



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Executive Director, Ralston Institute, College of Family and Consumer Sciences

The University of Georgia (UGA) invites applications and nominations for the position of Executive Director of the Ralston Institute for Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences. The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing research, developing an information/resource clearinghouse, training and building collaborations with other behavioral health colleagues and professionals, creating workforce connections with mentorship and internship programs, partnerships, developing inter-professional education and growing evidence-based practices and resources.

The Ralston Institute for Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities comprises units on behavioral health, developmental disabilities, research and evaluation, instruction, and administrative services. Currently housed in the Rivers Crossing building at the University of Georgia, the developmental disabilities unit is a designated University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), part of a national network of 68 university centers with core funding provided by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The behavioral health unit has been recently added to the Institute, through funding from the state that has been provided to enhance the behavioral health workforce in the state. The Institute has an admirable record of procuring federal, state, and foundation funding for its activities that include technical support, evaluation or projects, and applied research on developmental and physical disabilities, direct service providers, vocational development, and other projects that fit within its scope. The Institute can be envisioned as stretching across Georgia, with educational programs and outreach projects touching every corner of the state. Under its previous name, the Institute for Human Development and Disability is one of UGA's oldest continuously-funded federal programs, and has, since 1965, provided a strong and positive force for social change focused on the strengths and contributions of people with disabilities and conceptualizes disability as a natural part of human existence. Disability issues are explored from infancy through aging.

The College of Family and Consumer Sciences, sixth largest at UGA in terms of undergraduate enrollment, is a student-centered college that emphasizes holistic student development and has grown rapidly in recent years to a current total enrollment of about 2027 students. There are approximately 110 total faculty members in the College, where undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered in all areas of family and consumer sciences, as well as collaborative programs with other schools, colleges, centers and institutes at the University. The College provides a comprehensive graduate program, offering master's and doctoral degrees in all four departments with a current enrollment of about 250 graduate students. Administratively, the College is comprised of four academic departments: Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics; Nutritional Sciences; Human Development and Family Science; and Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors as well as the Ralston Institute for Developmental Behaviors and Disabilities. The College is proud of and benefits from a high degree of diversity in its faculty, students and programs. International opportunities are strongly supported in the College and the University. Programs of outreach and public service, including outstanding Cooperative Extension initiatives, extend the resources of the College and University to the general public and targeted audiences. Faculty in the College manage significant external grants and contracts for research and public service from the NIH, USDA, DOD, NIMH, NIDA, DOE, the CDC and GEFA among others. Additional information about the College of Family and Consumer Sciences is available at <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/>.

Responsibilities:

- Collaboratively with faculty and staff, develop an overarching mission and philosophy for the Institute, engage in long-range planning, and lead and manage the Institute's strategic planning and



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operational effectiveness, ensuring that program evaluation findings and information obtained from needs assessments are used to continuously improve Institute programs and activities.

- Design and oversee Institute programs that enhance the overall Teaching, Research, and Service missions of the University of Georgia. Ensure that the Institute maintains balance among its various programmatic efforts.
- Facilitate cooperative relationships with groups, agencies, and individuals on the university campus, in the state, and nationally. Promote the visibility of the Institute on the university campus, in the state, and nationally. Represent at state conferences, trainings, etc. to create visibility for the Institute.
- Promote leveraging of resources, including successful competition for grants and other extramural sources of funds.
- Recruit highly qualified professionals who are dedicated to the fields of developmental disabilities and behavioral health and who hold values consistent with the mission. Supervise faculty and professional staff; develop and implement policies which enhance their professional growth.
- Manage the overall budget in a cost-effective and sound manner.
- Support, encourage, and coordinate research efforts. Provide research technical assistance on behavioral health and disabilities. Oversee collection of Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) data related to research and leveraging of funds.
- Ensure that the Institute consistently meets or exceeds all ADD Performance Criteria.
- Ensure that programs in the Disabilities unit are responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities and their families, as well as to the needs of advocacy groups and the local and state service systems.
- Assure that the Institute is represented on the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Participate in the AUCD network; encourage faculty and staff to actively participate in the network.
- Increase the pipeline of personnel working in the Georgia behavioral health and developmental disability service systems, with particular emphasis on critical shortages in the state behavioral health workforce.
- Oversee creation and maintenance of a Clearinghouse focused on the intersection between behavioral health and criminal justice. Incorporate new opioid-related projects into the Clearinghouse as they are funded.
- Identify resources/gaps in training for individuals to work in behavioral health field, determine the need for developing new classes, certificates, degrees, etc. to address identified shortages across the state, and develop trainings and certificates, etc. to address the gaps. Explore possible new programs to incentivize graduates to seek jobs in the state behavioral health system.

