



# The University of Georgia

University Council  
Athens, Georgia 30602

March 26, 2010

## UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2009-2010

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal for a new Center for the Collaborative Study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions (C-GSET) will be an agenda item for the April 2, 2010, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair  
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Professor Jere W. Morehead  
Dr. Laura D. Jolly



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# The University of Georgia

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Office of Vice President for Research

February 9, 2010

Professor Jere W. Morehead  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
and Provost  
206 Administration Building  
CAMPUS

Dear Jere:

Please find enclosed a proposal for the formation of the Center for the Collaborative Study of Gene- Social Environment Transactions (C-GSET), as well as additional letters of support.

I request that you review the proposal for your approval or suggestions for change. If it meets your approval as presented, please forward it to Mr. David Shipley for review and approval by the Curriculum Committee of the University Council.

I thank you for your assistance in making this important initiative for UGA a reality.

Sincerely,

David Lee, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Research

cc: Dr. Steve Beach  
Mr. David Shipley

**Proposal for the Establishment of  
The Center for the Collaborative Study of Gene- Social Environment  
Transactions (C-GSET)  
in the  
Office of the Vice President for Research  
In conjunction with the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, the College of  
Family and Consumer Science, the College of Education, and the College of Public  
Health  
University of Georgia**

**Submitted by  
S. R. H. Beach  
Professor of Psychology  
Director, Institute for Behavioral Research**

**February 8, 2010**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction: Rationale for C-GSET.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Specific Need</b>	
<b>Value Added</b>	
<b>Value of Centers in General</b>	
<b>Scientific Justification for the Center</b>	
<b>I. Background.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Advancing Understanding of G effects in a Social Context:</b>	
<b>Working toward Applied Implications</b>	
<b>Relationship to the Funded Center of Excellence</b>	
<b>Active Participation in the Research Component</b>	
<b>Network Development</b>	
<b>Communication and Information Management on Campus</b>	
<b>Center Activities Specific to UGA</b>	
<b>II. Operating Procedures and Policies.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A. Structure .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>B. Review Process.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>C. Grant Administration: Institute for Behavioral Research.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>III. Funding and Development Strategy.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>IV. Tentative and Initial List of Faculty Participating in the Center.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>V. Anticipated Additional Staff.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>VI. Proposed Summer Course for Faculty.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix: Letters of Support.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **Introduction: Rationale for C-GSET**

**Specific Need.** In recent years, calls to undertake interdisciplinary research in the context of Gene-Environment Transactions have become commonplace. There is a substantial demand for faculty educational opportunities and a need to create venues for collaboration across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Yet rarely are the challenges to doing effective interdisciplinary research addressed as an element in the design of any particular research program or within any particular department. Activities carried out by C-GSET will be informed by a broader effort to understand and respond to the challenges of interdisciplinary research in two ways: (a) by drawing on the experience of previous interdisciplinary research initiatives, and (b) by incorporating mechanisms designed to promote collaboration. This will require encouraging more constructive engagement between behavioral scientists in the Franklin College, College of Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, and the College of Public Health on the one hand and biological (bench) scientists in the Franklin College, The College of Public Health, and OVPR research services.

An integrative approach to the study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions recognizes that valuable insights can emerge from the interplay between biological sciences and behavioral sciences. Indeed, the Behavioral Sciences bring key insights that may be critical to the correct interpretation of biological findings “in context” as well as their appropriate application when used to solve social problems. Promotion of engagement between those working in disparate disciplines establishes a process that strives to identify local points of convergence and promotes the interaction of interdisciplinary groups of scholars with a long-term goal of developing new paradigms and new knowledge for the benefit of the intellectual environment of the University of Georgia, as well as provision of applied benefits for the people of the State of Georgia, the U.S. and the world.

There is remarkable breadth in the resources available at UGA that can be brought to bear on the proposed focus on Gene-Social Environment Transactions. Despite this breadth, efforts to increase collaboration are currently fragmented and there are too few contexts in which those with an interest in Gene-Social Environment transactions can actively interact or collaborate across the disciplines.

