

Brand Voice and Tone:

How We Tell the Georgia Story

June 2017



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A photograph of a large, white, classical-style building with columns, likely a part of the University of Georgia campus. In the foreground, there is a black, ornate lamp post with two white globe lights. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a clear sky. A red rectangular graphic element is visible in the top left corner.

We are here to tell the story
of the University of Georgia.



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Cool. Thanks, guy.

What's that supposed to even mean?

It's not just about:



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It's not just about:

- Teaching people something





It's not just about:

- Teaching people something
- Convincing people of something





It's not just about:

- Teaching people something
- Convincing people of something
- Informing people about something



A photograph of a sunset scene. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow. In the foreground, there is a dark metal fence with vertical bars. Behind the fence, a building with a gabled roof is visible. The background shows a hilly landscape with trees. The overall mood is peaceful and nostalgic.

We're here to make people
feel something.



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EMOTIONAL HUMAN-CENTERED STORYTELLING



PART ONE: THE TOOLBOX



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Our Positioning

1. Who are we?
2. What do we do?
3. Why do we do it?
4. Why does it matter?





Our Positioning

The University of Georgia tackles the most pressing issues of our time, by inspiring those who will lead, discover and serve on a relentless pursuit to improve our world.

Our Messaging





Our Personality

NURTURING

We are personable, supportive and invested in others, as well as easygoing, kind and respectful.

OPTIMISTIC

We are hopeful, and we envision a better world that we are helping make possible.

TIME-HONORED

We are guided by a respect for history, tradition, and our Southern roots.

TENACIOUS

We are ambitious, and we never stop searching for better answers and bigger solutions.

FOCUSED

We are intentional and doggedly determined, guided by a clarity of purpose.

COMMITTED

We are deeply invested, and our conviction—to our students, our state and our world—is unwavering.





How does it sound?

Confident, but not cocky.

Earnest, but not humorless.

Humble, but not self-deprecating.

Direct, but not pushy.

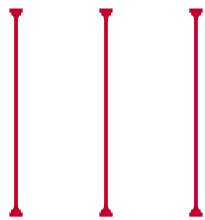
Inspiring, but not didactic.

Ambitions, but not overreaching.

Smart, but not pretentious.

Matter-of-fact, but not blunt.







At the heart of all we do



At the heart of all we do

is

HEART.

