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UGA is making a difference in the lives of Georgians

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Lawrence Sweet Photo by John Paul Gallagher

Former Brown U. prof named UGA's first Sperduto Professor

By [Sam Fahmy](#) | September 10, 2012

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A clinical neuropsychologist whose research explores the relationship between physical changes in the brain and conditions as diverse as dementia, nicotine dependence and obesity has joined UGA as the inaugural Gary R. Sperduto Professor of Psychology in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences.

Lawrence H. Sweet, who comes to UGA from Brown University, has authored more than 50 peer-reviewed research papers and has received funding from several National Institutes of Health agencies, including the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Cancer Institute. He is the co-editor of the book *Brain Imaging in Behavioral Medicine and Clinical Neuroscience* and holds a patent for a method for measuring changes in brain activity over time.

Sweet uses a technique known as functional magnetic imaging, or fMRI, to provide objective assessments of brain activity and to predict treatment outcomes. His research has examined the neural weight loss, how cardiovascular disease affects cognitive function and how the brains of smokers respond to various rewards. In 2010, he and a colleague received a patent for a new method that combines brain imaging and a common test of working memory and can be used to determine the effectiveness of drugs for conditions such as dementia or multiple sclerosis, for example.

"Neuroscience is a critical bridge between the fields of psychology and biology, and the addition of Dr. Sweet to our faculty puts us at the leading edge of a discipline with far-reaching applications," said Franklin College Dean Alan T. Dorsey. "The support of donors such as Gary Sperduto allows us to attract and retain faculty that keep the college at the forefront of teaching, research and service, and

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the benefits extend far beyond our campus."

Sweet holds a bachelor's degree in German studies and psychology from the University of Minnesota and master's and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology from the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science in North Chicago, Ill.

Prior to coming to UGA, he was associate professor in the department of psychiatry and human behavior at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University in Providence, R.I. He was director of the Butler Hospital Neuroimaging Center and served as a psychologist at Butler Hospital and Miriam Hospital, both in Providence. Previously, he was a behavior therapist at Rogers Memorial Hospital in Wisconsin.

"Dr. Sweet's research is illuminating our understanding of some of the nation's most pressing health issues—from obesity to addiction to dementia—and we're thrilled that he's joined our department and clinical psychology program," said W. Keith Campbell, professor and department head. "Thanks to the support of Gary Sperduto, one of our distinguished alumni, our already strong department is achieving a new level of excellence."

Sperduto is the chief executive officer of Sperduto and Associates, Inc., a firm of corporate psychologists and management consultants based in Atlanta.

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To J. Michael Floyd, the new associate vice president for auxiliary services, the 30,000-plus individuals enrolled at UGA are more than students. [Continue](#)

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In its August meeting, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents approved the sale of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' Plant Sciences Farm in Watkinsville. The 522-acre farm will be sold to the Townley Family Partnership for \$11.4 million. [Continue](#)

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Provost Jere Morehead has appointed a committee to begin a national search to fill the position of dean of UGA's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication. [Continue](#)

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[Data crunch](#)

As the world's data usage increases, so do problems of how to manage large quantities of data quickly and efficiently. UGA researchers Daniel Krashen and Roberto Perdisci recently received National Science Foundation CAREER Awards to create nimble ways to analyze mathematical problems and combat computer viruses in data-heavy environments. The two also will conduct workshops and lead mentoring activities to develop student interest and skills in these fields. [Continue](#)

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[UGA units partner to establish pet-friendly emergency shelters](#)

When the threat of disaster forces evacuees to flee their homes, no one wants to leave a loved one behind—even if that family member is furry and walks on all fours. [Continue](#)

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