Critical Dates

- No Classes, Homecoming
- No Classes, Veteran’s Day
- Drop or Withdraw without Failing Grades
- No Classes, Thanksgiving
- Classes End
- Finals
- Residence Halls Close at 4 p.m.
- Fall Semester Grade Available Online (ISIS)
- Residence Halls Open at Noon
- Spring Semester Classes Begin
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Spring Break

November 9
November 12
November 19
November 21-24
December 5
December 8-10-14
December 15
December 19
January 3
January 7
January 21
March 2-9

For questions regarding FOS please contact:
Leslie Pendleton
Director of the Florida Opportunity Scholars Program
155 Tigert Hall
P.O. Box 113250
Gainesville, FL 32611-3250
(352) 392-1265
lesliep@ufsa.ufl.edu

The FOS Family Newsletter is produced by the:
Division of Student Affairs
University of Florida
P.O. Box 113250
Gainesville, FL 32611-3250

October 2012

Notes from the Director: Leslie Pendleton

I am delighted that the University of Florida is able to provide the Florida Opportunity Scholarship to so many talented first-generation college students.

You should be proud of what your outstanding student has already accomplished. I am certain your student will leave a mark upon this university.

As a family member of a Florida Opportunity Scholar, you probably have a number of questions. In addition to wanting to know about UF policies and procedures, you may be wondering how you can best support your student and what your student can expect in college.

It is my hope that this Florida Opportunity Scholars Family Newsletter, which we plan to send out twice a year to the families of first year students, will provide you with useful information that will enable you to begin to answer these questions.

Sincerely,
Leslie Pendleton
Director of the Florida Opportunity Scholars Program

FOS Fun Facts

- Florida Opportunity Scholars are from all over the state of Florida, representing 48 out of 67 counties.
- There are currently 40 FOS alums in professional degree programs at UF: 17 Pharmacy, 7 Medical, 7 Nursing, 5 Law, 2 Vet Med, 1 Physician Aest, 1 Physical Therapy.
- Florida Opportunity Scholars are leaders on campus. One of our recent graduates even served as Student Body Treasurer managing more than $13 million for students.

FOS Scholarship Requirements

- Maintain a 2.0 GPA
- Earn a minimum of 24 UF credit hours by the end of spring semester 2013
- Take First-Year Florida, the first year student seminar course at UF, in their first year at UF
- Connect with their FOS peer mentor
- Attend two Financial Literacy Workshops, one in the fall semester and one spring semester
- Renew the FAFSA by March 15, 2013

Academic Advising

Each UF college offers major-specific advising for students who plan to pursue a degree in one of its departments or areas of study. These advisors offer a wealth of knowledge to students, from course selection to college and university policies to what options are available to them under virtually any circumstance they encounter. Please encourage your student to discover what the college advising office has to offer. A helpful place to start is the UF advising Web site, uadvising.ufl.edu. Contact: (352) 392-1521

Tutoring

UF’s Teaching Center offers free tutoring to students in many of the subject areas in which students frequently experience difficulties, including math and chemistry. The Teaching Center, located in Broward Residence Hall is also the home of the UF Reading and Writing Center, which provides additional assistance to students who are interested in improving their college-level reading and writing skills. The Teaching Center Web site address is teachingcenter.ufl.edu. Contact: (352) 392-1010

Academic Departments and/or Individual Instructors

Many UF academic departments offer help that is tailored to the specific course in which your student is enrolled. In fact, among the most helpful resources for students are their course instructors, who are available for office hours and by appointment throughout the week. Though many students are reluctant to approach their instructors with questions, most professors are concerned about their students’ academic success and will go out of their way to assist students. Please encourage your student to either go to their instructors’ office hours, or to schedule an appointment to meet with them in person. Phone calls and emails are never as productive as face-to-face interaction.

Changing Majors

If your student decides to change majors, we recommend that he or she makes the most informed decision possible by utilizing the Career Resource Center (CRC) provided help in many areas, including developing a résumé, finding internships, searching for a job, interviewing, and preparing for graduate school. In order to officially change their major, your student needs to meet with their current college academic advisor. For a complete list of colleges advising departments, please visit registrar.ufl.edu/soa/advisers.html.

