

A tall, grey stone tower with arched windows and decorative carvings, part of the University of Florida campus.


# UF ONLINE

UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA ONLINE

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-2017

A photograph of a large, historic brick building with multiple gables and arched windows, surrounded by trees and greenery.

*Presented to the UF Online Advisory Board*

A photograph of an alligator swimming in a body of water, with its head and back visible above the surface. The water is a vibrant blue-green color. The background is a soft-focus green landscape with a yellow and green checkered pattern at the top.

**“THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA** is a comprehensive learning institution built on a land-grant foundation. We are The Gator Nation, a diverse community dedicated to excellence in education and research and shaping a **BETTER FUTURE FOR FLORIDA, THE NATION AND THE WORLD.**

*Our mission is to enable our students to lead and influence the next generation and beyond for economic, cultural and societal benefit.*

**-UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA MISSION STATEMENT**

**UF** ONLINE  
UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA

# **UF ONLINE** **ANNUAL REPORT**

## ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-2017

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The background image shows a multi-story brick building with large glass windows. In the foreground, there is a large, yellow, geometric structure made of thick beams that crisscrosses the frame. The image has a warm, orange-yellow tint. At the top and bottom, there are decorative borders consisting of a grid of small squares in shades of yellow and orange.

*“Our online programs deliver*  
**THE SAME DEGREE**  
**AS OUR ON-CAMPUS**  
**COLLEGES”**



# MESSAGE FROM **THE DIRECTOR**

Welcome to our third annual report for the University of Florida's fully online undergraduate experience, UF Online. The successful launch of UF Online in 2014, the growth in online academic offerings, and the currently thriving online student body are all testaments to the strength of Gator innovation and the power of our students, staff, and faculty. We continue to transform the undergraduate experience, remaining focused on delivering strong, versatile, and valuable academic programs for our students within a thriving online learning community of faculty, staff, and students alike.

Our results this year continue to be strong and reflective of a growing demand across the higher education landscape for credible, rigorous, and engaging online post-secondary programs. Best of all, as our enrollments and programs expand, so do our faculty ranks and academic advisors; and we now celebrate over 950 graduates from UF Online. As we expand access to the state's flagship institution, we also shifted decision-making for costs over to the student, empowering them to decide what fees were right for them. This year, we launched the first-of-its-kind optional fee package that enables and empowers our students to customize their own costs and student experience. Lastly, we now welcome all students into their own virtual campus -- the UF Plaza, where students take the initiative to connect, share and form study groups, sometimes from across the country or around the world. A hallmark of this year has also been the advancements in labs for our online students in biology and physics. Faculty at UF are rethinking traditional approaches and limitations and the results are nothing short of awesome.

I am also proud that this University has been able to continue to expand offerings and programs all while undergoing a major transformation away from a private vendor. We emerge now on the other side in a much better position to serve students as one campus. Best of all, there was no pause in our services and we were able to continue to add majors and course offerings even as our enrollments increased another 30% over last year. The Gator Nation certainly rises to the occasion.

I invite you to read more about these accomplishments in the pages that follow. To pay homage to our fantastic students, in this year's annual report we wanted to share some of their stories in their own words. I hope these stories of our students inspire you as much as they inspire all of us here at UF Online. We are so grateful for the opportunity to serve these remarkable Gators.

Here's to another year at UF Online as we welcome, support, and celebrate the accomplishments of so many students, thanks to the remarkable faculty at this great institution.

Go Gators!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'E. Cummings'.

**Evangeline Tsibris Cummings**  
Assistant Provost & Director of UF Online

# INTRODUCTION

The University of Florida faculty are serving a growing number of fully online undergraduates with an ever-expanding list of majors, courses, and lab innovations. UF Online continues to grow in size and breadth. Below, we describe the UF Online model in place to guide that growth. We are pleased that UF Online continues to progress in accordance with our projections and the tenets of the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan.

