

PAMELA J. GUNTER-SMITH, Ph.D.

Drew University
Madison, NJ 07940

November 30, 2011

Georgia College Presidential Search and Screen Committee
Heidrick & Struggles, Inc.
303 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 4300
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Dear Sirs/Madams:

I am delighted to have an opportunity to express my interest in the position of President, Georgia College and State University. Georgia College and State University is distinctive not only as the public liberal arts institution of Georgia, but among all liberal arts institutions both public and private. With a rich tradition of and commitment to academic excellence, Georgia College is characterized by a vibrant intellectual community, excellent teaching, engaged students, and successful outcomes. As I consider my attributes and interests that match those provided in the position profile, I consider most important my unflinching belief in the role of a liberal arts education in preparing the future leadership for our country and the world. Liberal arts institutions are committed to the holistic education of each student and create an environment that:

- *fosters critical and analytical thinking and the ability to acquire new knowledge and integrate that knowledge into new ways of understanding;*
- *engages students in ways that enable them to make connections between disciplines and the classroom and the world;*
- *sets high expectations for academic and scholarly achievement for both students and faculty;*
- *encourages creativity and a joy of learning; and*
- *inspires students to commit themselves to personal and professional achievement and responsible citizenship in their community and the world.*

I believe that these shared values form the foundation of a partnership in which my experience, talents, and energy will complement those of your community. In the remaining paragraphs, I highlight my experiences that are particularly relevant to the opportunities you outline for the next President of Georgia College and State University.

My education is deeply rooted in the liberal arts. I am a graduate of Spelman College, a small historically Black college for women. I am very much aware of the impact of the liberal arts on my own development. It has provided me with a set of tools (e.g., analytical and critical thinking skills and a love of learning) that has facilitated my movement from bench scientist and research manager to faculty member and university administrator. My most gratifying experience throughout my professional career has been to participate in the development of the talented men and women to whose education we are entrusted.

The first 12 years of my professional life was as a research scientist and administrator at a government research laboratory, the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI). As AFRRI's project manager for Gastrointestinal Physiology with oversight for three independent laboratories, I was responsible for program and budget development, setting priorities, and allocation of resources. Securing project resources required me to match project objectives with priorities set by the governing bodies that allocated resources across all AFRRI programs and projects. This early experience in matching

institutional priorities with the interests of funders has continued to serve me well in garnering resources in the academic setting. I was awarded the Director's Award for Distinguished Service for my efforts and, on the international front, I was appointed the United States representative to the NATO working group on radiation-induced gastrointestinal injury. I held faculty appointments at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and the George Washington University. I also sponsored undergraduates in my laboratory during the summer and served as a visiting professor spending a week each year teaching undergraduates.

I was a faculty member and administrator at Spelman College from 1992-2006 where I served as the chair of the biology department and associate provost for science and mathematics. I am proud of our accomplishments during my tenure. Student retention and graduation rates in biology increased, as did the number of students pursuing graduate degrees. We created a research-rich environment for students and faculty and increased extramural support for both. A faculty member committed to excellence in teaching, research, and service, I continued to revise and incorporate new pedagogies into my courses, maintained an externally funded research program on campus, participated in national peer review panels, and served on various college committees.

As associate provost for science and mathematics, I supervised the science department chairs and program directors. I had oversight for all science curricula, academic programs, and resources. I facilitated the development of grants across the natural and social sciences and initiated a review of the general education requirements in the natural sciences. Importantly, I used my administrative roles and my network of colleagues and contacts across the country to provide opportunities for both faculty and students.

I played a major role in the fund-raising for and programming and building of Spelman's Science Center. I worked closely with the Office of Institutional Advancement during Spelman's capital campaign, developing relationships with potential corporate donors and representing the college on visits to corporate headquarters. I also collaboratively developed institutional proposals that generated over \$3M in corporate donations (e.g., Amgen and Merck). Then President Johnnetta B. Cole and I jointly made the official ask to Amgen, culminating three years of donor cultivation. Similarly, I was instrumental in developing institutional grants from private foundations (e.g., HHMI) and federal agencies (e.g., NIH and NSF) for over \$7M.

As fulfilling as my tenure was at Spelman, I realized that if I were to continue my development as a university administrator, I would ultimately have to seek opportunities beyond my alma mater. I sought a number of other professional development opportunities including: the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration (HERS) program and the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellowship at the University of Miami under the mentorship of President Donna Shalala, who at the time was launching the public phase of their billion dollar campaign.

