

UF Voices

Budget cuts to deepen



J. Bernard Machen

Allow me to bring you up to date on our current budget situation and outline how we plan to proceed in developing the budget for the next year.

As part of its mid-year budget plan to close a \$2.3 billion shortfall, the Legislature last week made permanent the 4 percent hold-back from last July. We have already set aside these funds, so no more cuts for the current fiscal year will be required.

Next year, however, is problematic. Estimates indicate the state's budget will be at least \$3.4 billion less than this year. That is a huge deficit going forward and all sectors of the state will be affected. We believe we may face a budget cut between \$72 million and \$75 million.

I have asked all academic and administrative units to prepare proposals to reduce their budgets by 10 percent. This process will involve faculty, staff and students, though it will be led by the administrators who are responsible for fiscal matters. Provost Joe Glover and others are also developing a set of possible reductions that cut across units.

We expect to have a list of possible reductions by mid-to-late March and we will encourage open discussion for 30 to 45 days. We will not know the exact amount of our reduction until the legislative session ends on May 1. After that time, final recommendations will be made to UF's Board of Trustees.

We will provide periodic updates as we move through the budget-cutting process. The information will be posted on a new Web site in coming weeks. A link for the Web site soon will be available on UF's home page. Thank you for your support during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

J. Bernard Machen
President

Top Stories

UF alumnus works on new NASA spacecraft 'Orion'

Duane Chin wouldn't be a good candidate for space flight — he gets motion sickness. But it doesn't stop him from working with NASA.

Chin, a University of Florida graduate, works as a biomedical engineer for NASA. His current project concerns NASA's Constellation Program.

The Constellation Program is developing spacecraft and booster vehicles to replace the space shuttle and return astronauts to the moon and beyond.

Chin is helping develop the Orion spacecraft's crew compartment for the program. He works as a crew health integrations specialist, developing ways the crew can stay healthy in space while living in a small area.

"The shuttle's volume of livable space is like a bus," Chin said. "Orion is like a VW Beetle."

Chin is working with engineers and flight surgeons to make sure the crew's medical needs are met in the small space provided.

"We have to get down to the basics," Chin explained. "The crew still needs to exercise every day but there is limited space."

The Orion vehicle is planned to debut in 2015.

University Ties

Chin, who graduated from UF in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science in engineering science and mechanics, first heard about the opportunities at NASA for engineers from his professors at UF.

"Going through the UF Biomedical engineering program with professors so close to Kennedy Space Center definitely helped me," Chin said. "UF has a great engineering program and enabled me to be a great engineer."

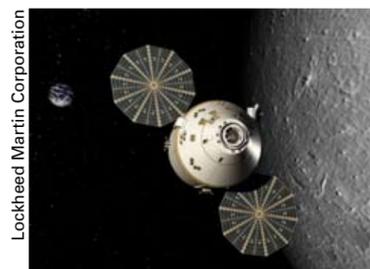
Chin's work at UF has now paid off. His job with NASA is paramount and unrivaled.



Duane Chin

"The opportunity to help in a launch, something that only a few countries in the whole world can do, is exciting," Chin said. "To be a part of (the Constellation Program) is really huge."

By Claibourne Smith



Artist's rendering of the Orion crew exploration vehicle in lunar orbit.

Construction projects cause traffic, parking changes

Beginning last December, portions of four major roads on the University of Florida campus became partially closed for restoration. The repairs include Museum Road, Newell Drive, Stadium Road and Buckman Drive.

The restoration stretches from Gale Lemerand Drive to Pugh Hall on Stadium Road, from Museum Road to Union Road on Newell Drive, from Pugh Hall to University Avenue on Buckman Drive, and from Gale Lemerand Drive to Beaty Towers on Museum Road.

Workers are removing the old asphalt and replacing it with 2 inches of new asphalt, which will eliminate roadway ruts and dips. Although some delays should be expected, at least one lane of traffic will remain open in the affected areas.

Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of February.

For a map of the affected areas, visit www.ppd.ufl.edu/ppdnews.htm.

Also in December, construction began on a new addition to the College of Business, Hugh Hall.

