Our Community

Florida State University is a community of scholars in pursuit of excellence in higher education, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, and dedicated to public service. Superior faculty members interact with students in and out of the classroom and laboratory, stimulating their creative intellects as well as their realistic capabilities, to promote lifelong learning that enhances the well-being of the individual, the state, and the nation. In an atmosphere of responsible freedom, students gain the benefits of a strong liberal arts tradition and a deep, rich, cultural understanding. The University encourages the learning process, critical thinking, sensitivity to others and to the environment, and the development of ethical principles on which to base a life of intellectual curiosity and satisfaction within a wide range of careers.

Florida State University’s main campus in Tallahassee is well known for its beauty. Jacobean Revival structures are combined with the latest in modern architecture, set in a landscape of rolling hills and Spanish-moss draped live oaks, pines, palms, and dogwoods protected by a strict municipal ordinance. Flowering shrubs, notably azaleas and camellias, provide year-round color. Nearby, a national forest, wildlife refuge, lakes, rivers, and the Gulf of Mexico beaches offer opportunities for numerous outdoor pursuits.

Tallahassee is not only Florida’s capital, but is one of its oldest and fastest growing cities. The capital city is located in Leon County, which has a population of 272,497. More than 100 state and federal agencies furnish our students with opportunities for internships, research and work-study programs matching all areas of academic interest. In addition, Tallahassee affords a rich offering of social, cultural, and recreational activities, making it an excellent place in which to live, study and grow.
Florida State University has earned a growing national reputation as a public graduate research university that blends outstanding teaching with research that advances our community, our state, the nation, and the world. We are home to a talented community of learners who are committed to excellence and engaged together in the pursuit of knowledge in the classroom, in the research lab, and through community outreach.

Our dedication to excellence encompasses many realms. Ranked as a Doctoral/Research University-Extensive—the highest category awarded by the Carnegie Foundation—and with many of our colleges ranked among the country's finest, we stand firmly in the ranks of the nation's top public universities. Led by a world-renowned faculty that has included six Nobel Laureates and numerous eminent scholars in many areas of the arts and sciences, our academic programs continue to receive major recognition for their quality and overall strength.

In the realm of scientific excellence, the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, which houses the most powerful magnets in the world, is located on our campus. The prestigious Center for Applied Superconductivity made its home on FSU's campus in 2006. Our powerful supercomputers have contributed to advances in hurricane forecasting, and the United States Navy chose Florida State University to develop the advanced power systems that will drive its next generation of ships.

Our external research awards have increased during a time when declines have been more typical, and our endowment increased six-fold in less than a decade. These achievements truly are marks of our excellence as an academic institution. To further strengthen this university's reputation, we have initiated “Pathways of Excellence,” an innovative, multi-year plan aimed toward moving Florida State to a new level of distinction in the academic world.

Our excellence also shines in realms beyond traditional academic settings. Located in countries throughout the world, our international programs are unparalleled. In the area of athletics, our scholar-athletes continue to perform at championship levels on and off the field, and their hard work and dedication add to this university's great reputation. Our students supplement their academic pursuits with community service time outside of the classroom, and each year they record hundreds of thousands of hours of service. In uncountable ways, this university reaches out to our community, the region, state and nation.

With a dedicated faculty and staff, a commitment to strong graduate and undergraduate programs, and a research agenda that contributes to the nation's economic well-being and quality of life, Florida State University is a leader in higher education. I hope that as you become a part of our community you will join us in our continuing pursuit of excellence.
THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE
The academic experience at Florida State University presents a variety of educational opportunities for scholarly excellence on a campus with a rich academic heritage.

The multicultural studies component, Living and Learning environments, guest lecturers, ready access to advisers, and a commitment to digital access prepare students for a variety of careers—from art to business to medicine.
RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES
During its distinguished history, Florida State University has built a reputation as a strong center for research in the sciences, the humanities, and the arts.
The Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (COAPS) in the College of Arts and Sciences was officially formed in August 1996 by the Florida Board of Regents. COAPS is a center of excellence promoting interdisciplinary research on air-sea interaction, ocean and coupled air-sea modeling, climate predictions, statistical studies, and predictions of social/economic consequences due to ocean-atmospheric variations.