*And it's the love we
share for our students,*



for the state of Georgia,



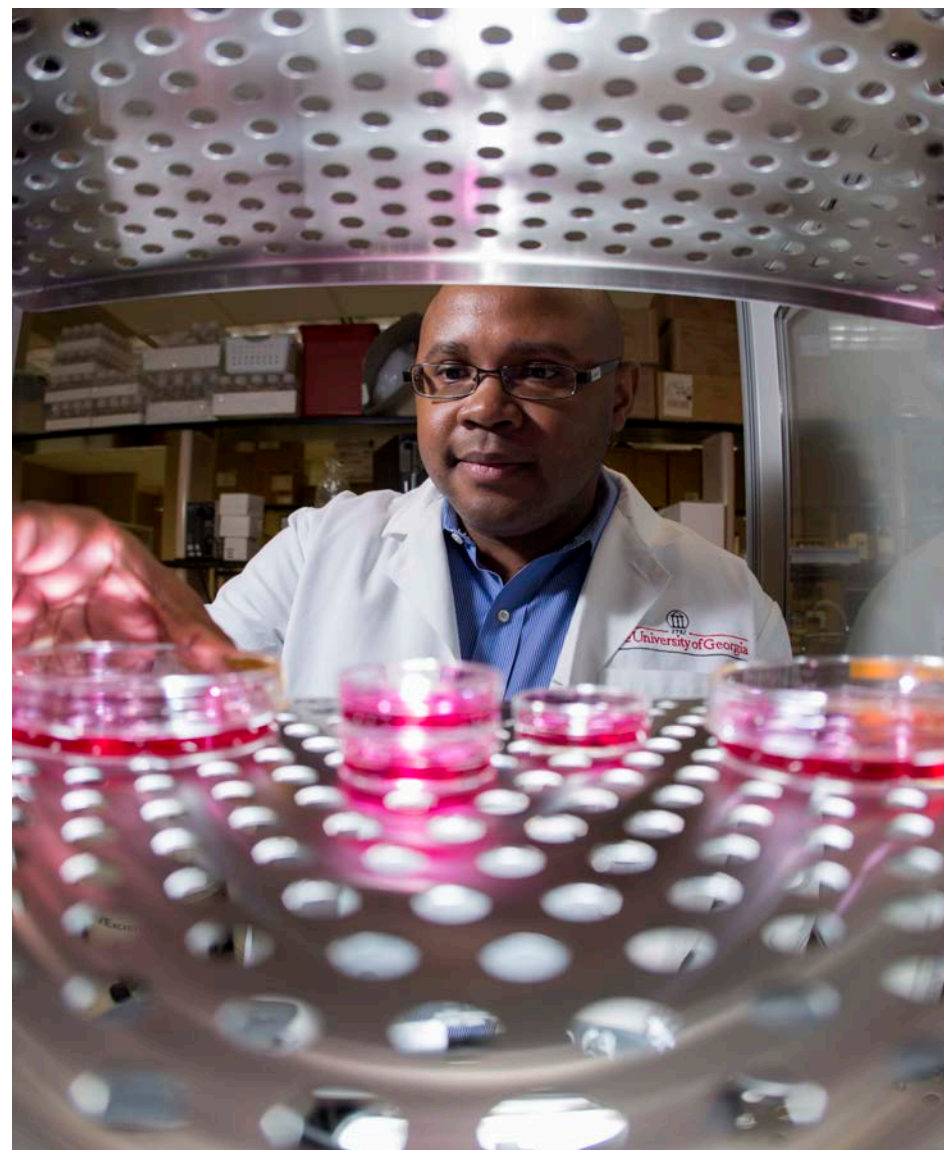
*and for the people
of the world*



THAT TURNS
EVERY
POTENTIAL
POSSIBILITY
INTO SOMETHING
TRULY POSSIBLE.



**THIS IS WHY
WE'RE SOLVING
GRAND GLOBAL
CHALLENGES.**





**THIS IS HOW
WE'RE SERVING
COMMUNITIES
AND IMPROVING
HUMAN LIVES.**

And this is the reason we give our
students every opportunity to

DO MORE,



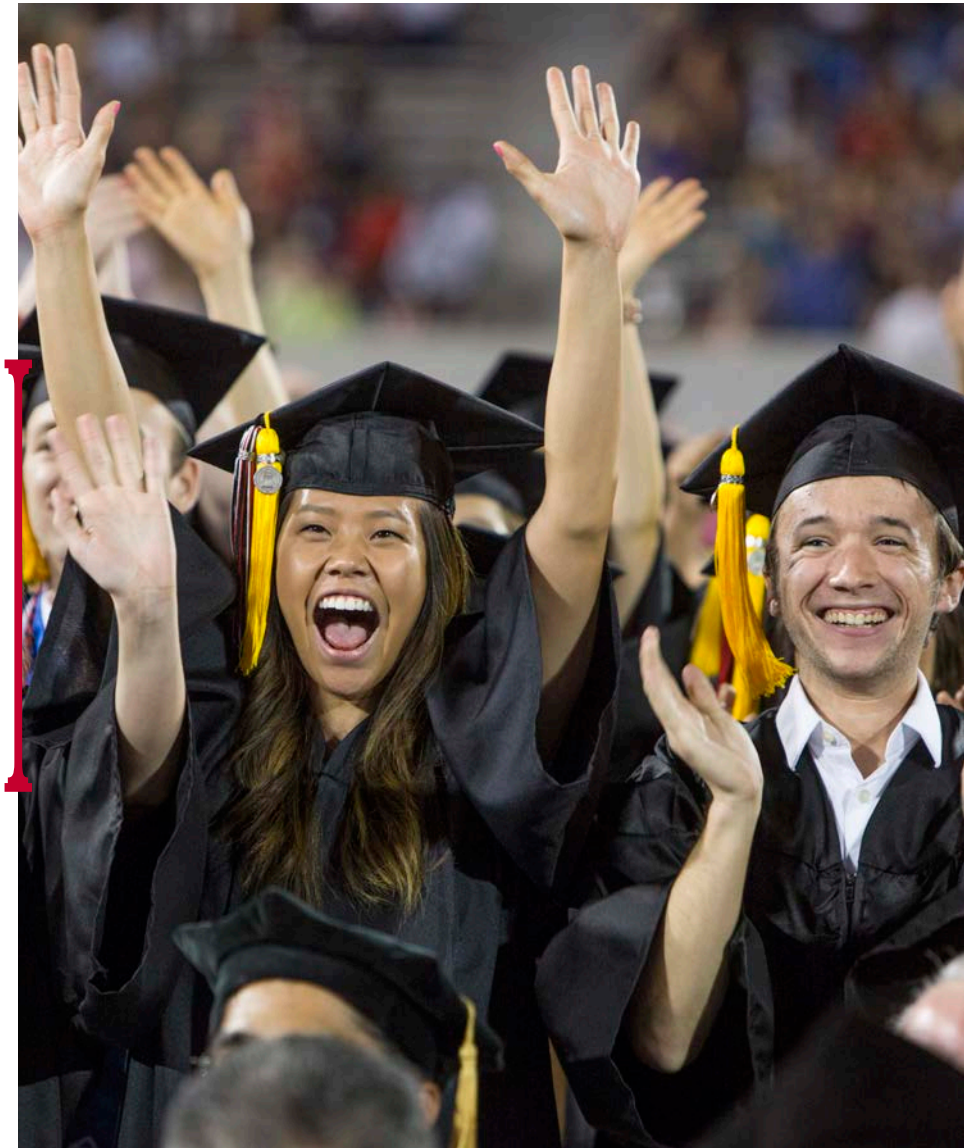
And this is the reason we give our
students every opportunity to