In 2006, I joined Drew University as the institution's first provost and academic vice president. Under the leadership of President Robert Weisbuch, Drew has embarked on a renaissance of the liberal arts. Our mantra, *Drew and Do*, links the liberal arts with global, social, and professional engagement as reflected by our internship programs, off-campus programs (e.g., Wall Street and United Nations Semesters), and networking activities among alums and between alums and students. We have also re-envisioned programs across the three schools and, in particular, have sought to create new programs that capitalize on the strength of the three schools while maintaining their unique identities and missions.

The sciences have been strengthened and, given my background, this has been an area of particular emphasis for me. I led the science faculty in creating and articulating a new vision and programming a new science facility. We are now in the schematic design phase for the building, heading toward a fund-raising emphasis for a science facility as part of our comprehensive campaign. I am a member of Drew's National Campaign Committee working with the vice president for advancement and the president on building the funding base for the science project. This past summer, I crafted and presented the case for the sciences to our trustees who subsequently approved breaking ground in 2013.

In the undergraduate college, we have increased the diversity of the student body by over 100% in the past four years. Our current first-year class boasts a minority enrollment exceeding 30% Black and Hispanic students, compared to 8% in 2005. In 2009, our strategic action plan resulted in more than a 25% increase in undergraduate enrollment, which has been sustained. In 2007, I led an effort to increase first-year retention. In 2010, first-year retention increased to 86% from an average of 80% in the previous five years.

We have re-envisioned our graduate and theological schools' programs with a goal of increasing enrollments and revenue. The graduate school added a low-residency Master of Fine Arts in Poetry and a Master of Arts in Teaching leading to certification. Our theological school added a new Master of Arts in Ministry. We also established two university centers: Religion, Culture and Conflict and Civic Engagement. They have been extremely successful in developing connections across the schools.

Another thrust has been to diversify the faculty. We created the National Faculty Initiative as a mechanism to provide departments with incentives to increase faculty diversity in their hiring. Of course, I am pleased to report the success of these initiatives; however, the real credit goes to my Drew colleagues. As university provost, my major role has been to "set the table" and to "seed" the conversations.

We are entering a new phase of planning and assessment and will present a strategic plan to the trustees for final approval in February 2012. I play a major role in planning, both as the primary architect of the process and as a member of the planning team. Institutional branding and marketing and financial sustainability are key elements of the plan; however, our primary focus is on ensuring a vibrant intellectual community and strengthening engaged learning. We are providing numerous opportunities for consultation with the entire community including our trustees.

For Drew, as for many institutions of higher education, it has been a difficult period with respect to returns on endowments and, although we are a private institution, decreased state support for our students. We continue to be diligent regarding the allocation of university resources, balancing this with the boldness needed to seek new opportunities. The vice president for finance and I are responsible for developing the university budget. Working with the president's cabinet and a university-wide budget advisory committee, we have presented a balanced budget to the president and trustees for the last four years. We are now engaged in a university-wide organizational review. The process involves faculty, students, staff, and administrators from across the institution. Our goal is not only to identify savings, but also to generate a substantial operating margin to use for new strategic investments. There are difficult, but necessary, choices to make. Paramount to any decision are academic excellence and strengthening the student experience.

I would be remiss if I did not mention several of my other rewarding experiences at Drew. I have had an opportunity to shape the university through new faculty hires. It has been a joy to interview potential new faculty and to officially welcome them at my annual faculty tea. I use social gatherings in my campus home to foster community and collaboration. I am very much a part of the university community and visible on campus. I routinely attend student events (from basketball games to theatre productions), lectures on campus (from Tony Blair to Newt Gingrich), and faculty research lectures (from Shakespeare to Musicology).

Most rewarding are my interactions with students. I developed and have taught a first-year college seminar course for the past two years and served as academic advisor for more than thirty students. These students and others I have worked with through the years know me as Dr. G-S, the professional title I most value. I recognize the importance of having meaningful interactions with the students I serve and being mindful of the work of our institutions in transforming lives.

For the past several years, I have facilitated workshops for department chairs, chief financial officers, and chief academic officers. In this role, I work with colleagues across a wide spectrum of institutions: public and private, large and small, liberal arts colleges and research universities. What is quite clear is that the landscape has changed for all institutions, but the ability of our public institutions to provide access for all citizens to a quality education is especially threatened.

Georgia College and State University is a wonderful institution with an equally wonderful story to tell. You will find me an effective champion for the institution and the community. Having been educated in Georgia and a Georgia resident for over 20 years, I am particularly drawn to serving the citizens of our state.

Great institutions understand the importance of continuing to evolve to meet the changing needs of students and the world. I look forward to exploring with you the possibility that Georgia College and State University might be the right opportunity for me and that I might be the right person to lead the institution at this point in its history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela Gunter-Smith".

Pamela J. Gunter-Smith, Ph.D.
Provost and Academic Vice President
Professor of Biology
Drew University