

UF Voices

IT aims to make UF jobs easier to do

The Office of Information Technology has been actively pursuing projects to help make the jobs of faculty and staff at the University of Florida easier. Three recent initiatives involve a computer purchasing contract, electronic submission of course changes and improvements to the campus calendar.

A computer purchasing contract expected to be signed in early March will provide not only significant discounts on computers, laptops and peripherals but also an outstanding service agreement. Purchasing created the strategic sourcing initiative that has allowed UF to negotiate with vendors, arriving at terms and conditions that best meet campus needs. The agreements also will allow for personal purchases at exceptional rates, some as low as 1 percent above campus prices.

The electronic course submission project has developed a Web-based process for submission, approval and tracking of information. The system is being tested now by the graduate school and is expected to be rolled out by summer. The system allows Web-based submission of the UCC-1 and UCC-2 forms, followed by tracking and approval via the Web. The system is generally expandable and updates this summer will include other UF forms.

Finally, a new committee has been formed to review the UF calendar and come up with a consistent approach to providing campus activity information from academic and nonacademic departments, the arts, sports and other campus groups. The committee's four goals are: eliminate duplication, reduce conflicts, expand event reach and improve search characteristics. Anyone interested in taking part in this project should contact Christine Schoaff at cschoaf@ufl.edu.

We are excited about these projects and will continue to work to improve communication, organizational excellence and opportunities through user-focused IT.

Marc Hoit

Interim Chief Information Officer



Marc Hoit

Top Stories

UF deems online alcohol course a success, commits to program

The University of Florida has decided to continue its online alcohol education course for new first-year and transfer students based on the success of its pilot program.

Incoming freshmen and transfer students in the summer B and fall terms were the first classes to take part in the program. By the start of spring semester registration in November, 94 percent of new students had completed the course.

Of these students, 86 percent reported that they would pay more attention to their drinking habits based on the information given in the course. More significantly, 78 percent of the students said the course would influence their drinking behavior, and 35 percent said the course would substantially affect their behavior.

"Anecdotally, students have shared that they had originally thought the program would be a waste of time," Ann Beck,

director of new student programs, said. "But once they took it, they felt that it was really interesting."

A joint effort of behavioral scientists, multimedia experts and educators, the online program is designed to be both entertaining and informative. The course includes dozens of articles that cover a range of topics from how to avoid hangovers and drunken aggression to what students should do if they get into trouble with judicial affairs.

The course also offers peer testimonials and interactive tools like a calorie counter and a blood alcohol level calculator.

Students need a minimum grade of 80 percent in the course, which they may take as often as necessary to reach passing. The program takes about 90 minutes to complete.

By Mindy Morris

Researcher studying high-risk drinking among students

In January, University of Florida researchers investigating binge-drinking among college students took it to the streets.

Virginia Dodd, an assistant professor in the Department of Health Education and Behavior, wanted to find out just how much Gator fans had been celebrating after the 2006 national football championship, so she and her research team joined the crowd on University Avenue.

"We went out with Breathalyzers and collected 52 samples," said Dodd, who will use the data as part of her federally funded research on high-risk drinking behavior of college students and the use of prevention methods that can influence this behavior.

Last June, Dodd was awarded a \$283,745 grant by the U.S. Department of Education to study alcohol use on campus. She is now working with the Student Health Care Center to change the perception of alcohol among students and decrease the prevalence of excessive drinking on game days.

"We felt that we wanted to try and craft a very student-directed health message campaign," she said. "Next fall, we will launch our specific game-day messages."

The researchers will study the impact of their health advertising through surveys and focus groups. The grant will end in 2008, but Dodd said she will continue to seek funding because there is a lot of work to be done.

"It's an issue that will probably always be prevalent on campus," Dodd said. "The ultimate goal is to get students to moderate their drinking."

By Panagiota Papakos

A market ripe for chestnuts

High Springs chestnut farmer Jenny Franklin discusses her crop last December with Gary Brinen, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences horticultural extension agent. Brinen said a chestnut variety that's a cross between an American chestnut and a Chinese chestnut is becoming a good option for North Florida farmers and could someday take a bigger bite of the chestnut market, now dominated by Italy.