DO MORE,
ACHIEVE MORE,



And this is the reason we give our
students every opportunity to

**DO MORE,
ACHIEVE MORE,
and BECOME MORE.**



*We share a deep sense of
duty and dedication.*



*We acknowledge the past
while we look to the future.*



We embrace the challenges
that push us way past our
COMFORT ZONES—





into **DISASTER ZONES,**



COMBAT ZONES,





END ZONES



and every **TIME ZONE.**




**WHEREVER
PEOPLE ARE
SUFFERING,**



**WHEREVER
COMMUNITIES
ARE LOOKING
FOR STRONGER
LEADERS,**



A photograph of two scientists in a laboratory. In the foreground, a man wearing a blue surgical cap, glasses, and a blue face mask is looking through a white compound microscope. He is wearing a dark blue lab coat. In the background, a woman wearing a green surgical cap and a white face mask is partially visible. The laboratory bench is equipped with various scientific instruments, including a pipette, a rack of test tubes, and a small digital scale. The background shows white lab cabinets and a bright, clean environment.

**AND WHENEVER
THE WORLD CRIES
OUT FOR THOSE
WHO WILL BRING
BETTER SOLUTIONS,**

**WE ARE THERE
TO ANSWER
THE CALL
TO SERVICE.**



It's more than our **MISSION.**

It's more than our **PASSION.**



It's our **COMMITMENT.**

A photograph of a man in a light blue shirt and red tie, wearing glasses, speaking to a lecture hall of students. He is standing in the foreground, gesturing with his hands. The students are seated in tiered rows, many with laptops open. The text "A COMMITMENT TO OUR FUTURE." is overlaid in the center of the image.

A COMMITMENT
TO OUR FUTURE.

A photograph of two students, a young man and a young woman, both wearing red shirts, sitting at a desk in a classroom. The young man is pointing at a laptop screen while the young woman, who is wearing glasses, looks on with a smile. A coffee cup is on the desk. The background is a blurred classroom with other students and bookshelves. The text "A COMMITMENT TO EACH OTHER." is overlaid in the center.

**A COMMITMENT
TO EACH OTHER.**

A person wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt, dark green cargo pants, and black rubber boots with yellow accents is pulling a large, dark fishing net. The net is draped over a wooden pole and extends across the frame. The background shows a wide, flat beach with a small body of water on the right and a clear blue sky. The text "A COMMITMENT TO A BETTER WORLD." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

A COMMITMENT
TO A BETTER WORLD.



A COMMITMENT
WE HOLD CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS.



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Our brand platform captures the spirit of our voice
and is a high-level inspiration for our brand story.

But this isn't how everything needs to sound.
Not exactly.



Questions that helped define our brand story.

- Why do we exist?
- What basic human value do we offer?
- How do we do it differently?

