group of graduate students to complete the telephone survey. Calls were made both during the days and evenings and on weekends, and calls were attempted up to 10 times before a number was eliminated from the study.

A focal point of the survey was to determine whether men and women are benefiting from the screening methods available to detect breast, cervical, colon, and prostate cancer. A full report on the results of the study was presented to the Southwest Georgia Cancer Coalition, which will then be able to use the data to assess needs in the area and develop new and effective screening programs.

For more information about the Center for Survey Research and Health Information, contact Dr. Ledlow in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, 912-681-5653 or go to <http://jphcoph.georgiasouthern.edu>.

# **Information literacy conference will appeal to teachers, librarians, media specialists and policy makers**

*SEPTEMBER 19, 2006*

They may have their own Web pages on myspace.com and an arsenal of I-pods to play their favorite songs, but that doesn't mean the young people of today are as technologically savvy as they need to be.

In fact, recent data suggests that many students of all ages lack the ability to use computers effectively in their academic pursuits.

An upcoming conference co-sponsored by Georgia Southern University and South University will provide teachers, librarians and media specialists with a better understanding of key information literacy issues they face as educators dealing with students in the information age.

The third annual Georgia Conference on Information Literacy will be held on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 6 and 7, at the Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah.

Information literacy can be loosely defined as the art and science of locating, evaluating and using pertinent information to answer a question or solve a problem.

With more than 55 presentations and workshops, the conference is relevant to educators at every level, from kindergarten teachers to college professors.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to interact with colleagues from around the country who are facing similar challenges and applying practical solutions," said W. Bede Mitchell, the dean of the Zach S. Henderson Library at Georgia Southern.

O. Joseph Harm, the vice president for Academic Affairs at South University, concurs, noting that "the conference models the best practices in higher education which are essential to quality postsecondary and graduate education. Conferences such as this demonstrate the educational excellence found in Georgia universities."

The conference will feature presentations by professional educators representing institutions in 20 different states. Their topics will include:

- Information Literacy for Rookies
- Whatcha Gonna Do When They Come For You? Multi-Media Approaches for Preventing Student Plagiarism

- Library/Teacher Collaboration: A Fully Integrated Curriculum Approach to Information Literacy
- Don't Panic: Seniors and the College Library
- Google vs. GALILEO Finding Authoritative Resources for Reports and Projects
- What Can Student Citations Tell Us About Their Research Practices? Librarians and Composition Teachers Look at the Evidence

The keynote addresses will be delivered by Betsy Barefoot and Michael Hall.

Barefoot is the co-director and senior scholar of the Policy Center on the First Year of College. She will discuss the ways that student characteristics and expectations affect their attitudes about and interactions with information literacy.

Hall is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling, Educational Leadership and Professional Studies at Columbus State University. He will discuss changing the paradigm of "school as we know it" to one that prepares students for global competition in the 21st century.

While computers and the Internet play a vital role in information literacy, far too many students are failing to take full advantage of these technological tools.

For example, in a study conducted by the Educational Testing Service, some 10,000 high school and college students were asked to evaluate a set of Web sites. Nearly half of the participants were unable to determine which sites were the most objective, reliable and timely.

In addition, a Texas newspaper reported that professors at one university in that state have asked for the development of seminars that will teach students how to use the library's catalog and various computer databases.

The Georgia Conference on Information Literacy seeks to address these kinds of problems by providing educators with access to successful initiatives and the latest research. More than 500 people attended the first two conferences in 2004 and 2005.

Professional Learning Units are available to conference participants who hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate or paraprofessional license, and to participants who are working toward a paraprofessional license.

Also, every participant will receive a CD that contains notes provided by many of the conference speakers.

In addition to the Henderson Library, the Georgia Southern entities involved in the conference are the Department of Writing and Linguistics, the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, the College of Education, and the Continuing Education Center.

The fee for the conference is \$125 per person. Advance registration is preferred, but participants can also sign up at the conference on the first day.

To register, call (912) 681-0847. For more information, visit <http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/conted/infolit.html> or email [dchampion@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:dchampion@georgiasouthern.edu) or [janreyn@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:janreyn@georgiasouthern.edu) .