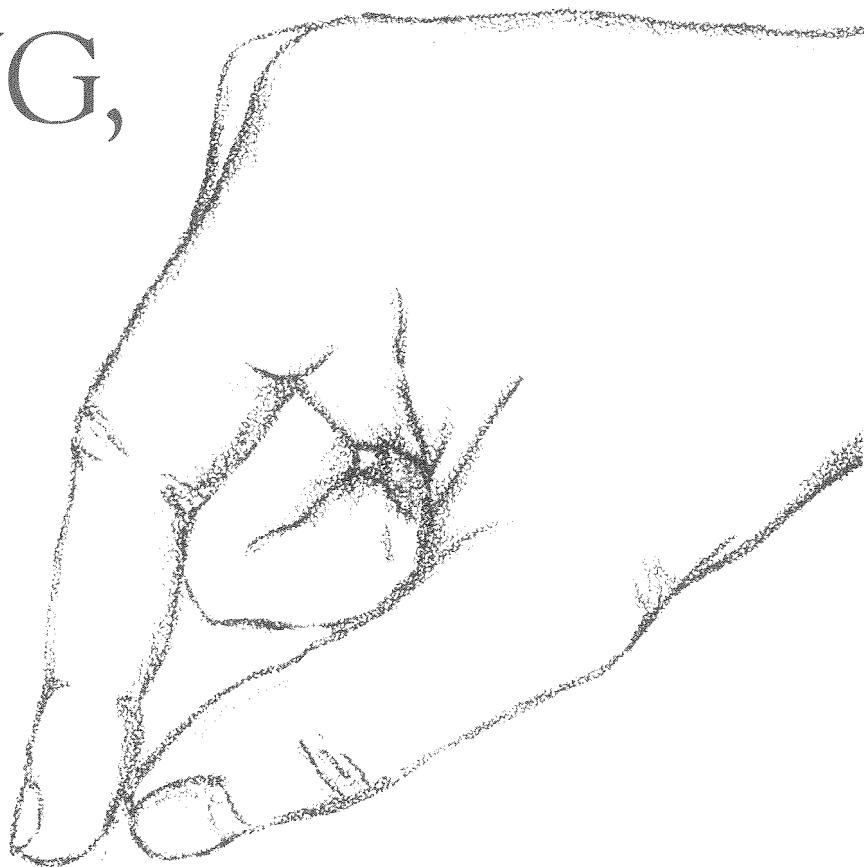

A MEASURE OF LEAVENING, A PINCH OF SALT



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(with the assistance of Professor of Biology Patricia Reggio,
Associate Professor of Public Administration and Human Ser-
vices Louise Bill and KSC alumna Gail Roos)

What do nineteenth-century English poetry, domestic violence in Georgia, developments in office automation, Kennesaw State student opinion polls and the chemical compounds in marijuana have in common? These are just a few of the 30 to 35 projects funded in one year by Kennesaw State College's SALT (Student Assistance for Leadership in Teaching) program, which began in 1985.

SALT's benefits for students are obvious. Unlike large institutions where the risk always exists that students will become lost, undistinguished in the vast lecture hall and among the impersonal scores of Scantron examinations, Kennesaw State's primary mission of undergraduate education demands opportunities for able, motivated students to break out of the crowd. The SALT program is one such opportunity.

Successful applicants, i.e., students at the junior or senior level with at least a 3.7 GPA and demonstrated "exceptional involvement in their professional area," as judged by the Division of Student Affairs, become "presidential scholars." These scholars work individually with faculty, whose 100- or 120-student-hour (maximum) programs have themselves been approved by their

chairs or deans and student affairs, for something above minimum wage and an incomparable learning experience.

Programs that ask students to perform data-entry, clerical or secretarial chores are rejected outright. Instead, students observe firsthand what academic research is like by undertaking it themselves, at the same time experiencing the kind of education reserved ordinarily for graduate students: concentrating in-depth upon a subject and discovering its academic context and the professional commitment to it.

Professor of chemistry Patricia Reggio, who has had a SALT grant every year since the beginning of the program, has had five students (Kaylar Greer, Judy Barnett, Georgia McGaughey, Dennis Chambers, and Jason Ponders) assisting her with her cannabinoid research. She reports that of those five, "Two are currently enrolled in chemistry graduate programs, two are graduate-school bound, and one has recently graduated from medical school." She has set up her project so that each student has his or her own aspect of investigation, leading to "a presentation at a national scientific meeting and/or a paper published in a refereed journal."