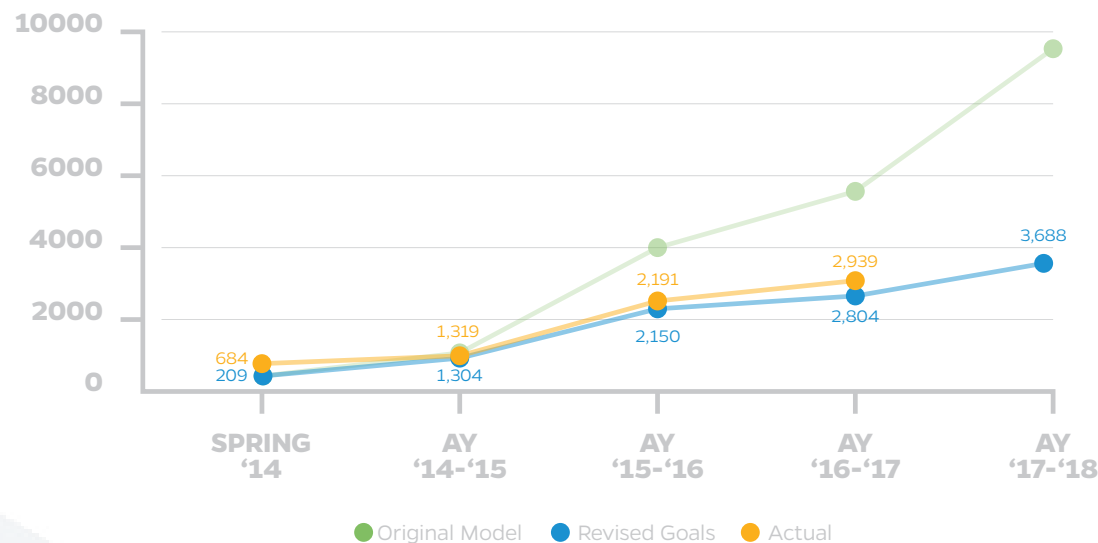
## PHASES OF GROWTH

This year, we continued to transition UF Online from a program dependent on a large private vendor to a program fully integrated into the University's operations with a robust set of campus services and teams, all working to support UF Online students. We describe UF Online's path in terms of our three phases. First, UF Online's initial launch from 2013-2015 with the aid of a large, private vendor. UF

Online's second phase, "Excellence in all Operations to Ensure Sound Growth" began midway through 2015 as the University began work to integrate all major program functions back into University hands. We are now firmly in UF Online's second phase (2015- 2018) given our transformation of operations and services, our continued growth, and maturation of services. This past year (July 2016-June 2017), we successfully completed our transition away from our previous vendor and now have completely in-house functions serving students within a thriving online learning community. We have also focused this past year on the growth of our academic programs and advisors, our marketing reach, our online STEM academic innovations, and serving our expanded student body with an adaptive and engaging online student experience, all while maintaining our quality and affordability. Our goal as we complete this second phase by mid-2018, is to position the University to fuel our continued expansion of academic programs and student services.

## UF ONLINE STUDENT HEADCOUNT: STEADY PROGRESS IN EXPANDING ACCESS TO UF

A comparison of the original projections, UF Online's Revised Goals, and UF Online Headcount Actuals



UF Online is exceeding the revised projections and with a healthy, increasing revenue flow from tuition.

Indicated by the yellow metric in the graph, AY2016-17 headcount grew 34% over the prior year, and tuition grew by 18% over the prior year.



## **THE UF ONLINE MODEL:** *A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL VIEW OF VALUE FOR OUR STUDENTS*

In the near term, we are utilizing a model of growth that balances the need for steady and methodical organizational design with the need to deliver bold academic innovation and offerings for students right now. This past year, as UF Online has completed its transition away from its previous, private vendor, UF has established a rich organizational framework for online undergraduate learning, fully supported by on campus, in-house University teams and networks. This organizational framework has all been designed and built with the value of UF Online in mind. That is, each team and functional area all contribute value to our common purpose as a program: student academic achievement. By looking at our organizational design through this lens of impact we are able to build what we need, but also maintain a steady focus on outcomes and impact of those functions. As a result, UF Online strives to remain nimble as an organization and as a set of connected functions. As we continue to expand and evolve, we will continually improve to ensure we give full attention to the dimensions that drive student academic achievement within UF Online. Laid out below,

we articulate seven (7) separate dimensions that frame the UF Online Model. In our view, these are the seven dimensions of the University of Florida that drive online student academic achievement online and on campus. Many of these concepts are universal components of any educational enterprise, and they are our focus here in UF Online as we serve a growing population of students in earning their bachelor's degree through an online modality.

