

Subject: UF Faculty Update April 1
Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 10:31:40 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Office of the Provost Faculty Update
To: Degen, Jason T

To view this email as a web page, go [here](#)



Academic News

Secrets of the Swamp

Academic News and Happenings

Law School event

Extinguishing the Flame: Market Failure, Legislative Paralysis, and the Expendability of Collegiate Olympic Sports

Nicholas J. Christopolis, Legal Skills Professor, University of Florida Levin College of Law

Monday, April 6 at Noon in Bailey Event Space

Please email ruthm@law.ufl.edu for more information

Part of the [Marshall M. Criser Distinguished Faculty Workshop Series](#)

Upcoming workshops with the Center for Teaching Excellence

In order to RSVP for these events you will need to [create a Passport Portal account](#).

If you already have a Passport account, you can register in the [Passport Portal](#). [View all upcoming events with the Center for Teaching Excellence](#).

Getting Started with AI: Research and Writing

Presented by Jennifer Parker

April 2, 2026

12:50pm – 1:20pm

Online

Enhance research and writing with AI functionality in academic and professional

research. Explore ways to manage citations, translations, and co-create high-quality content.

Preview Review: Lessons from Welcoming First-Year Students

Presented by Ashlee Ossiboff

April 8, 2026

11:45am – 12:45pm

In Person

Insights from hosting freshman orientation to create welcoming, engaging classrooms that build trust, foster belonging, and inspire student confidence from day one.

Cafe Conversations: Textbook/Course Material Adoption and Accessibility

Presented by Ryan Rushing

April 8 2026

2:00pm – 3:00pm

Online

In this workshop, we will identify what the instructors are responsible for in ensuring the accessibility of course materials, textbooks, and courseware. For faculty using courseware not provided through the bookstore, we will discuss the questions you need to ask your publisher and how to assess whether the materials comply with accessibility standards. The majority of the session will be open Q&A and discussion on any topic relating to the accessibility of course materials.

Teaching Sparks: Simple Syllabus Walk-through with Faculty

Presented by Linda Nguyen

April 14, 2026

10:40am – 11:10am

Online

Join us for an informal Teaching Sparks session on implementing the Simple Syllabus. In each session, faculty will share with participants their experience building a course syllabus in Simple Syllabus. You'll see how it connects to Canvas, learn practical tips for completing key sections, and hear what they wish they'd known starting out. These sessions are **not recorded**, so bring your questions and learn directly from a peer—live, candid, and immediately useful.

Fall 2026 Virtual Exchange Training





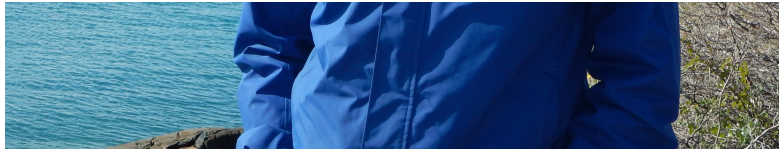
Designing a Virtual Exchange (VE) is a 5-week online course during which faculty are guided through the steps of creating a virtual exchange, as a means of incorporating international content and communication activities into their existing classes. Upon completion, UF faculty will receive \$500 in professional development funds and 500 miles toward the [Global Teaching & Learning Certificate](#). To learn more and hear from past participants about their experience, consider joining an upcoming information session:

- Friday, April 10, 11:00am-12:00pm
 - [Pre-register to attend Session 2](#) via Zoom
- Wednesday, April 15, 2:00-3:00pm
 - [Pre-register to attend Session 3](#) via Zoom

Applications for the Fall 2026 program are due April 25. For full details and to apply, visit the [Virtual Exchange Training webpage](#). Please send any questions to Carrie Martins at cmartins@ufic.ufl.edu.

Distinguished Professor Lecture: Jonathan B. Martin





Jonathan B. Martin, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor & Associate Chair
Department of Geological Science
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

What Happens as Ice Sheets Retreat? Impacts on Isotopic, Greenhouse Gas, and Nutrient Sources.

- A backstory of how my early work in tropical and semi-tropical settings led to the pursuit of interesting questions about the Arctic and climate change.
- A brief description of ways that glacial-interglacial cycles impact numerous global processes.
- An evaluation, based on analyses of samples from southwest Greenland, of how glacial-interglacial cycling alters sediment weathering (and, no, Greenland is not for sale).

Date & Time: April 9, 2026 at 3:30 PM

Location: Bless Auditorium, Williamson Hall

Webcast:

<https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/90ad0a8e1d964a05b9c62c1878434c411d>

Learn over Lunch
Youth Compliance: Summer camps and child abuse reporting



LEARN OVER LUNCH

COMPLIANCE AND ETHICS UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Are you planning events for youth under 18 at UF? If so, don't miss our upcoming UFCE Learn over Lunch webinar (via Zoom)! Our speakers, Sophia Andrews, Assistant Director, Youth Compliance, Ivelisse Munoz Medina, Assistant Director of Talent Acquisition and Onboarding, Human Resources, and Greg Banks, Insurance & Risk Coordinator, Environmental Health & Safety, will guide you through a practical, all-in-one overview of what you need to know when hosting youth events.