In another department and another school, Louise Bill, an associate professor of public administration and human services, contributed to the Georgia legislature's efforts to pass protective legislation on domestic violence; her project was to create a data base for analysis of that problem. As a result, her SALT student, Denise Houston, took on an active role in the political process at the capitol and raised, by Dr. Bill's own account, "challenging questions...that needed answering for the general public and legislators." Dr. Bill reports that Ms. Houston found the experience "very enlightening."

Another student who values her experience with the SALT program is Gail Roos, a 1992 KSC *summa cum laude* alumna, who participated as a SALT assistant in three different divisions of the college.

"All three of my SALT projects were wonderful learning experiences," she writes. "I was impressed to see the immediate result of my work for Dr. Eddie Blick." The project polled students for their opinions about the Sentinel, the KSC student newspaper.

"My work with Dr. Deborah Roebuck taught me about our library systems, about office automation and about KSC's business school," Ms. Roos continues. "My work with Dr. Dabundo not only gave me more knowledge of the library equipment and a tremendous appreciation for Romantic authors but also gave me a path. I continue to pursue and enjoy copy editing and research. And, of course, I love the Romantic authors... Although I worked diligently for each of these professors and I think I produced the quality of work they expected, I would have to say that I was the big winner, gaining in knowledge, confidence and self-esteem with the completion of each project. My participation in the SALT program made the difference between just attending school and getting involved in all that college had to offer. I was allowed to try things in a fairly protected environment that I may not have had the chance to try otherwise. Having tried and succeeded, I graduated with real experience."

The appeal and advantages for the students are many. But maybe most important to KSC faculty is to consider how the SALT program intersects with pedagogy and what benefits accrue to the instructor, for it is not just a program designed to enhance baccalaureate education for talented students. The genius of SALT is that both sides gain.

For faculty, there are immediate, tangible results—such as research findings for Dr. Reggio, a data base for Dr. Bill, a completed book for me—but there are larger, less measurable, though more substantive consequences for us as well.

All of us, I venture to say, have arrived both at our love for teaching and at our positions as faculty members by virtue of the example and concerns of a mentor or model. If education truly is a process, then in many ways we as educators can begin to repay the investment in us by passing on to our students that same love of our fields and the chance to labor intensively and productively in them. As faculty, we honor and recognize our human obligations beyond the classroom to our students and to all whom they might reach.

Education, I believe, takes place in a community whose components are finally personal, and our success as teachers can only be calculated in individual cases, student by student. We are simply not whole if we do not acknowledge this.

If our experiences and our training have leavened us, and we in turn seek to educate and provoke leavening in others, then we can always be the better for the addition of a pinch of SALT. 🍎

SOLVING THE EQUATION FOR

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MATH 090 PREPARES STUDENTS FOR ALGEBRA

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During the 1991-92 term at Kennesaw State College a new developmental studies mathematics course was begun. That course, Math 090, was primarily designed to serve the needs of students who are not required to take developmental studies mathematics.

Math 090 essentially covers the content of Math 098 (signed numbers, equations and inequalities, exponents, polynomials and rational expressions) and Math 099 (linear equations and inequalities, systems of equations, radicals and quadratic equations) in one quarter instead of two. The course has served students with diverse backgrounds, and those students have been quite successful with their subsequent math courses.

As one would expect, the course attracts non-traditional students who had algebra in high school 25 years ago, who were not required to take the Collegiate Placement Exam (CPE), but who know they are not ready to enter college algebra. In addition, Math 090 attracts students who did take the CPE and barely met the cutoff, either by using their knowledge from prior math courses or by buying a book and studying before taking the CPE. Some students come because they have already tried Math 105 and either dropped or failed the course because of inadequate preparation. Still others have credit for college algebra already, but choose to take Math 090 in preparation for other math courses or for science courses.

Thus, for most, but not all, Math 090 students, the immediate goal is to do well in Math 105. How well did the 1991-92 students reach that goal? As of the end of the 1992 summer quarter, 24 of the students who had completed Math 090 had taken Math 105. Thirteen (54%) of those students made A's. Another six (25%) made B's. So the Math 090 students have an almost 80% chance of making an A or B in Math 105. The other Math 105 grades included three C's, one D, and one W.

Two of the students went straight into Math 114 (precalculus algebra) instead of Math 105. Both made A's. Many of the students have now completed their second math course. Two have taken Math 106; one received an A and one a B. Five out of seven (71%) who have enrolled in Math 107 (statistics) have earned A's. One student has taken Math 115 (precalculus trigonometry) and earned an A.

Students who are interested in taking Math 090 need to be advised carefully. They still have the option of auditing Math 098 and 099 rather than taking Math 090. Indeed, if a student has had little or no algebra background or if a student has a heavy workload, he or she would be strongly advised to go the Math 098-Math 099 route. But for the right student, Math 090 is an exciting option! 🍎