She’s Roman, he’s Greek. She’s a goddess, he’s a mortal. But there’s no clash here. In fact, Minerva and the Spartan are a well-matched pair. She symbolizes the spirit and wisdom of the university, which began as a woman’s college in 1891. He was adopted as a symbol for UNCG’s athletics program in 1967, soon after the university went co-ed. Together, they are invincible.

**Minerva and The Spartan**

**Voted Most Likely to Succeed**

**Minerva’s Helmet**
Protects her head. After all, it is the seat of wisdom.

**Spartan’s Helmet**
A given for battle. Historically, the helmet protected the individual Spartan soldier and he could be forgiven if he lost it in battle. His shield was a different story...

**The Roman Goddess**
Minerva ruled over wisdom, war and weaving, as well as the other creative arts associated with women. Above all, she was the patron of anything which involved mental skill.

**University Seal**
The head of Minerva appears in the center.

**A Fitting Symbol**
The university logo, launched in 2004.

**Minerva’s Feet**
Coins have been found at Minerva’s feet, especially during exams. Hmm…

**Who’s Minerva’s**
Minerva is often depicted holding an owl, another symbol of wisdom.

**Mascot**
Named “Spiro” from the Greek word for “Spirit”.

**Spartan’s Shield**
If he lost his shield in battle, a Spartan soldier could be banished or put to death. The shield not only protected him but also the soldier to his left in the Spartans’ well-known battle formation.

Minerva was sculpted in 2003 by UNCG alumnus James Barnhill as a gift from the Class of 1953. She is 9 feet tall and stands on a 6-foot limestone pedestal in the east courtyard of Elliott University Center. Said to have sprung from the head of her father, Jupiter, Minerva evolved from the Etruscan Menrva. As Italians became Hellenized, they began to equate her with the Greek Athena. In an odd twist, her sister, Athena, sculpted by another UNCG alumnus, Alan LeQuire, oversees the full-scale reproduction of the Parthenon in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Spartan, installed in the plaza between the softball and soccer stadiums in 2009, was a gift from Irwin Belk. Sculpted by Hanna Jubran and Jodi Hollnagel Jubran, he stands 14 feet tall and weighs 1,500 pounds. UNCG’s coaching staff chose the Spartan to brand their athletics program because he epitomizes strength and courage. Also, his masculine image helped to ease the transition to a co-ed institution for the 650 males and 4,715 women enrolled at UNCG in 1967.

**The Spartans**
Widely regarded as the best in battle, the Spartans rose to become the dominant military power in ancient Greece.

**Go Spartans**
The current athletic logos were launched in 1999.