PART TWO: BUILDING THE FRAMEWORK FOR EMOTIONAL STORIES



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3 Things You've **Always** Got To Do:



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3 Things You've **Always** Got To Do:

Be interesting



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3 Things You've **Always** Got To Do:

Be interesting

Make an emotional connection



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3 Things You've **Always** Got To Do:

Be interesting

Make an emotional connection

Say something real





12 Ways to Try to Get There



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1 Start with a hook.

Give them a reason to care right away. Lead with a benefit.



2 Find an angle.

A story should be about one thing.
Place, process, purpose, people.

“A trending story on Twitter could mean thousands of people care about an issue—or that some computers are doing their jobs. New research from the University of Georgia found that Twitter "bots" can be the driving forces behind dialogue in social movements, possibly leading to journalistic attention and governmental change.”

The Angle: Bots may be driving social movements.



The screenshot shows the UGA Today website. The main headline is "Connecting the bots: Researchers uncover invisible influence on social media" dated May 30, 2017. The article is by Matt Weeks, with contact information for Elena Karahanna and Carolina Salge. The article text discusses how a trending story on Twitter can mean thousands of people care about an issue, or that some computers are doing their jobs. It mentions that new research from the University of Georgia found that Twitter "bots" can be the driving forces behind dialogue in social movements, possibly leading to journalistic attention and governmental change. A photo shows Elena Karahanna and Carolina Salge. The right sidebar contains a "Receive UGA news each morning" subscription form, a "Sort all news by:" dropdown menu, and a "News by selected interests:" section with various categories like Culture / Living, Environment, Medical Science, Public Policy and Politics, and Science.



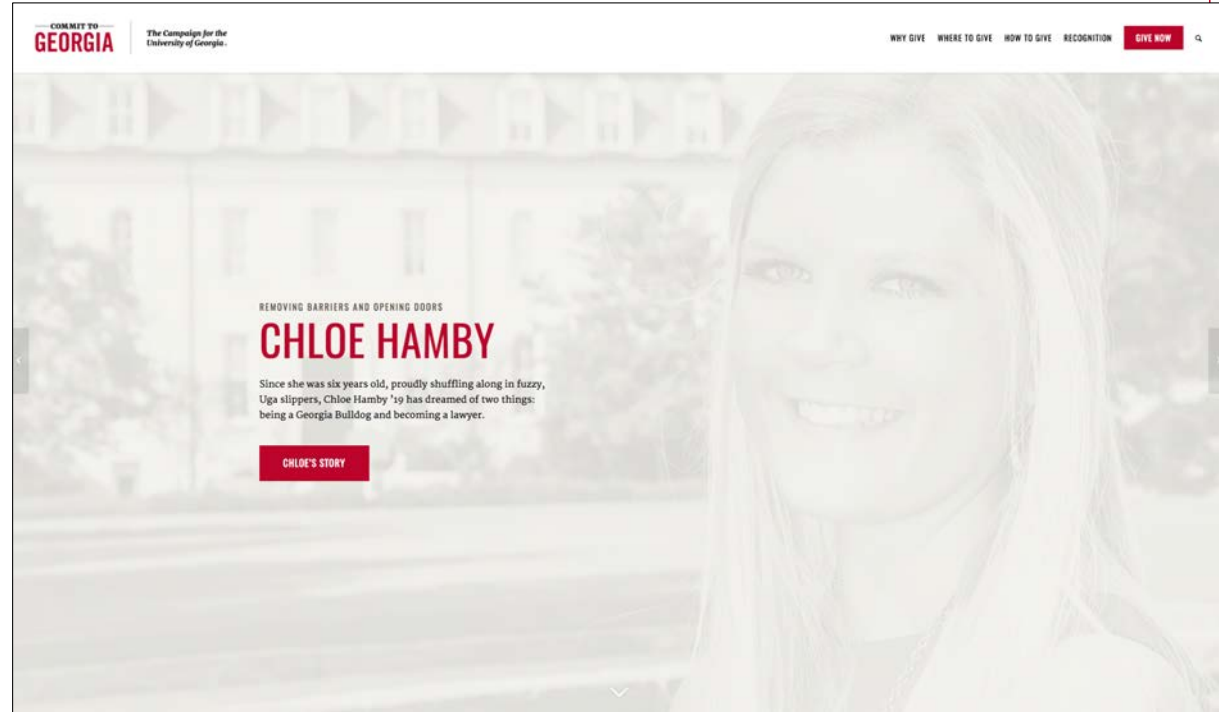
3 Find the hero.