**Added Value.** The primary added value of the C-GSET will be to 1) foster constructive, collaborative engagement between faculty of different departments and across colleges, 2) create increased opportunities for faculty continuing education on relevant topics, and 3) foster the development of grant proposals and other scholarly works dealing with “gene-social environment” transactions. The Institute for Behavioral Research has a long history of supporting and nurturing interdisciplinary efforts. Housed within the IBR, the C-GSET will provide an institutional framework for a process that currently has no disciplinary home despite representing a substantial opportunity structure for scholarship and funding at UGA. The C-

GSET will add value to the considerable intellectual resources already in place at UGA. Initially, C-GSET will serve as a bridge between faculty and students from different disciplines and units on campus by creating a speaker series and regular forums for interaction. It will maintain a comprehensive collection of publications, reports and other materials that will be available to UGA faculty, graduate students and other interested researchers. In turn, it is expected that these activities will serve the University of Georgia's interest by increasing the competitive advantage of UGA investigators seeking extramural funding, increasing UGA's research reputation and national prestige in this rapidly developing area, and allowing UGA to more effectively attract and retain researchers at various stages of their careers who are interested in pursuing research at the intersection of genetics and behavioral science. Given UGA's goal of enhancing research and graduate training, the proposal for the C-GSET could not be more timely. Eventually, as part of our long-term strategic plan, we hope to be able to offer seed grants to graduate students for preliminary dissertation research and host post-docs and visiting researchers. Over the next few years, we will be working with the Franklin College Development Office, and the University Development Office, to create an endowment to realize these goals. In the short-term, however, no new funds, space, or resources are required to house or initiate C-GSET activities.

Value of Centers in General. Solving today's toughest problems requires many different kinds of knowledge. Research centers and institutes bring together the right mix of expertise to answer the big questions in science and society. A strong center or institute provides the infrastructure and support services necessary to help these teams of scholars and scientists produce their best work.

When they join a center or institute, faculty members retain their appointments in traditional, discipline-based departments, continuing to teach students and mentor graduate students. By carrying new knowledge back to their home departments, these faculty members help keep their disciplines current and vital.

Research centers and institutes also help the state's economy, because their ability to address real-world problems in a comprehensive manner attracts external funding and helps Georgia compete for economic-development opportunities. In short, a thriving research center or institute is a powerful force for new ideas and beneficial change for the people of the State of Georgia as well as for the University.

### ***Scientific Justification for the Center***

To date, most work in the social and behavioral sciences has been based on the assumption that the substantial effect of current and early learning environments on important health and social outcomes can be accounted for adequately within a framework that focuses entirely on *environmentally mediated effects*. Recent evidence, however, suggests the association of some environmental risk factors with outcomes may be, in part, genetically mediated or conditioned by

genetic differences at the DNA sequence level. Genetic influences extend to individual differences in exposure to life circumstances, such as harsh parenting (Deater-Deckard, Fulker, & Plomin, 1999) or stressful events (Rutter & Silberg, 2002), that are risk mechanisms for a variety of adverse outcomes throughout life. Genetic effects on life circumstances arise because people's behavior shapes and selects their environments and influences others' responses to them (e.g., a temperamentally rambunctious child can elicit controlling, harsh parenting). Insofar as such evocative behavior is genetically influenced, it will bring about gene-environment correlations (rGE) (Rutter & Silberg, 2002) that can masquerade as environmentally mediated effects (e.g., the effects of children on their environments rather than effects of rearing experiences on children). Another form of G-E interplay, gene-environment interaction (G×E), occurs when genetic variation alters an individual's sensitivity to specific environmental events (e.g., maltreatment in the development of depression) or when environmental events (e.g., participation in a preventive intervention or exposure to life stress) exert differential control over genetic effects (Brody et al, in press; Kendler & Eaves, 1986). The genetic moderation hypothesis implies that differences between individuals, originating in the DNA sequence, bring about differences in their resilience or vulnerability to the environmental causes of many disorders, including substance abuse, delinquency, and a range of health and mental health outcomes (Hamer, 2002). From a prevention science and public health perspective, the *misspecification* of genetically mediated or gene-environment interactions as environmentally mediated effects yields weakened etiological models that compromise the optimal design of preventive interventions (Kellam & VanHorn, 1997). More broadly, models that fail to specify the interplay between genes and social environment yield weaker theories and so fewer and less reliable implications for models of change and intervention.

