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## **Leadership Academy will help HR managers become ‘C-suite ready’: UGA’s Terry College of Business teams up with SHRM-Atlanta on new executive program**

Athens, Ga. – The University of Georgia’s Terry College of Business and the Atlanta chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management have teamed up to establish the HR Leadership Academy, which will begin classes in early 2010 at the Terry Executive Education Center in Atlanta.

The 10-day executive program is designed to help human resource professionals develop their strategic business skills in the areas of change management, innovation, critical thinking, financial acumen, strategic marketing, business analysis, team development and lean management.

The HR Leadership Academy combines the resources of SHRM-Atlanta, with more than 2,500 members representing some 1,300 large and small organizations, and the Terry College of Business, whose undergraduate and graduate programs are consistently ranked among the nation’s best.

“This is an opportunity for Terry College to partner with a well-respected, growing association here in Georgia,” said Daniel L. Stotz, director of strategic partnerships in the college’s Office of Executive Programs.

“We’re very excited about this partnership,” added Diane Tuccito, SHRM-Atlanta’s executive vice president overseeing the Leadership Academy. “We were working on this program on our own, and now that we’re in partnership with a respected organization like the Terry College of Business it gives a little more polish and credibility to what we’re able to present.”

Stotz and Tuccito said they’ve already adopted a slogan – “Business Expertise to be C-Suite Ready” – to serve as the motto and working vision for the program.

“One of the trends in business is for the top HR person in a company to be called the chief HR officer (CHRO), instead of a senior vice president, because those corporations understand that the talent part of their operation is now extremely important,” Stotz said. “But being ‘C-suite ready’ means that an HR professional will complete this program knowing enough about accounting, finance, innovation, strategy and economics to be a more valued business partner to the CEO and the CFO – to the decision makers who are in the C-suite.”

“The HR profession has been trying to become more of a strategic function in business, especially since it represents the largest asset and the largest expense that any company has,” said Tuccito, who works for Atlanta-based Kinetix, a boutique consulting firm. “Through the years, HR professionals have been encouraged to ‘get a seat at the table,’ but SHRM-Atlanta has talked about the fact nobody is doing anything to prepare people for that seat at the table. Too often, HR professionals get there and they’re not prepared and they don’t succeed, which hurts the profession and doesn’t give businesses the added value they should be getting from their HR people.”

The 10-day training program will be divided into five Friday and Saturday modules and will cover topics like change management, strategic planning, strategic innovation, executive presence, advanced collaborative strategies, finance, strategic marketing and economics. Participants will also be expected to complete a MAP (multi-action plan) project to implement a major change in their companies.

The Leadership Academy will give HR professionals the tools to advance well beyond the somewhat passive roles that too many of them have assumed in the past, Stotz said.

“Our goal is to give HR managers the knowledge, skills and confidence to be a credible and strong voice for the strategic decisions their companies make and to be sure their talent strategies are aligned with critical business goals,” he said.

Classes will be a combination of theory and practice and will be taught by Terry College faculty, senior HR practitioners, guest speakers and guest teachers, possibly including faculty from the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business.

Upon completion of the program, Leadership Academy graduates will receive a Terry College Advanced Certificate in Business Strategy, and SHRM-Atlanta will award participants a SHRM-Atlanta HR Leadership Academy Certificate.

In addition, participants may be eligible for continuing education course credits from the Human Resource Certification Institute, and Stotz said participants will receive CEU credits to count toward Professional in Human Resources (PHR) or Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification renewal.

The Terry College was chosen by SHRM-Atlanta to lead the executive program through a competitive bidding process that was open to the top business schools in the state.

“The program is very experiential in its design, and we’re taking the best of both worlds in this partnership with UGA by tapping into the expertise of the UGA faculty, as well as supplementing it with successful business practitioners of various business functions,” Tuccito said.

The Leadership Academy’s inaugural class will draw from the Atlanta area primarily, but Stotz said he envisions the program attracting interest from outside the state.

“For this first program, we’re mainly targeting HR professionals in Atlanta. Our focus in the beginning is to help human resource managers in Georgia, first and foremost,” he said. “But I think the program concept definitely has a more national appeal.”

The fee to register is \$4,500, which includes all meals, refreshments, parking, course materials and a year’s membership in SHRM-Atlanta. Full and partial scholarships are available as well as payment plans. For more information about the HR Leadership Academy, visit the [SHRM-Atlanta Web site](#) under the “Events” menu.

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