People are at the heart of everything we do. Put them there.

Find the hero:

In a story about Removing Barriers and Opening Doors on give.uga.edu:

“Since she was six years old, proudly shuffling along in fuzzy, UGA slippers, Chloe Hamby '19 has dreamed of two things: being a Georgia Bulldog and becoming a lawyer. Now in her sophomore year at the University of Georgia, Chloe has achieved the former and is hard at work on the latter. It was not an easy path for Chloe to get to where she is; her family has struggled with illness, financial difficulties and even homelessness. These adversities, however, have only increased Chloe's drive. She is determined to not only reach her goals, but also help others who have had similar struggles.”



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4 **Reveal our character.**

You don't always have to say
“commitment”. But you should
always show it.



5 **Breathe life into every word.**

Our voice is personal—we write like we talk. Read it out loud to test.



**6 Be real.
Clever is overrated.**

The best writing doesn't call much attention to itself. Speak to people.



7 Avoid jargon and hyperbole.

Even if it's what everybody says.
Especially if it's what everybody says.

Avoid Jargon:

“The utilization of the material learned in the training was bolstered by the local capacity building and gender sensitive expertise of local experts; the synergies brought together by different sectors, the information about the local context leveraged by the leaders, and the cross-cutting themes adopted by the facilitators made for a successful workshop for the beneficiaries that will facilitate knowledge sharing and bottom up development.”

HOW MATTERS
Aid can be better. Let's talk about HOW.

HOME ABOUT BLOGROLL GET IN TOUCH ONLINE COMMUNITIES RESOURCES SERVICES

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- Good Practice
- Guest Bloggers
- Poetry Pause
- Reflection & Rumination
- Smart Risks
- Uncategorized

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- Betrayal
- What the U.S. re
- can't imagine
- A big week
- Philanthropists,
- need you to be

#IntDevComms, Guest Bloggers

Why and how to avoid jargon

December 9, 2014

A guest post by Stephanie Buck of *Until the Lions*.

“The utilization of the material learned in the training was bolstered by the local capacity building and gender sensitive expertise of local experts; the synergies brought together by different sectors, the information about the local context leveraged by the leaders, and the cross-cutting themes adopted by the facilitators made for a successful workshop for the beneficiaries that will facilitate

Until the Lions

Better storytelling for international development

Home About Contact

Journalism First: How one woman is helping organizations 'story up'

"When people share their stories, the world ignites with possibilities." Last month I had the privilege of speaking with Catharine Gately...

#communications for development, #journalism, #storytelling, #storytelling for change, #why storytelling matters

How to Find the Story

Sometimes the most difficult part of talking about international development is figuring out which story to tell. There is so much...

#storytelling

Lessons from Fiction: Show and Tell

"Show, don't tell." It's a constant challenge for writers, filmmakers, and photographers, whether they're telling stories based in fact or...

#communications for development, #globalaid, #lessons from fiction, #narratives, #writing

September Inspiration: Back to School

"How was your summer?" August spills over into September and, in the Northern Hemisphere, that's often the first question that escapes...

#inspiration, #participatory media, #storytelling

Aylan Kurdi: What we can learn from the latest viral image

By now you've probably seen the image of the drowned Syrian boy plastered across news and social media channels.

Don't Create a Mood, Just Tell Good Stories

Guest post by Daniel Lombardi. This post was originally published on WhyDev, and

ABOUT

How-matters.org explores the skills and knowledge needed by all international "do-gooders" (professional and amateur alike) to put real resources behind local means of overcoming obstacles. The book inspired by this blog, *Smart Risks: How small grants are helping to solve some of the world's biggest problems*, will be available in April 2017!

f t in s

TWITTER FEED

RT @1000currents: #SmartRisks: #Smashing grassroots wisdom www.its.co.uk/1000currents/

any reports written just like the paragraph above, using it for the reader to understand. This is especially true if ment jargon. So let me focus on the use of jargon, and



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8 **Cut out excess.**

Say only what you need to say.
Get to the point without using
unnecessary words.