Investigators associated with the C-GSET will help identify rGE and G×E mechanisms, including those involving epigenetic change, whereby genetic factors foster increased exposure to proximal risk factors for substance use. This line of research will focus on evocative mechanisms (the genetically influenced tendency for individuals to elicit certain kinds of responses in their social environment) as well as active mechanisms (the genetically influenced tendency for individuals to seek, create, or otherwise end up in particular kinds of environments). Investigators will also examine proximal risk mechanisms that are influenced by genetic diatheses, suggesting new priorities for intervention targets and new conceptual frameworks to guide research. Protective factors that moderate links between genotypes and proximal risk mechanisms also will be revealed by Center initiated studies.

#### References

Brody GH, Beach SRH, Philibert RA, Chen Y-f, Lei M-K, Murry VM, et al. Parenting moderates 5-HTTLPR status effects on longitudinal increases in youths' substance use. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology* in press.

Deater-Deckard K, Fulker DW, Plomin R. A genetic study of the family environment in the transition to early adolescence. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines* 1999;40:769-775.

Rutter M, Silberg J. Gene-environment interplay in relation to emotional and behavioral disturbance. *Annual Review of Psychology & Aging* 2002;53:463-490.

Kendler KS, Eaves L. Models for the joint effect of genotype and environment on liability to psychiatric illness. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1986;143:279-289.

Hamer D. Rethinking behavior genetics. *Science* 2002;298:71-72.

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## **I. Background**

The idea for creating the C-GSET, i.e. a center at UGA that is dedicated to promoting interaction among faculty to address the thorny conceptual problems posed by the study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions, originated in 2003 with a proposal to the Vice President for Research. At that time, Steven Beach, Director of the Institute for Behavioral Research and Gene Brody, Director of the Center for Family Research approached the OVPR with a proposal to begin collection of genetic samples of family members participating in ongoing research at the University of Georgia.

With continuing financial support and encouragement from the Vice President for Research, that internal proposal led to several successful grant proposals to NIH and most recently to a center of excellence grant (P30) to examine Gene-Environment Transactions. This success suggests there is an opportunity, if we move quickly, to rapidly build capacity to capitalize on OVPR investments in this area and to examine more complex issues areas well as seek additional sources of funding. It also suggests that UGA has the opportunity to participate in the creation of a new field of study that has attracted the attention of faculty in many different behavioral science departments across campus.

By expanding our efforts to include faculty across many department and several colleges we increase the potential for faculty to successfully compete for funding and to support each other throughout the funding process. We also hope to work with others on campus to offer educational opportunities for faculty in the summer to deepen skills and preparation for work in this area. Having the C-GSET sponsor such classes will add value by providing multiple mechanisms for feedback and instituting mechanisms to insure that the classes will be well attended and useful to participants in the social and behavioral sciences. The flexibility to quickly change the content of such classes will be a great asset in this fast moving area.



## **Relationship to the Funded Center of Excellence**

C-GSET will support the recently funded Center of Excellence (P30) initiative and be supported by it through shared networks of academic researchers with relevant expertise and interest. These networks (or workgroups) will examine research ideas, methods of analysis, and new conceptualizations that promise to provide a deeper understanding of Gene-Social Environment Transactions and that may lead to collaborations among researchers resulting in proposals for extramural funding. It will harness the capacity of existing and emerging groups of researchers at UGA by linking individual social scientists, bench scientists, research institutes, and research services on campus. Particular emphasis will be placed on promoting and fostering research partnerships between behavioral and bench scientists. Mechanisms by which the C-GSET will link researchers include:

1. sponsoring workshops, training sessions, research opportunities, and summer institutes;
2. identifying UGA researchers who may have an interest in participating in research activities within the Center for Excellence;
3. hosting an invited speaker series, drawing both on UGA researchers and outside speakers;
4. serving as a resource center for UGA faculty and students interested in interdisciplinary research and Gene-Social Environment Transactions;
5. providing guidance on integration of social and natural science methods
6. supporting efforts of faculty affiliates to develop collaborative interdisciplinary projects that will attract external funding; and
7. highlighting Gene-Social Environment research done at UGA through features on the IBR website.