COAPS faculty comprises members of the Meteorology and Oceanography departments. Currently, 19 graduate students are enrolled in the program, as well as four undergraduate research scholars. Students in COAPS come from a wide variety of departments including meteorology, oceanography, computer engineering, computer science, mathematics, and information studies. Undergraduate research scholars receive training in meteorological analysis, GIS applications, Web design, and computer graphics. When in residence, all COAPS students receive training in the software computer applications and programming that form the backbone of the research performed at the Center.

COAPS has over 50 people working on research grants totaling more than three million dollars per year from the National Aeronautics & Space Administration, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research, National Oceanographic Partnership Program, and the United States Department of Agriculture. Through these grants, they produce original, published papers that advance our understanding of the ocean and the atmosphere.

The COAPS research emphasis is quite broad. Current research to improve hurricane storm surge predictions in the Gulf of Mexico and develop an understanding of the regional distributions of hurricane activity in the United States is of importance to all Floridians and coastal residents. COAPS research includes analyzing oceanographic measurements obtained from satellites for sea surface winds, sea surface shape, and ocean color. It also focuses on climate forecasting for farmers in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama using coupled atmosphere–ocean global and regional models.
COAPS houses the Florida Climate Center and the Florida State Climatologist. The Florida Climate Center can access all previously archived weather data and advises the public and private sectors on climate variability. Typical questions received by the Center are: Will El Nino affect the hurricane season? When will the drought end? What is the wild fire forecast? How much sea level rise can Florida expect?

COAPS was founded by Dr. James J. O’Brien, the Robert O. Lawton Professor of Meteorology and Oceanography. He is internationally known for mentoring young scientists, and under his guidance 40 students have completed their PhD degree, and over 80 students have completed their MS degree. He also has supervised more than 25 post-doctoral assistants. Dr. O’Brien’s early emphasis was in ocean modeling, which led to new breakthroughs in understanding coastal upwelling, El Niño, La Niña, and hurricane effects on the ocean. His most recent research interest is on the impact of climate variability on our everyday life.

With Dr. O’Brien retiring in December 2006, Dr. Eric Chassignet, from the University of Miami, has moved to Tallahassee to become the new COAPS director. His expertise is in high-resolution ocean modeling and ocean prediction. Dr. Chassignet’s current research interest is on the role of the ocean in climate variability using coupled ocean-atmosphere numerical models.
The Center for Music of the Americas (CMA) was established by the School of Music at Florida State University in 1985. CMA seeks to create and enhance understanding among the peoples of North, South, and Central America and the Caribbean through music and its related arts and folkways. The Center’s first director was Dr. Robert L. Smith, who served until his retirement in 1990. It is currently directed by Dr. Dale A. Olsen, a distinguished research professor of ethnomusicology who specializes in the music of Latin America.

The Center for Music of the Americas forms an integral part of the College of Music at Florida State University, and approximately 200 undergraduate and graduate students are affected by its programming. The Center’s activities include the following goals and objectives:

• It is closely related to academic curricula leading to certificates, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in a number of specialized disciplines within the College of Music;

• It oversees the numerous world-music performance groups within the College of Music;

• It seeks funding for projects involving or potentially involving any and all aspects of music within the Americas and the world; and

• It endeavors to support any and all activities related to music in the Americas and the world.

The Center for Music of the Americas’ active role is not confined to any specific research area, although it is closely related to the disciplines of ethnomusicology, historical musicology, and multicultural music education, and adopts as a part of its purpose the primary objectives of those disciplines, the scholarly study and research of music.

The Center for Music of the Americas actively seeks funding and has received grants for projects in Internet distance learning of world music; salsa and blues performance in schools; a world music distance learning course; an American roots music undergraduate course; and Moravian musical research, to name a few. The CMA seeks funding for concerts, workshops, and/or lectures by outside and local musicians from around the world and the USA; it seeks funding to support graduate students for
research and travel; and it supports and assists the School of Music in the purchase and repair of world musical instruments. These are but a few of the ways the CMA provides assistance and other means of support to further the cause of creating cross-cultural understanding through music.

The Center for Music of the Americas provides the administrative coordination for the College of Music’s World Music programming, culminating in the World Music Rainbow Concert held every spring semester since 1995. Typically, nearly 200 undergraduate and graduate students from across the campus perform in the annual Rainbow Concert, as members in one or more of the world music ensembles.

Finally, the Center for Music of the Americas administers two certificate programs: the Certificate in Music of the Americas and the Certificate in World Music. These certificate programs function like minors in those areas and are open to all degree-seeking students at Florida State University.