Josh Wickham

Happenings

Listings in this section are a sampling of events at the University of Florida compiled from entries listed in the full calendar that appears on the Web at calendar.ufl.edu. To submit an event online, send an e-mail to calndar@nersp.osg.ufl.edu with the following information in this order: event date; event name, brief description and sponsor; time; location; costs; and contact information to include name, phone number and e-mail. Events, dates, times and programs are subject to change.

March 1
4 p.m., "Politics and Religious Identities in Pre-modern Europe: Case Studies in Poland and Spain," lecture by Benjamin Ehlers and Pawel Kras, Smathers Library, Conference Room West 212

March 3
10 a.m., "Road Map to Graduate and Professional Schools," program for minority sophomores and juniors, Reitz Student Union, Rion Ballroom

March 4
3 p.m., Carillon recital, Century Tower

March 5
4:05 p.m., "Advances in Diagnosis and Therapy for Celiac Disease," lecture by Mariagrazia Cunto, CSE, E121

March 6
Noon, "Immigration and Work through Literary Works and Public Discourse: Madrid, Valencia and Alicante at the Beginning of the New Millennium," lecture by Karina E. Vazquez, Anderson Hall, Room 216

University Auditorium

Feb. 28
7:30 p.m., Concerts Band concert

March 1
7:30 p.m., Jazz Band concert

March 2
7:30 p.m., Scott Poole, bassoon recital

In Focus

Doctors Without Borders president to speak at UF

Dr. Darin Portnoy has opened clinics in Liberia, helped Chechen refugees get emergency health care in Georgia, coordinated primary care programs in the Sudan, and helped form programs to control tuberculosis in Uzbekistan and measles in Nigeria.

Portnoy, a New York physician and president of the board of directors of Doctors Without Borders in the United States, will speak at 7 p.m. March 5 at the University of Florida Phillips Center for the Performing Arts.

Doctors Without Borders, also known as Médecins Sans Frontières, is an international medical humanitarian organization composed of doctors, nurses and other medical and nonmedical professionals who work to provide health care to patients in war-torn regions, medically underserved countries and disaster zones. The group

also sets up programs like those Portnoy ran to help stop the spread of infectious diseases in these countries.

"My wish is that the community will be made aware, by the example set by Doctors Without Borders, of current issues in global health and be inspired to contribute to the effort to improve it," said Heidi Nagel, a second-year medical student in the College of Medicine who organized the event with classmates. "This to me is the primary altruistic example of what I believe in as a doctor."

One College of Medicine faculty member is already contributing. Dr. I. Keith Stone, chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, recently joined Doctors Without Borders and will be working in Sierra Leone until June.

Medical students and public health

What:
Darin Portnoy, President
Doctors Without Borders

When:
7 p.m. March 5

Where:
Phillips Center for the
Performing Arts,
315 Hull Road

Cost:
Free



Darin Portnoy, M.D.

students from the College of Public Health and Health Professions have spent the past year planning and raising money to bring Portnoy to UF, Nagel said. They also plan to sell photos at the event to give an additional donation to the organization.

The event is free and open to the public.

By April Frawley Birdwell

Seen & Heard



Bob Bird
Sergio Vega's installation piece, "Shanty Nucleus after Derrida," is part of the exhibition "International Contemporary Art from the Harn Museum Collection."

Museum Nights features talk by Sergio Vega

Internationally acclaimed artist and University of Florida Associate Professor Sergio Vega will present a lecture on his work and career during the Harn Museum of Art's Museum Nights on Thursday.

Vega's installation piece, "Shanty Nucleus after Derrida," is included in the exhibition "International Contemporary Art from the Harn Museum Collection," on view in the Harn's Coffin Pavilion through September.

Following Vega's 6 p.m. lecture, visitors can tour the exhibition with a Harn docent and view Vega's work, along with the other pieces featured in the exhibition. For more

information about programs and events, call 352-392-9826 or visit the Web at www.harn.ufl.edu.

\$2.75 million NIH grant to aid pediatric HIV study

Dr. Mobeen Rathore, a professor and assistant chairman of pediatrics and chief of pediatric infectious diseases at the UF College of Medicine-Jacksonville and Wolfson Children's Hospital, was recently awarded a \$2.75 million grant by the National Institutes of Health to study the effects of antiretroviral medications on children exposed to them in utero.