## **II. Operating Procedures and Policies**

### **A. Structure**

The Director of the C-GSET will report directly to the Director of the Institute for Behavioral Research, who currently reports directly to the Vice President for Research and to the Dean of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences (FCAS). In addition, the Director of IBR confers regularly with Deans from Colleges affiliated with IBR, including the College of Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, and the College of Public Health. These colleges are currently the primary participating colleges in the C-GSET, and this is reflected in the proposed governance structure for the C-GSET. The governance structure of the C-GSET includes the following: center director, executive committee, faculty affiliates, and external advisory committee and administrator.

#### *Center Director*

Initially, the Director of the Institute for Behavioral Research will also serve as Director of the C-GSET. The Director of the Institute is subject to regular review through the OVPR and it is

Group will be Dr. Robert Philibert, who has a long history of constructive interaction with faculty at UGA.

#### ***B. Review Process***

Centers/institutes created after December 2009 are expected to undergo an initial review by the administrative unit, to be completed by the end of the third year of existence. In the case of the C-GSET, the review will be conducted by IBR. Centers are expected to summarize progress toward stated goals and demonstrate added value. In the case of C-GSET, this will reflect progress toward the three overarching goals of 1) fostering constructive, collaborative engagement between faculty of different departments and across colleges, 2) creating an increased range of opportunities for faculty continuing education on relevant topics, and 3) fostering the development of grant proposals and other scholarly works dealing with "gene-social environment" transactions. Specific indices to be used as markers of Center activity will include workshops and training sessions sponsored, collaborative discussions hosted, invited speakers, provision of guidance for interdisciplinary collaboration, submission of proposals for extramural funding, other scholarly works produced by affiliates, and mentoring of junior faculty.

Subsequent to the third year review, the center/institute will be reviewed as part of the normal cycle of review. Again the review will be conducted by IBR if the Director is not also the Director of IBR. Otherwise the review will be conducted by the OVPR as part of the regular review of the Director. Review will occur no less frequently than once every seven years.

During each review, the center will address any changes to resources, commitments, or operating agreements.

Each review report will include a statement that continuation of the center or institute is either recommended or not recommended. If continuation is not recommended, the Vice President for research will decide whether to invoke the process for dissolution.

The annual report for the center will be made available to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

#### **C. Grant Administration: Institute for Behavioral Research**

Grant submission and administration can be handled flexibly. Grant submissions led by those in the Biological Sciences have traditionally been handled within departments. However, most behavioral scientists working in this area have worked with IBR, and so have been directly or indirectly supported in their efforts by the OVPR investment in this area. It is anticipated that most proposals led by Behavioral Scientists within C-GSET will be handled by UGA's Institute for Behavioral Research (IBR, [www.ibr.uga.edu](http://www.ibr.uga.edu)). Established under the auspices of UGA's Vice President for Research, IBR provides services, information and support for interdisciplinary research in the social and behavioral sciences and has a professional staff that is intimately familiar with UGA accounting policies.

For proposals facilitated by IBR, the IBR staff will help with disbursement of funds, submission of reports on expenditures and oversight of expenditures. In addition, consistent with current IBR policy, all indirect cost return will flow either to the investigators or the home departments of the investigators. That is, because IBR does not retain indirect cost return fund, it is anticipated that all indirect cost return will benefit the project, the investigator, or the home unit of the investigator. For proposals in which a biological scientist is PI, it is expected that grant submissions will typically be handled by the PI's department. When submissions are handled by biological departments, it is assumed that indirect cost return will be shared in an equitable manner across Co-Investigators in a manner in keeping with usual departmental practices.