Located in the former parking area of Criser Hall, the construction area has created the loss of a number of parking spaces. As a result, parking changes are now in effect for several areas of campus, including carpool, gated, orange, red one, all red and any decal parking. For more information, visit <http://www.parking.ufl.edu/springparkingchanges/springparkingindex.html>.

By Susan Stewart

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, visit <http://calendar.ufl.edu/submit/>.

Jan. 20 - 21 Career Resource Center presents "Career Showcase." O'Connell Center, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Day One will host non-technical employers. Day Two will feature technical employers. Free and closed to the public. Call 352-273-2322 or visit <http://crc.ufl.edu/showcase> for more information.

Jan. 23 Spring S-U Grade Option Deadline. Call 352-392-1374 or visit <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu> for more information.

Jan. 26 UFPA presents Riverdance. Phillips Center, 7:30 p.m. Ticket prices: \$45-75. Open to the public. Call 352-392ARTS (2787) or visit <http://www.performingarts.ufl.edu> for ticket information.

Jan. 30 Spring Degree Applications Deadline and Spring Withdrawal Deadline. All courses, with 25% refund (W assigned). Call 352-392-1374 or visit <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu> for deadline information.

Age of earth may be millions of years off, say UF scientists

After researching for six weeks in India, geologists believe they have been wrong from the beginning, literally.

A team of geologists studying the Vindhyan basin of India has dated the area to be about 1,073 million years old. Fossil organisms in these basins are also significantly older than previously thought.

Until this discovery last July, the basins of Central India were believed to have formed 500 million to 700 million years ago during the Ediacaran and Cambrian period.

"The possibility that organisms in this basin are much older than originally thought was the most interesting implication of the study," said Joe Meert, a University of Florida geology professor and leader of the team who made the discovery.

The geologists were able to establish a date of origin of the basin through a combination of dating methods using kimberlite, a volcanic rock containing diamonds, and zircon minerals found within the sandstones in the basin.

The 500-million-year discrepancy is controversial in the science world.

The findings could alter aspects of the theory of evolution. Scientists have always believed in a Cambrian explosion resulting in a rapid appearance of most major groups of complex, multi-cellular animals, Meert explained.

Yet multi-cellular life, in the form of soft-bodied Ediacaran organisms, was discovered in the Vindhyan basin, leading Meert and co-authors to suggest that the explosion may have been more of a slow burn.

The study also helped reconcile an inconsistency in the Snowball Earth hypothesis that states the Earth was covered in snow and ice from 635 million to 700 million years ago.

A major roadblock for this hypothesis had been that the Vindhyan and other Purana basins did not have signs that glaciers existed during that period. Now that the origins of these basins have been pushed back to before

Snowball Earth, the lack of glacial evidence is no longer problematic.

Information from the study appeared in the online and print editions of the journal Precambrian Research, as well as in National Geographic and The Christian Science Monitor.

"In modern geology, a 500-million-year revision in age is pretty unique," Meert said.

By Claibourne Smith



Joe Meert drills samples at India's Vindhyan basin.

Vimal Pradhan

Seen & Heard

Tax policy series established

Examining modern tax policy and how its implementation affects the economy and people's lives is the purpose of the newly endowed Ellen Bellet Gelberg Tax Policy Lecture Series established at the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Gelberg, a 1977 graduate of the college's Graduate Tax Program, has pledged \$500,000 from the Stein Gelberg Foundation to the college's LL.M. Tax Programs Endowment Fund.

The series will bring a prestigious lecturer to the college every year.

The \$500,000 pledge will become eligible for 50 percent state matching dollars through the state's Major Gifts Trust Fund Program, which would increase the endowment to \$750,000.

International Educator awards announced

The University of Florida International Center (UFIC) recently announced the recipients of the 2008 International Educator of the Year Award. Charles H. Wood, professor of sociology and Latin American studies, was given the senior faculty award. The junior faculty award

went to Juan Carlos Molleda, associate professor of public relations.

UFIC established the award to recognize outstanding international endeavors by UF faculty members, in order to support UF's strategic goal of internationalizing the campus and curriculum. Consideration was given to three main factors: research, teaching and service.

For a brief profile of each winner, please visit <http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/iea.htm>.