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Talk about how classes are exciting at first, but for many students, homesickness sets in. The Student Health Care Center (SHCC) responds to students who need treatment for illness, shots including the free flu vaccine, and additional time to complete tests if it's determined that a student needs such accommodations. Learn more - contact 352-392-8565 or visit dso.ufl.edu/drc.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides services to students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities. DRC educates students about their legal rights and responsibilities so they can make informed decisions. The DRC provides quiet test taking environments and additional time to complete tests if it's determined that a student needs such accommodations. Learn more - contact 352-392-1575 or visit counseling.ufl.edu.

OAS Workshop
The Office of Academic Support has been charged with the mission to provide academic and personal enrichment programs and services for all UF students who are interested and would benefit. A primary objective of OAS is to serve students who are first generation, low income, AIM, or from underrepresented groups at UF. All UF students are welcome to participate in the activities of OAS. OAS's services support the success of students who participate and the broad diversity of the student body, which are important to the achievement of UF's educational, research and service mission. Learn more online at oas.ua.ufl.edu.

U Matter, We Care
The First Generation Student Organization is open to all UF students, but caters to first generation university undergraduates. The purpose of the group is to build community among the scholars through social events and campus awareness, give back to the Gainesville and UF community, and provide students with the necessary skills to have a smooth transition out of college. Membership is free. Students can activate their membership by emailing skyge@uaa.ufl.edu.

Personal and Academic Concerns
Students have to make many important decisions while in college about career, friendships and their future. It is normal for students to experience some stress during their college years. However, if you notice your student withdrawing from friends or family, acting abnormally or beginning to engage in unhealthy patterns of behavior, recommend that he/she speak to a counselor. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides free and confidential counseling for students. Learn more - contact 352-392-1575 or visit counseling.ufl.edu.

Leaving home for the first time may be exciting at first, but for many students, homesickness hits sometime during the fall semester. How can you help your student? Listen to your student's concerns. Be encouraging. Let your student know she or he is not alone by sending letters or care packages. Suggest your student visit home periodically, but don't encourage that they come home every weekend. It is important that students start to feel connected to UF and to Gainesville during their first year. Going home every weekend does not allow for this connection to happen. Be patient as your student adjusts to a new environment; encourage your student to get involved, but recognize that it may take time. Suggest they discuss this with their peer mentor or meet with Leslie Pendleton, director of the program.

How can students help themselves? Getting involved helps combat homesickness. Students can participate in campus activities, residence hall activities, and other events where they can begin to feel more at home at UF. GATORIGHTS! is one of our more popular events which takes place every Friday night at the Reitz Union. It's a great opportunity for your student to make new friends or try new activities. Also, if your student wishes to talk to someone, counseling services are available. Contact the Counseling & Wellness Center at 352-392-1575 or online at counseling.ufl.edu.

Workshop
October 23 in Matherly 18
“Getting the Job”
November 8 in Matherly 18
Surviving the Swamp
November 13 in Matherly 18

Workshop
Honoring Your Resume
Exam reviews, depending on the class
• Peer study groups
• Professor/Instructor/Graduate Assistant

FOS with helping him to maintain the balance between coursework and life. The workshops and career guidance offered by the FOS program also made a difference.

Christopher Cruz
UF class of 2008; BA in Finance
Homestown: Miami

Alex Klein
UF class of 2011; BA in Communication Sciences & Disorders
Homestown: Orlando

Harnard Sinclair
UF class of 2011; BS in Telecommunications
Homestown: Ft. Lauderdale

The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program not only gave me the financial support I needed to be successful in college, it made me feel part of something bigger than myself. I knew I had a community at UF.

Currently, I am in my 3rd year of my Doctor of Audiology program at the University of South Florida and just received my white coat. Recently I was recognized for performing the best academically in my class. I’m thrilled to have found a field I’m passionate about and can excel in.

The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program allowed me to realize the importance of being an independent learner. I was able to take courses which challenged me to effectively communicate my point of view.

I finished graduate school in TV, Radio and Film Production from Syracuse University. I am now doing an internship with the NCAA in Indianapolis, IN.