### **III. Funding and Development Strategy**

C-GSET is being created with a confluence of support from several sources. Core funding of the Center for Excellence is provided by a P30 grant from National Institutes on Drug Abuse, support from the OVPR, and support from IBR. The P30 award will drive several collaborative efforts at UGA and includes support for activities that will directly benefit the C-GSET. The Institute for Behavioral Research, under the auspices of the OVPR will provide space and staff support for Center initiatives as well as funding for speakers. The Center will collaborate with initiatives underway in Franklin College (under the auspices of Russell Malmberg) and training initiatives within the OVPR and the College of Public Health (under the auspices of Travis Glenn) to provide additional logistical support during the process of initiating C-GSET activities and establishing a speaker series.

The Franklin College Development Office will be approached regarding the potential for the development of a long-term strategy to support C-GSET. We will focus on providing sustained support for C-GSET through an endowment. We have identified three priorities: (1) establishment of a speaker series, (2) long-term support for a full-time C-GSET administrator and (3) an Endowed Director position. Support from other colleges and from the OVPR will also be sought. However, in the short term, all additional costs generated by the new Center will be absorbed by IBR and we do not anticipate asking the OVPR for new funding to support center activities.

Initial funding needs will focus on the Summer Course, described below, for social and behavioral faculty (and graduate students) to introduce them to genetic research and the potential to integrate genetic variables into their research. However, the availability of previously committed funds from the OVPR in support of the P30 award will cover these expenses.

### **IV. Tentative and Initial List of Faculty to be Invited to Affiliate with the Center (other Fellows will be welcome)**

Once the C-GSET is approved, all individuals on the following list will be asked to affiliate. They will also be asked to identify others who may be interested in the activities of the C-

**GSET. Membership as a Fellow will be available to all tenure-track faculty members at the University of Georgia regardless of department or background.**

**By Department**

Gene Brody, Child and Family Development

Ron Simons, Sociology

Ezemenari Obasi, Counseling and Human Development

Steve Kogan, Child and Family Development

Travis Glenn, Environmental Health Science

Jia-Sheng Wang, Environmental Health Science

Russell Malmberg, Department of Plant Biology

Steve Miller, Psychology

James MacKillop, Psychology

Rheeda Walker, Psychology

Ying Xu, Institute of Bioinformatics

Celeste Condit, Speech Communication

Dr. Lijiang Shen, Speech Communication

Dr. Tina M. Harris, Speech Communication

Wyatt Anderson, Genetics

Robert Ivarie, Genetics

Mary Bedell, Genetics

Jonathon Arnold, Genetics

Ping Shen, Cellular Biology

Dionne Goddette, Health Promotion and Behavior

Stephanie Burwell, Child and Family Development

Tina Harris, Speech Communication

Tera Hurt, Institute for Behavioral Research

Steve Holloway, Geography

Phillip Holmes, Psychology

Maureen Killeen, Emeritus

Keith Campbell, Psychology

Jonathon Crystal, Psychology

Jennifer Monahan, Speech Communication

Andrea Hohmann, Psychology

Adam Goodie, Psychology

Abraham Tesser, Emeritus

Anne Bothe, Communication Sciences & Disorders

Virginia Nazarea, Anthropology

James MacKillop, Psychology

Dawn Robinson, Sociology

Cindy Suveg, Psychology

Sarah Fischer, Psychology

Anne Shaffer, Psychology

Pamela Orpinas, Health Promotion and Behavior

Hui-Chin Hsu, Child and Family Development

#### **V. Anticipated Additional Staff**

No additional staff are anticipated in the short run. However, it is our long-term goal to make the Center an independent Center within IBR. For long-term viability, this would require support for the Director position and for an administrator position. We do not currently have a time table for establishing this support or making the Center self-sufficient. In the interim, costs will be covered by IBR.

#### **VI. Proposed Summer Courses for Faculty**

To respond to faculty demand in the social and behavioral sciences for greater exposure to genomics and genetic sciences, it would be useful for the University of Georgia to provide some opportunities for continuing education focused on integrating social and behavioral scientists into the genomics revolution. This educational opportunity would be organized jointly by Travis Glenn and Steven Beach. Some funding would be required for faculty providing the instruction. The course would focus on facilitating the introduction of social and behavioral scientists to the power, and limitations, of current genomics technologies and identifying opportunities for collaboration with faculty in the biological sciences at UGA. Should the C-GSET be approved, we would hope to offer a brief introductory summer course for the summer of 2010, designed to introduce faculty in the social and behavioral sciences to potential applications of genetic technology in their research area.