Pulvermacher awarded commissions, performances

Neta Pulvermacher, assistant professor of dance and a choreographer, recently received commissions from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Manhattanville College and the Dreyfoos School for the Arts. In addition, Pulvermacher's new production "Fold and Air," to premiere in February at the Danspace project in New York City, received support from the Bossak Heilbron Charitable Foundation,



Juan Carlos Molleda

The Helen & William Little Foundation and the Harkness Foundation for Dance. In December, the critically acclaimed work, "Blue," choreographed by Pulvermacher, was performed by the world-renowned Jose Limon Dance Company at the Joyce Theatre Season, New York City.

Judy Fisher awardees recently announced

Sanford Berg and Subhajyoti Bandyopadhyay, Warrington College of Business Administration professors, recently received the 2008 Judy Fisher Teaching with Technology Award for their innovative use of technologies such as wikis, podcasts, and e-mail newsletters.

Berg is a UF Distinguished Service Professor in Economics and Distinguished Teaching Scholar and director of Water Studies for the Public Utility Research Center (PURC). Subhajyoti Bandyopadhyay is an assistant professor in the college's Department of Information Sciences and Operations Management.

The annual Judy Fisher Teaching with Technology Award was established in memory of former faculty member Judy Fisher.

Repeating Events

Florida Museum of Natural History presents "Women's Medicine: Traditions of the Florida Creek Indians" on display through April 12. Florida Museum of Natural History. Free and open to the public. Call 352-273-1820 or visit <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu> for more information.

Harn Museum of Art presents "Momentum: Contemporary Art from the Harn Collection" on display through May 12. Harn Museum of Art. Free and open to the public. Closed Mondays. Call 352-392-9826 or visit <http://www.harn.ufl.edu> for more information.



Jack Hartim/Abhann Productions

Feb. 1 School of Theatre and Dance presents "Electronic City." Nadine McGuire Black Box Theatre, 2 p.m. Admission fee and open to the public. Call 352-392-1653 or visit <http://www.arts.ufl.edu/theatreanddance/> for more information.

Harn Museum of Art presents "Exhibition Spotlight Tours: Highlights from the Photography Collection." Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, 2 p.m. Free and open to the public. Call 352-392-9826 or visit <http://www.harn.ufl.edu> for more information.

Teacher/scholar nominations sought

All colleges are invited to submit nominations for the Teacher/Scholar of the Year Award for 2008-2009. The award offers an honorarium of \$5,000, in addition to other appropriate recognition. Current faculty members of the University of Florida are eligible.

For more information, call Candace Buford of Faculty Development at 352-392-6004.

2009 holiday schedule announced

Human Resources has announced the holiday schedule for 2009. Please note that areas of campus, including medical clinics, may remain open during holidays.

- Memorial Day, May 25
- Independence Day, July 3
- Labor Day, Sept. 7
- Homecoming, Oct. 16
- Veterans Day, Nov. 11
- Thanksgiving, Nov. 26, 27
- Christmas Day, Dec. 25
- 2009 Holiday, Dec. 28 - Dec. 31

For additional information about the holiday schedule, visit <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/leave/holidays.asp>.

Seeking Gator stories

The Gator Nation wants to know your personal Gator story. Visit the outdoor mobile video booth to record your story at the following upcoming events. Just look for the orange and blue "When did you become a Gator?" signage.

- Jan. 27 to Jan. 29 at Reitz Colonnade, 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
- Jan. 28 at the O'Connell Center prior to men's basketball at 8 p.m.
- Feb. 8 at the O'Connell Center prior to women's basketball at 2 p.m.
- Feb. 20 at the O'Connell Center prior to gymnastics at 7 p.m.
- Feb. 27 at the McKethan Stadium prior to baseball at 6:30 p.m.

If unable to attend these events, visit www.insidethegatornation.com to upload a video story or submit a written story. The site features hundreds of Gators' stories, as well as University of Florida news, pictures, iPhone wallpaper and more.

Did you know?

There's no need to wait for InsideUF news. InsideUF is online, as well as in print. Check for daily news by clicking on the blue "InsideUF" on the UF homepage, www.ufl.edu.