The information gathered during the four-year Pediatric HIV/AIDS Cohort Study will contribute to the study's long-term goal to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection, Rathore said.

UF College of Medicine-Jacksonville is part of a nationwide multicenter group conducting the research – the first of its kind to look at potential effects of antiretroviral medications during pregnancy. The Jacksonville study site, which covers north



Mobeen Rathore, M.D.

Florida and southeast Georgia, is gearing up now to begin screening patients. Nationwide, 1,625 children will be enrolled.

Study links grades, number of Hispanic students

Hispanic students at community colleges with large Hispanic populations are more likely to earn higher grades and complete their courses, according to a study headed by University of Florida College of Education Professor Linda Serra Hagedorn.

Educators have long believed that a "critical mass" of like students is vital to making minority students feel at home on college campuses. But this study, appearing in the February issue of the journal Research in Higher Education, may be the first to find statistical evidence to confirm that belief.

Hagedorn is the lead investigator and director of the Transfer and Retention of Urban Community College Students project, a multiyear, comprehensive study of the educational outcomes of 5,000 community college students at the nine community college campuses in the Los Angeles area. Investigators queried the students on their backgrounds, attitudes and experiences, and compared those data to the students' transcript records.

Note This

ABC soap stars part of UF benefit event

University of Florida faculty, staff and students interested in meeting some of daytime TV's most popular young actors may want to be on the North Lawn of the Reitz Student Union on Friday for "Rock the Quad," an event in part to benefit victims of recent tornados in Central Florida.

The event takes place from 1 to 4 p.m. and features food, music, dancing, giveaways, and photo opportunities with stars from "General Hospital," "One Life to Live" and "All My Children."

Admission is free, but donations of clothing and nonperishable food items will be accepted. An ABC crew will be on hand to tape the event.

Employee appraisals due at end of March

The standard evaluation period for all USPS and TEAMS employees at the University of Florida ends Wednesday, with performance appraisals due to Human Resource Services by March 31.

Overview sessions will be held for new supervisors or current supervisors wanting a refresher. For a list of dates and times of these sessions, visit the Web at www.hr.ufl.edu/training/schedule.htm#GET150. Registration for any of the sessions is also available online at www.hr.ufl.edu/training. The course code is "GET150, Performance Mgmt Overview."

For more information on performance appraisals, visit the Web at www.hr.ufl.edu/performance or direct questions to Employee Relations at 392-1072 or emprel@ufl.edu. For questions on training, contact Training and Organizational Development at 392-4626 or training@ufl.edu.

Location change for book donations

Donations of new and semisused books and magazines to benefit new libraries in Uganda may be dropped off at the Department of Geography, Turlington Hall, 3014 Poehling Room. An item in last week's InsideUF gave an incorrect location for making donations.

Don't forget ...

To update your addresses (postal and e-mail) in the UF directory to ensure you don't miss important mailings on any number of topics, including benefits changes. Details on how to keep this information current are available online at www.bridges.ufl.edu/advisory/advisory70.shtml.

InsideUF

Send submissions for publication consideration at least two weeks in advance to insideuf@ufl.edu.

UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
The Foundation for The Gator Nation



Kris Kristofferson

March 3
7:30 p.m., Shannon Parramore, flute recital

March 5
7:30 p.m., Miranda Morris, horn recital

Florida Museum of Natural History

March 1
6:30 p.m., "Tibet: A Buddhist Trilogy, Part I: The Dalai Lama, the Monasteries and the People"

Galleries

Student Arts Juried Exhibition, through March 9, University Gallery
"Ligature 2007," annual design show organized by student group voxGraphics, through March 16, Focus Gallery

Theater/Dance

Feb. 27-28, March 1-3
"Vote: Antidote to Apathy," Nadine McGuire Pavilion; weekday and Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.

Phillips Center

Feb. 27
7:30 p.m., Kris Kristofferson

March 1
8 p.m., Santa Fe Community College Dance, "Elements of Style"

March 2
7:30 p.m., Moscow Festival Ballet "Don Quixote"

March 3
7:30 p.m., Atlanta Symphony Orchestra with Emanuel Ax

March 4
7:30 p.m., Chick Corea and Béla Fleck

Academic Calendar

March 10-17
Spring break (no classes)
InsideUF will not publish this week.