#### **Proposed Outline of Short Course for Social and Behavioral Science Faculty**

##### **Initial Plenary Address: Emerging Issues and Future Directions in Contextual Genetics**

##### **Day 1: Morning – Basic Introduction to Genetics for Social and Behavioral Scientists**

##### **Day 1: Afternoon – Some Practical Issues**

- Sample collection options
- Genotyping Options
  - Amplification
  - SNP genotyping
  - VNTR genotyping
- Cost/economy of Scale
- Reading the Output of Genotyping

##### **Day 2: Morning - Epigenetics**

- Methylation profiles
- Gene Expression

##### **Day 2: Afternoon: Psychiatric Genetics**

- Common polymorphisms (the Usual Suspects)
- Organizational Framework – Systems Biology



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# The University of Georgia

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Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
*Office of the Dean*

January 14, 2010

Dr. Steven R. H. Beach  
Director, Institute for Behavioral Research  
510 Boyd Graduate Research Center Athens, GA 30602

Dear Dr. Beach,

I am writing to convey my full support for your proposal to develop a "Center for Collaborative Study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions (C\_GSET)." The proposal is in keeping with longstanding Franklin College of Arts and Sciences priorities and will add value by creating new potential for synergy between existing units on campus that do not have a tradition of working together at UGA. As you know, the Franklin College is already the home of a number of interdisciplinary units and we view interdisciplinary research as particularly important to the future of the college. Your current proposal to focus on Gene X Environment interaction effects fits with this focus and is particularly timely and important. I am confident that many researchers within Franklin College will find this Center attractive and will be interested in pursuing opportunities for collaborative research within the Center. In view of that, I am very supportive of faculty in the Franklin College participating in the Center. Likewise, I am hopeful that the proposed Center will help build strong bridges between bench scientists and behavioral scientists within Franklin College as well as between researchers in other Colleges. In addition, given the affiliation of the Center with IBR, I am confident the Center will help stimulate extramural funding.

I look forward to working with you on ways to include Franklin College and its faculty in the center and its activities. I do not see any conflicts with existing programs or departments in the Franklin College.

Thank you for including the Franklin College in your planning.

Sincerely,

Garnett S. Stokes, Ph.D.  
Dean, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Georgia



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# The University of Georgia

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College of Education  
*Office of the Dean*

January 12, 2010

Dr. Steven R. H. Beach  
Director, Institute for Behavioral Research  
510 Boyd Graduate Research Center  
Athens, GA 30602

Dear Dr. Beach,

As Dean of the College of Education I would like to convey my support for your proposed "Center for Collaborative Study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions (C\_GSET)." As you know, having been involved in past efforts, the College of Education is quite interested in interdisciplinary research and has historically been a strong supporter of such efforts. Your current proposal to focus on Gene X Environment interaction effects seems timely and important. Your work with Dr. Ezemenari Obassi provides a good foundation as an example for collaboration with researchers within the College of Education who may want to pursue this line of research. I am confident that others will also find this area of research of interest as the technological hurdles continue to decrease. In view of that, I am very supportive of faculty in the College of Education collaborating and participating in the Center as well as in collaborative grant proposals that bring together bench scientists and behavioral scientists. I believe the Center will help support an area of growing interest to researchers and create new opportunities for extramural funding.

I look forward to working with you on ways to include the college and its faculty in the center and its activities. I do not see any conflicts with existing programs or departments in the College of Education.

Thank you for including the College of Education in your planning. I am very pleased with the direction you are taking with center and its potential to advance both basic and applied research efforts.