After fifteen years of service, at the end of this academic year Dr. Olsen will retire as director of the Center for Music of the Americas. He will pass on the directorship to Dr. Denise Von Glahn, an associate professor of music, who specializes in the music of the United States.
DISTINGUISHED FACULTY
Lise Diez-Arguelles

“It has always seemed strange to me that in our endless discussions about education so little stress is laid on the pleasure of becoming an educated person, the enormous interest it adds to life. To be able to be caught up into the world of thought—that is to be educated.”

—Edith Hamilton

As an FSU alumna, I am honored to have the opportunity to contribute through my teaching. Many years ago when I was a graduate student in creative writing, I never dreamed that I would teach at my alma mater. I did not have a career plan (unless wanting to be a poet or a private investigator counts as a plan). A fondness for language, an appreciation for the mysteries of life, and three children kept me busy. I was thrilled when, 20 years later, I was offered a job teaching in the College of Business.

I teach writing, public speaking, etiquette, and professionalism to business students. It is quite a challenge. Many students dread this required course, and a large part of my job lies in appealing to their self interest. How will these skills enhance their accomplishments? If I do my part successfully, most of my students are receptive to the skills and are willing to work to improve. If I am really persuasive, a few move beyond asking “How many points is this worth?” to “May I borrow those fascinating books you mentioned?” That transformation is a delight!

Kathleen M. Erndl

I am a broadly trained historian of religions with comparative interests and primary specialization in modern Hindu religious practices. My research has focused mainly on Hindu goddess traditions and on women and gender issues in Hinduism. The teaching environment is nearly ideal for me at Florida State University, as I am able to teach students from first year undergraduates through PhD candidates. I use an eclectic array of methods and materials and am constantly developing new courses, updating old ones, and experimenting with different teaching techniques, as it keeps alive my enthusiasm for teaching.

I am an advocate of active learning. Students learn best when they are personally engaged in the educational process, constructing their own understanding, rather than passively absorbing the pronouncements of the professor. At the same time, I believe I would be shortchanging my students if I deprived them of my experience, knowledge, and leadership. So, I try to strike a balance between lecture and discussion and between structuring courses according to my own agenda and allowing enough flexibility and unpredictability for students to pursue their own agendas.

The most important aspect of teaching is mentoring students. This aspect is most obvious at the graduate level, where I can give specific guidance on research, publication, grant applications and the like. But it is also important for undergraduates, even those outside my field, who often come to me for general advice or encouragement. It is important to have contact with students out of class, too, as this helps foster a sense of community. Every semester I host an Indian pot-luck dinner and video screening at my home—a tradition everyone looks forward to.
Kenneth Goldsby

Think about the last time you learned something—I mean really learned something. Chances are you did not learn it from a book. You probably learned it by working with someone who already knew how to do it well. And you didn’t learn it from watching that person do it. No, you learned it by having that person watch you.

I watched my dad change the brakes on our car half a dozen times, but it was not until I did it while he watched—with encouragement and good humor—that I learned how to do it myself. Now, with a manual and some time, I can change the brakes on most cars. That’s the oldest kind of teaching there is, and it is still the best kind of teaching we do. In certain professions, the teachers are referred to as masters, and students as apprentices. I once spent a summer working as an electrician’s apprentice, and now I can do most simple jobs around the house, myself.

At the university, this kind of teaching is sometimes called mentoring, but it’s still just plain teaching—the kind we are supposed to be doing at a research institution. In our department it generally takes the form of laboratory work. In other departments it will look different, but it always involves the give and take of ideas between the teacher and the student. Classroom teaching is important, but we should never lose sight of the ideal of a student-mentor relationship. My experience has been that you learn more when I do not do all the talking.

Jon Maner

Mark Twain once remarked about writing fiction, “Don’t just say the old lady screamed. Bring her on and let her scream.” This advice is as true about teaching as it is about writing. Rather than simply telling students about psychological research and the human mind, I try to help students experience these things for themselves through vivid demonstrations, interactive discussions, and engaging, memorable examples.

My goal is to let students see not only that psychology is an intrinsically interesting discipline, but also that it has tremendous relevance to events currently going on in the world, as well as in their own lives. From social problems such as ethnic prejudice and violence to the profound importance of close friendships and altruistic behavior, psychology provides insight into fundamental questions about human nature—questions that many students find themselves wondering about all the time.