Cut out excess:

An exceptionally unique example:

Enclosed walled courtyard Precisely tailored to
Rewind back Three-wheel trike
Perhaps it is no surprise that the region is
experiencing an unexpected flurry of interest
Your own self-respect Consume orally
Confront head-on Forced (against her will)
Careening down a hill, out of control
She wanted to pen her own autobiography
Other alternatives Rubens's adaptation of a
pre-existing chalk sketch
Previous experience Following in the wake of ...
Don't go at 11am on a Saturday morning
Extremely comprehensive **Male sibling**
She lived in total isolation
Catch the market as it climbs upwards
It was the transforming moment that would change his life
Splits apart Absolutely crucial
Personally curated selection Close proximity to
Alternative option As-yet undeveloped
Reverse back to where they were **Added bonus**



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9 Show the impact of our work.

Every story should reveal why we do the things we do.





10 Make an emotional connection.

Decide how you want your audience to feel, and write accordingly.



11 Draft a plot.

Rather than state the benefit, dramatize it. Show our brand promise at work.

Draft a plot:

It's Tuesday at 11 a.m., and a rapt classroom of students is gazing up at huge pictures of rashes and macroscopic photos of the insects that caused them.

It's gross, it's squirm-inducing and it's absolutely engrossing. It's just another day in "Medical Entomology," a course co-taught by UGA entomology professor Darold Batzer.

Batzer has been teaching students about the incredibly small, but powerful, world of insects since joining UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences entomology department 20 years ago.

The screenshot shows the University of Georgia website. At the top is a navigation bar with links for Students, Faculty/Staff, Alumni, Parents & Families, Visitors, Community, and Corporations & Businesses. Below this is the UGA logo and the text "UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA". A search bar is located to the right of the logo. Below the navigation bar is a secondary navigation bar with links for About UGA, Admissions, Academics, Research, Outreach, Student Life, Working at UGA, Giving to UGA, Arts, and Athletics. The main content area features a large photo of Professor Darold Batzer, a man with short brown hair wearing a blue shirt and a backpack, smiling in a field. Below the photo is the caption "Professor introduces students to small, but powerful, world of insects." To the left of the photo is the text "It's Tuesday at 11 a.m., and a rapt classroom of students is gazing up at huge pictures of rashes and macroscopic photos of the insects that caused them." To the right of the photo is the text "It's gross, it's squirm-inducing and it's absolutely engrossing. It's just another day in 'Medical Entomology,' a course co-taught by UGA entomology professor Darold Batzer." Below the photo is the text "Batzer has been teaching students about the incredibly small, but powerful, world of insects since joining UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences entomology department 20 years ago." To the right of the photo is the text "In courses like 'Medical Entomology' and the study-abroad course 'The Natural History of Insects,' Batzer helps undergraduate students from all majors connect a".

Students | Faculty / Staff | Alumni | Parents & Families | Visitors | Community | Corporations & Businesses

MyUGA | UGA MAIL | A-Z INDEX

QUICK LINKS

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

About UGA | Admissions | Academics | Research | Outreach | Student Life | Working at UGA | Giving to UGA | Arts | Athletics

Professor introduces students to small, but powerful, world of insects.

FEATURE STORIES

Absolutely engrossing

It's Tuesday at 11 a.m., and a rapt classroom of students is gazing up at huge pictures of rashes and macroscopic photos of the insects that caused them.

It's gross, it's squirm-inducing and it's absolutely engrossing. It's just another day in "Medical Entomology," a course co-taught by UGA entomology professor Darold Batzer.

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Search Feature Stories

PREVIOUS FEATURES

Gathering the D.C. Dawgs

Crossing boundaries

Validating a Venetsianov



12 **Be consistently inconsistent.**

These aren't rules and they shouldn't be. Choose the language that best communicates our message, and the voice will follow.

PART THREE: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER



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Answer these questions before you write
anything, and you'll be most of the way there.



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1 What are we talking about here?

- How does this story show how we're improving the world?
- How does this story represent our relentless commitment?
- How does this story illustrate the ways we inspire those who will lead, discover, and serve?
- How are we doing this in a way that's different from other institutions?
- How does this embody and celebrate the spirit of who we are at UGA?



2

Who are we talking to here?

- List all possible audiences for your story.
- Prioritize them by narrowing your focus to the most important audience.
- Determine what they care about.
- Use your understanding of them to influence the casualness or formality of our voice.



3

What larger truth is this story revealing about the University of Georgia?

- If you think of the specifics of your story as proof points, what point are they proving?
- Find ways to connect the details with the larger benefits and attributes of the institution.
- Choose just one big message and go with it.



Thank you.
Questions?



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