Sincerely Yours,

Arthur Home, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Education  
University of Georgia



# The University of Georgia

College of Public Health  
Denn's Office

January 5, 2010

Dr. Stephen R. H. Beach  
Director  
Institute for Behavioral Research  
510 Boyd Graduate Research Center  
Athens, GA 30602

Dear Dr. Beach:

I am writing to convey my support for the "The Center for Collaborative Study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions (C-GSET)" that you are developing. Your interest in exploring Gene by Social Environment interaction effects in order to enhance prevention efforts across a range of social and behavioral problems is of great interest to those of us in public health, and I imagine the College of Public Health faculty will be leaders in this effort. As you know, the College of Public Health is very interested in helping Georgia and the nation respond effectively to prevention needs by attending to genetic and epigenetic risk factors. For example, the Institute of Gerontology in the College of Public Health has been looking at the impact of genes and environment on longevity and quality of life of older adults. The NIH-funded work looked into the impact of genes on neuropathology, neuropsychology, functional capacities, and how these factors impact health and disease as well as institutionalization and longevity.

I am very supportive of faculty collaborating and participating in transdisciplinary discussions and collaborative grant proposals that bring together bench science and behavioral science. I expect your proposal to be attractive to a number of faculty in the College of Public Health and I believe it will help support an area of growing interest to researchers interested in the social determinants of public health.

The College of Public Health is particularly committed to preventative intervention and the development and implementation of new intervention efforts <http://www.publichealth.uga.edu/>. We have a strong statistical support group as well as a strong bench science group, and strong prevention research groups in the college. As your center develops, I imagine that each of these groups will have faculty who overlap with the focus of the center. Accordingly, I look forward to working with you on optimal ways to include the college, support the expansion of the college, and the needs of its faculty as your center expands and develops. I would like to applaud your effort to reach across traditional boundaries between bench sciences, behavioral sciences, and computational sciences in this problem focused approach. You are developing a dialogue that will have repercussions throughout the university, and it is a discussion that will



Letter of Support – C-GSET

January 5, 2010

Page 2

resonate particularly well within the College of Public Health. I do not see any conflicts with existing programs or departments in the College of Public Health. On the contrary, the proposal outlines a mechanism for making the most of our limited faculty resources in this area and allowing us to create synergy and the emergence of a critical mass of scholarship.

Thank you for including the College of Public Health in your planning. On behalf of the College of Public Health, I can tell you that we are looking forward to participating.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Williams', written in a cursive style.

Phillip L. Williams, Ph.D.  
Dean



# The University of Georgia

Laura D. Jolly  
Dean

College of Family & Consumer Sciences  
Office of the Dean

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January 14, 2010

Dr. Steven R. H. Beach  
Director, Institute for Behavioral Research  
510 Boyd Graduate Research Center  
Athens, GA 30602

Dear Dr. Beach,

I would like to convey my enthusiastic support for your proposed "Center for Collaborative Study of Gene-Social Environment Transactions (C\_GSET)." As you know, the College of Family and Consumer Sciences has a strong history of supporting interdisciplinary efforts and we are particularly interested in supporting your work on Gene X Environment interaction effects. Your previous work with Gene Brody in developing prevention programs at the Center for Family Research, as well as the recent Center Grant award has been impressive and has set the stage for this broader, University-wide initiative. I have enjoyed talking to you about possible ways to build on your current foundation and take it to a new level. In view of that, I am very supportive of faculty in FACS collaborating and participating in transdisciplinary discussions and collaborative grant proposals that bring together bench scientists and behavioral scientists to create synergistic research programs. I know that the Center will be attractive to a number of faculty in FACS and I believe it will help support an area of growing interest to researchers interested in the interaction of family environments with genetic factors.

I look forward to working with you on ways to include the college and its faculty as your center expands and develops. I do not see any conflicts with existing programs or departments in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences. Your proposal outlines a mechanism for inclusion that seems likely to help us maximize faculty resources in this area.

Thank you for including the College of Family and Consumer Sciences in your planning. I am very pleased with the direction of this center and I am confident that it will lead to new opportunities for prevention research as well as enhancement of current prevention program dissemination efforts. Please let me know how the College of Family and Consumer Sciences can continue to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Laura D. Jolly, Dean  
College of Family and Consumer Sciences