In discussing these questions, I challenge students to think like social scientists and to evaluate critically their “common sense” assumptions about why people do the things they do.

Being part of students’ academic growth is both stimulating and rewarding. I am grateful to the students at Florida State University for allowing me to relive the excitement of learning about human behavior and the human mind. Through my students, I get to experience the very same intellectual curiosity that first led me to choose a career in psychology.
Svetla Slaveva-Griffin

An educator must use multiple strategies to become an effective teacher. The most important one for me is to gain students' trust and to excite their curiosity so they want to learn from me in the moment, in a particular course, and about a particular subject. I do not have a teaching persona—I am the same person in the classroom, in my office, and on the street. I have found that students respond immediately, maturely, and enthusiastically to this real-life teaching style.

Perhaps I am somewhat inclined toward this approach in the classroom because my research interests lie in ancient philosophy. One of the prevalent views today is that the study of ancient philosophy is about learning how to lead a good life as an intellectually and morally informed person. I aspire to show my students how learning can become a personal journey (even in the beginning sequence of ancient Greek), in which they do not only learn a subject, but also become better people. I do this by striving to create an atmosphere of intellectual curiosity; high but attainable expectations; mutual respect; freedom of opinion; and tolerance of diverse views. The Roman philosopher Seneca summarized this approach most eloquently when he said that we learn not for school, but for life.

Nora Underwood

What I love most about being a professor is that I get to research and teach. These two parts of my professional life are closely integrated, and each informs the other. In the lab, students help generate new ideas and data. In the classroom, in addition to providing a foundation of basic knowledge, I try to communicate the essentials of how science is actually done. I hope to give students an understanding of the nature of science as a critical thinking process rather than a collection of facts, to help students learn to synthesize information from many sources, and to stimulate curiosity about the world.

While the depth of knowledge I aim for differs between introductory and upper division classes, my fundamental goals remain the same. I focus on critical thinking over memorization because the ability to think analytically remains integral to life long after memorized facts fade away. Learning to see how different areas relate to each other is critical because seeing connections is key to sparking curiosity both in the classroom and in students’ lives outside of the classroom. Being able to synthesize different types of informations also gives students a framework into which they can fit future observations and subjects about which they learn. Finally, I particularly enjoy sharing my excitement about biology and my enthusiasm for learning in general. I know from my own experience that it is a teacher’s excitement that students remember long after they have forgotten any facts learned from class.
Eight students from Florida State University won Fulbright awards in 2006-2007.

The Fulbright competition is administered at Florida State University through the Office of National Fellowships. Jamie Purcell, the Office’s interim director, serves as FSU’s Fulbright Program Adviser.

Under this program, almost 1,300 American students in over 100 different fields of study have been offered grants to study, teach English, and conduct research in over 120 countries throughout the world beginning this fall. Of the grantees, 40 were also recipients of a new supplemental Fulbright Critical Language Enhancement Award, through which they can study to become fluent in languages deemed “critical” under the National Security Language Initiative.

Students receiving awards for this academic year applied through 532 different colleges or universities. Please visit the Fulbright Program Web site: www.fulbrightonline.org/us.

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program equips future American leaders with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly global environment by providing funding for one academic year of study or research abroad, to be conducted after graduation from an accredited university.

Fellows undertake self-designed programs in disciplines ranging from social sciences, business, communication and performing arts to physical sciences, engineering and education. The U.S. Student Program awards almost 1,300 grants annually and currently operates in over 150 countries worldwide.

Since its inception in 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided more than 275,000 participants worldwide with the opportunity to observe each others’ political, economic and cultural institutions, exchange ideas and embark on joint ventures of importance to the general welfare of the world’s inhabitants. In the past 60 years, more than 100,000 students from the United States have benefited from the Fulbright experience.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Financial support is provided by an annual appropriation from Congress to the Department of State, with significant contributions from participating governments and host institutions in the United States and abroad. The presidentially appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board formulates policy guidelines and makes the final selection of all grantees.

The Institute of International Education administers and coordinates the activities relevant to the U.S. Student Program, including an annual competition for the scholarships.

The Fulbright Program also awards grants to American teachers and faculty to do research, lecture and teach overseas. In addition, nearly 3,000 foreign Fulbright students and scholars come to the United States annually to study, carry out research and lecture at U.S. universities, colleges and secondary schools.