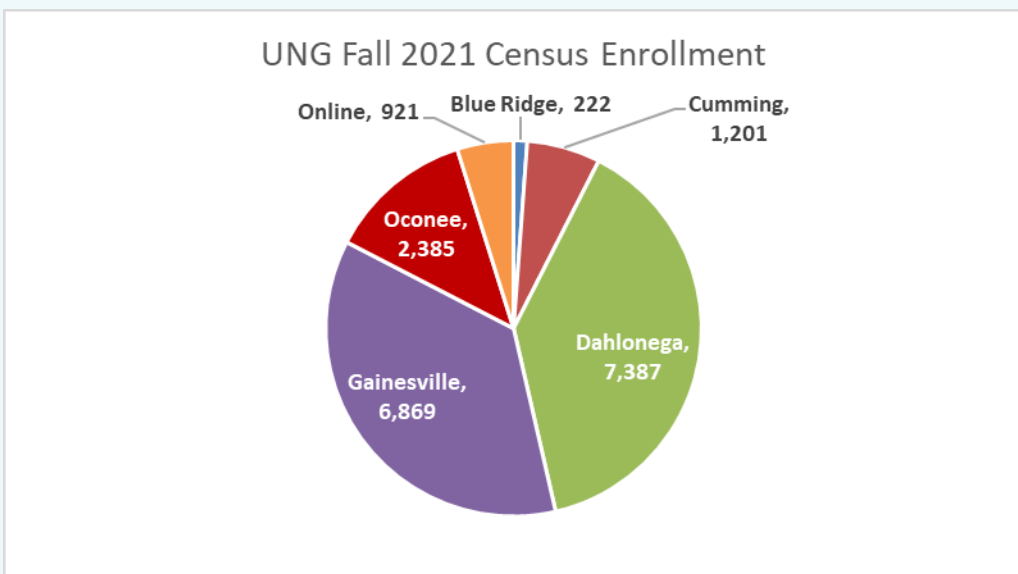


INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS NEWSLETTER: FALL 2021 EDITION



Want to Learn More?

Check out our [Fall 2021 Dashboard](#) to dig deeper into the data!

Need more? Submit a request via our [Service Now Portal!](#)

Bragging Rights!

We're always proud of our amazing team and love to share their accomplishments!

- ◆ **Teja Plyler** —IR Analyst— was recently accepted into the Master of Science in Analytics program at Georgia Tech and will begin studies in January.
- ◆ **Dr. Thapelo Whitfield** —Asst. Director of Assessment— joined our office in October and recently successfully defended her dissertation for her Ph.D. in Educational Measurement and Statistics from University of Iowa.



DATA LITERACY: WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

FROM THE DESK OF DR. HOLLY VERHASSELT

Data Literacy, Pt. 2: How Do I Know What to Ask For?

Requesting data is a lot like writing a research question. It's essential to ask the right questions initially to ensure that you will receive data that helps you address the problem you're trying to solve.

Here are some things to consider:

- ◆ How much data do you *really* need to answer your question? Big data gets a lot of attention these days, but big data is not always better data. Unless additional variables are necessary to answer your question and you have the ability to do detailed or complex data analysis, it might be better to start with a smaller request.
- ◆ Have you provided specific definitions for your terms? We get a lot of requests for student success data, and it's not unusual to follow-up with questions such as "which students?" and "what do you mean by success?" At UNG, we have students enrolled at different campuses and online, in multiple degree levels, and across colleges, departments, and majors. Depending on what you're interested in learning more about, your responses to these questions could yield very different data sets.
- ◆ How important is trend data, or do you just need a snapshot? This is a really tough question to address right now. Trend data can be very useful in understanding how certain indicators are changing over time. However, the pandemic has caused major disruptions in the lives of our students and on UNG's operations. Recent trend data may not be as useful given all the many challenges we've faced over the past 18 months.

By thinking critically about the data you're going to request, you can help streamline this process. The IR staff are always available for a consultation if you'd like to talk through your ideas or if you're not sure what is or is not available. A lot of information about UNG's enrollment and student success are already published in our dashboards, and those resources are always available to address your data needs. The dashboards can be a great starting point for data-informed conversations about student success.

FILLING IN THE MISSING PIECES: ADMINISTERING HERI SURVEYS IN AY 2022

Institutional Effectiveness routinely pulls data from our internal reservoirs to answer quantitative questions about our students and staff, but what happens when Banner and HR data don't give us the full picture? To fill in the qualitative gaps, Institutional Effectiveness regularly utilizes externally developed surveys to capture student, faculty, and staff perspectives on a variety of important topics.

This coming academic year, IE will administer three surveys developed by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). A national leader in institutional assessment and longitudinal research, HERI coordinates with institutions to collect responses, analyze the data, and create an institutional report to best illustrate the results. This year's surveys will include the **Diverse Learning Environments Survey**, the **HERI Faculty Survey**, and the **HERI Staff Climate Survey** — gathering responses and insights from students, faculty, and staff regarding campus culture, attitudes towards race and gender, and the overall direction of our institution. Be on the lookout for surveys to hit your inboxes this month! We will continue to collect survey responses until February 2022.

Your responses can and will help shape the future of UNG!

Assessment Spotlight

Dr. April Nelms, UNG College of Education

April Nelms is an Associate Dean and Professor in UNG's College of Education (COE). April joined UNG in 2011. Throughout her career, she has taught science content and science education pedagogy courses in the middle school, high school, and university setting. Dr. Nelms has been involved in many research projects that focus on how pre-service and in-service teachers acquire pedagogical content knowledge with her research being supported by the Georgia Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. Her research interests include pedagogical content knowledge, longitudinal professional development, and student analysis of primary literature.

During her time at UNG, she has served as a faculty member, Coordinator of Science Education, and as the head of a department in the COE. In her current role as the Associate Dean, she is responsible for assessment, accreditation, and reporting. This is no small task considering that the COE has over 20 degree and certificate programs. This reporting is a vital component in maintaining accreditation, making instructional and program improvements, promoting student success and engagement, and informing planning and budgeting.

April works closely with the COE's Dean, Dr. Sheri Hardee, and COE professors to create assessment plans that focus on mastery of course objectives through the development of meaningful program level outcomes.

We would like to thank Dr. Nelms, COE professors, and department leaders for supporting assessment and preparing teachers for classroom success.