Key topics include:

- Steps to register your event with the Youth Compliance office
- How to obtain required parental/guardian consent
- Summer Camp Insurance
- Necessary background checks and youth protection trainings
- Additional safeguards and best practices

We will also discuss Florida's Child Abuse Reporting laws and the obligation to report suspected abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

UF is committed to providing enriching experiences for youth in both in-person and virtual settings. To uphold that commitment, event planners must understand their responsibilities. Attending this Learn over Lunch is a smart, proactive way to get a solid head start. Reserve your spot today.

When: Thursday, April 9, noon – 12:50

How to sign up: [Registration Link](#)

If you have any general questions about the Learn over Lunch, please contact Loren Israel at Loren.Israel@ufl.edu.

Fullbright Awareness Week



Fulbright Awareness Week | April 6-10, 2026

HOW TO WIN A FULBRIGHT



Greg Kiker
Professor and Graduate Coordinator, Chair UF/IFAS Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering
Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award
South Africa

Greg Kiker's work focuses on ecological modeling and the management of natural systems. His research has taken him from Florida's rivers and coasts to critical infrastructure in Texas and the savannas of Africa, where he studied elephant management in Kruger National Park. Although these places are very different, his research highlights a common challenge: managing valuable natural resources in uncertain environments.



Muthusami Kumar
Professor, Nonprofit Management & Community Organizations, IFAS Family, Youth and Community Sciences
Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award
South Korea

Muthusami Kumar's teaching, research & outreach roles at UF revolve around management capacity building for nonprofit organizations in the USA and NGOs in several countries. He serves on the Boards of three Florida nonprofits and two international NGOs. He has trained more than 3,000 nonprofit/NGO leaders in 8 countries worldwide.

Monday, April 6, 2026
12:30 – 2:00 pm
REGISTER: <https://go.ufl.edu/7099>

Registering for a session implies consent to be recorded. For additional information contact, please email at concordia@ufl.edu





Fulbright Awareness Week | April 6-10, 2026

FULBRIGHT VOICES: SCHOLARS PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Christopher J. Anthony
Associate Professor of School Psychology
Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award, Malta
See Malta and Learn to Live Intensely

Christopher J. Anthony research focuses on promoting children's positive development, particularly character, social skills, and academic competence. He uses advanced psychometric methods to improve the fairness and usefulness of educational assessments used with children in the United States and around the world. In 2024-2025, he received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to lead a national study of child well-being in Malta.



Mwansa Musape
Graduate Assistant, College of Design, Construction, and Planning
UF Visiting Fulbright Student, Zambia
Urban Peripheries in Transition: A Land Tenure Perspective from Zambia

Mwansa Musape is a Fulbright Student from Zambia and a four-year PhD candidate in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning in the College of Design, Construction, and Planning. Her research focuses on land tenure and housing conditions in rapidly changing peri-urban areas in Zambia, where customary and statutory land systems coexist. Her professional experience provides practical insight into planning policies and institutional dynamics that shape peri-urban land development and housing in rapidly urbanizing areas.

Wed. April 8, 2026
1:00 – 2:30 pm
REGISTER: <https://go.ufl.edu/4ovc9jn>

Registering for a session implies consent to be recorded. For additional information contact, please email at concordia@ufl.edu





Fulbright Awareness Week | April 6-10, 2026

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION



JEN MURRAY
Assistant Director for Outreach and Recruitment
Fulbright U.S. Scholars Program at EE

Before joining the Fulbright Scholars Program at EE, Jen served as Dean of International Studies at Bard College. She oversaw study abroad and student exchange programs, was services for international students and scholars, and a global scholarship program. She has been an active member of the Forum on Education Abroad and the Global Leadership League. In 2015, she received a Fulbright International Education Administrators award to the Republic of Korea.

THURSDAY
APRIL 9, 2026
12 – 1 PM
REGISTER AT
<https://go.ufl.edu/NV1996>

Registering for a session implies consent to be recorded. For additional information contact, please email at concordia@ufl.edu



Our Kickoff event will be **How to Win a Fulbright on Monday, April 6th**. It will feature Greg Kiker, Professor and Graduate Coordinator, Chair UF/IFAS Department

of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and Muthasami Kumuran, Professor, Nonprofit Management & Community Organizations, IFAS Family, Youth and Community Sciences.

Information on additional events is also included below.

For more information, contact Claire Anumba at canumba@ufic.ufl.edu

To register for each event, see below:

Monday, April 6, 2026 | 12:30 – 2:00 pm

How to Win a Fulbright

Featuring Greg Kiker and Muthasami Kumuran

REGISTER: <https://go.ufl.edu/ouj7059>

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 | 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Fulbright Voices: Scholars Perspectives on Education and Urban Development

Featuring Christopher J. Anthony and Mwansa Mwape

REGISTER: <https://go.ufl.edu/4cv1ejn>

Thursday, April 9, 2026 | 12 – 1 pm

Fulbright Scholar Program Information Session

Featuring Jen Murray

REGISTER: <https://go.ufl.edu/nviv995>

Students Thinking BIG



Join us for Students Thinking BIG, a two-day event bringing together student projects across the arts, humanities, science, engineering, technology, and business, creating a community-facing space that connects students, educators, families, and community members within Gainesville's innovation ecosystem. Hosted in partnership with the UF Engineering Innovation Institute's IGNITE, the UF Center for Arts, Migration, and Entrepreneurship (CAME), and the Cade Museum for Creativity & Invention.