Required/Minimum Qualifications:

- Ph.D. or Ed.D. in a FACS discipline or a related area including demonstrated expertise in developmental disability and behavioral health.
- Currently at the rank of Professor or have completed at least five years as Associate Professor (for appointment to rank of Professor by the effective date of the appointment) and must show clear and convincing evidence of high levels of achievement in scholarship, and evidence of successful administration. To be eligible for tenure upon appointment, candidates must be tenured at their current institution or have been tenured at a prior institution and bring a demonstrably national reputation to UGA. Candidates must be approved for tenure upon appointment before hire. For more information about the requirements for the rank of Professor, please see the [University Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure](#).

Relevant/Preferred Education, Experience, Licensure, and/or Certification

- Demonstrated engagement in interdisciplinary collaboration.



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- Demonstrated verbal and written communication skills with the ability to manage a variety of relationships with various stakeholders.
- Demonstrated track record for sustained measurement of program and project outcomes, ability to work independently and with others to achieve desired results.
- Knowledge of and the ability to effectively utilize project management processes, methodologies and tools.
- Three (3) years of organizational leadership experience.
- Three (3) years of experience with development, implementation, and evaluation of services and interventions focused on treatment ecosystems as well as experience working within and navigating community systems including service provision or employment for individuals with disabilities, human services, behavioral health, community service provision, first responders, law enforcement, community corrections, and courts.

Since our founding in 1785, the University of Georgia has operated as Georgia's oldest, most comprehensive, and most diversified institution of higher education (<https://www.uga.edu/>). The proof is in our more than 235 years of academic and professional achievements and our continual commitment to higher education. UGA is currently ranked among the top 20 public universities in *U.S. News & World Report*. The University's main campus is located in Athens, approximately 65 miles northeast of Atlanta, with extended campuses in Atlanta, Griffin, Gwinnett, and Tifton.

UGA employs approximately 3,000 faculty and more than 7,700 full-time staff. The University's enrollment exceeds 43,000 students including over 32,000 undergraduates and over 10,500 graduate and professional students. Academic programs reside in 19 schools and colleges, including our newly formed School of Medicine.

The University of Georgia has goals to advance its national and international standing in research and scholarship by leveraging the excellence of all its faculty and the comprehensive nature of its public, land- and sea-grant missions. For further information about the University of Georgia, please visit: www.uga.edu.

Applications: Applicant screening will begin immediately. Candidates are encouraged to submit their materials by Sunday, September 7, 2025; however, screening will continue until the position is filled. The application packet should include a cover letter detailing how the applicant's credentials and experience meet the needs, responsibilities, and qualifications stated above; a current vita/resume; and contact information for three references (who will not be contacted without further correspondence with the applicant).

All applicants must apply online at <https://www.ugajobsearch.com>. Please see the job posting at: <https://www.ugajobsearch.com/postings/438122>

To request a descriptive **Opportunity Profile** for this position, provide a nomination, or seek additional information, please contact Paige Gates, Primary Consultant with the UGA Search Group, 706-542-5230 or Paige.Gates@uga.edu. Letters of recommendation or a simple nomination should include the name and contact information for the nominee.

The University of Georgia is an Equal Opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, color, disability, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, or veteran status or other protected status. Persons needing accommodations or assistance with the accessibility of materials related to this search are encouraged to contact Central HR (hrweb@uga.edu).