STUDENT INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT NIGHT

Friday, April 10, 5:30 - 9:00pm at the Cade Museum

Student Innovation Spotlight Night is a high-energy, thesis-style event where student

founders and innovators share their ideas through rapid, engaging 3-minute presentations. The evening combines concise storytelling with appetizers, networking, and informal conversation, creating an environment that encourages connection among students, alumni, and community partners.

FRIDAY event landing page: <https://cademuseum.org/event/students-thinking-big/>

COMMUNITY INNOVATION DAY AT THE CADE **Saturday, April 11, 10:00am - 2:00pm**

Community Innovation Day is a free, family-friendly, open showcase where students share their work through creative exhibits, hands-on demonstrations, performances, and storytelling installations. The day invites the broader community to explore how students are thinking about real-world challenges and shaping ideas through design, invention, and creativity. This day is designed for audiences of all ages, encouraging curiosity, conversation, and discovery!

SATURDAY event landing page: <https://cademuseum.org/event/community-innovation-day/>

Free, not a ticketed event.

Last Call - Register now for Interface 2026



Get ready for Interface 2026 on April 28–29, 2026, at the Reitz Union Grand Ballroom! This year the University of Florida's flagship teaching and learning conference expands to two days with an additional pre-conference workshop session on April 27.

Pre-Conference

Prompted to Teach: Six AI Power Moves to Transform Your Teaching Event Details:

- Date: April 27, 2026
- Location: Public Safety Building, Gainesville, FL
- Time: 12:00pm –4:00pm
- Registration Cost (includes lunch): \$75

Day One: Teaching & Learning in Practice

Immerse yourself in evidence based, high impact teaching strategies designed to enhance engagement, and instructional design. Whether you're new to teaching or deeply experienced, Day 1 offers practical ideas you can implement right away.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Kate McConnell
Teaching Through the Tempest: Taking Risks, Finding Purpose, and Creating Joy Through Pedagogy in Challenging Times

Plenary Panel: The Art of Courageous Teaching

Day Two: Research in Teaching & Learning (RiTL)

Day two delves into the research side of pedagogy. UF's RiTL community will showcase scholarly work that investigates how students learn within and across disciplines. Participants will engage with frameworks such as the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), Teaching as Research (TAR), and Discipline-Based Education Research (DBER).

Keynote Panel: The Science of Inspired Teaching

Event Details:

- Date: April 28-29, 2026
- Location: Reitz Union Grand Ballroom, Gainesville, FL
- Time:
 - Day 1: 8:30am – 5:00pm
 - Day 2: 8:15am – 2:30pm
- Registration Cost: (includes breakfast and lunch)
 - UF Affiliated: FREE

Join us for one or both days to connect, collaborate, and contribute to the future of teaching and learning in higher education.

[Learn more on our website.](#)

[Register here for Interface 2026.](#)

Secrets of the Swamp

The “Bust in the Box” featured last week is a bronze likeness of [President John Tigert](#), UF's third and longest-serving president (1928-1947). It was displayed in Tigert and Emerson halls for many years. Little was known about its origin until last week, when **UF Archivist Sarah Coates** unearthed a 1955 *Alligator* article describing its creation by the wife of a UF biology professor identified only as “Mrs. Albert M. Laessle.”

Mrs. Laessle made the cast for the bust out of “French water clay” over the course of 11 live, two-hour sittings (!) with the then-retired Dr. Tigert, the article says. She planned similar busts of Albert Murphree, UF's second president, and J. Hillis Miller, its fourth, both deceased by 1955 — but if they were made, they have long since disappeared. She was a graduate of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the daughter-in-law of prominent American sculptor and animalier [Albert Laessle](#).

The article notes that the Laessle family's garden was adorned with a few of the elder Laessle's sculptures. If anyone knows their fate or has any knowledge of extant Murphree or Miller busts, get in touch. We would love to reveal more of this Secret of the Swamp. (No one correctly identified Dr. Tigert's bust).

Attic to Palace



When this discipline was new to UF, its students worked in a cramped attic (above). A century or so later, they're soon to have the run of UF's most striking new building. What's the discipline and the new building?

The first to email ahover@ufl.edu the correct answers wins the Provost's Pen and UF travel mug!

Share your thoughts or submit items by emailing the Provost Faculty Update staff.
Submitted imagery must adhere to ADA digital standards.

**The Office of the Provost
235 Tigert Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, Fla. 32611**

This email was sent by: University of Florida
PO Box 112099, Gainesville, Florida, 32611 United States