Taking a multidimensional view to driving student academic achievement in the online realm will enable UF Online to boost progress in each discrete area to achieve an overall amplifying affect for each student. Taken together, all seven of these dimensions contribute to drive UF Online students to excel. In order to realize success in each of these seven areas, underpinning all of these dimensions, our core management tenets from our business plan propel us forward: boosting revenue, cutting costs, investing and leveraging partnerships. These frameworks form the UF Online Model that will guide our work into the future.

# A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MISSION THAT CUTS ACROSS ORGANIZATIONAL TEAMS

We now have core leadership roles and teams in the following areas: (1) Administration, Operations and Infrastructure, (2) Marketing and Communications, (3) Recruitment and Enrollment Management Services, (4) Academic Advising and Curriculum, (5) Course Innovation and Production, and (6) Student Success and Engagement. Most significantly, UF now has the advantage of newly realized synergies and collaborations that may occur across these functions given that all staff members work in-house. This affords the opportunity for seamless in-house communication and information sharing. For instance, planning for course production can be informed directly by academic advising.

In addition, feedback flows directly to course production from recruitment and marketing channels. In another example, the new student success and engagement team is able to rely upon UF Online's marketing and communications experts to amplify notification of events and opportunities for current students. At the same time, the marketing team's outreach to prospective students ensures that they see UF Online's unparalleled approach to student engagement as they determine whether UF Online is a good fit for them.

Fundamentally, all in-house functions rely on the same data infrastructure, enabling UF Online analytic and outreach capability that has not been possible until this point. As we move forward, we will grow, learn, and continually fortify these fundamental business lines to best serve our students and faculty. It is important to note, however, that although distinct leadership now exists in each area, our goal is for the organization to remain quite flat and matrixed to ensure collaboration and data sharing across each team.



**"I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED MY EXPERIENCE IN THE PACE PROGRAM.**

*The faculty and staff of the program were always so uplifting and positive. They made it known that there were **NO LIMITATIONS TO MY GROWTH, EDUCATION AND POTENTIAL IN BEING A GATOR.**"*

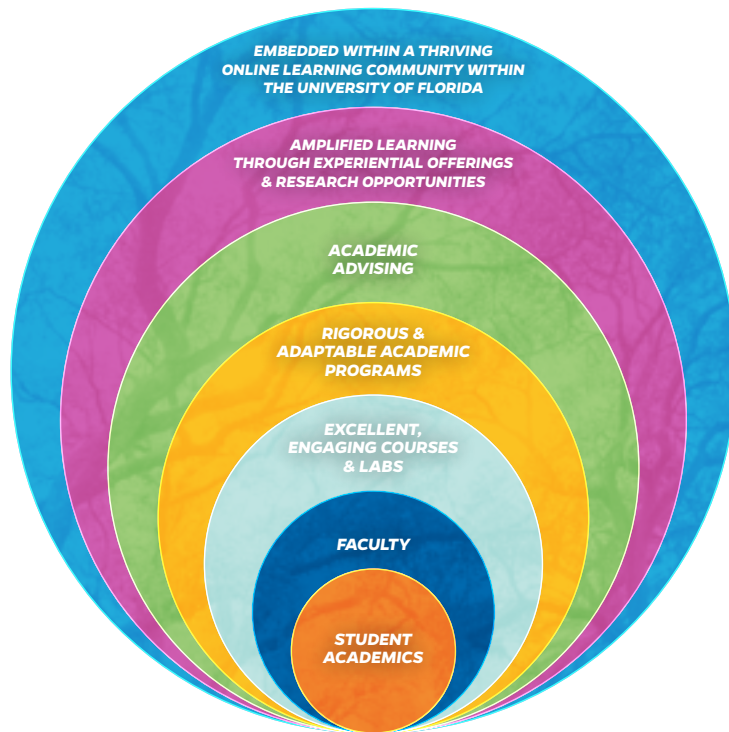
**- ALEXANDRA MELENDI**  
(PUBLIC RELATIONS MAJOR)



# SEVEN DIMENSIONS THAT FUEL STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS



View 1: The UF Online Model: Seven Cumulative Impacts that Flow toward UF Online Student Academic Achievement



View 2: Nested Relationships of the Seven Dimensions of UF Online Student Academic Achievement all supported by the four management tenets from the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan

## REMAINING AGILE, CONTINUALLY IMPROVING THROUGH 2017 & BEYOND

Each dimension represents an area that contributes value to our students. Furthermore, the success of each area may be supported and fueled by multiple organizational units – faculty and staff cut across colleges and service lines – yet all rely on core data and analytics stemming from our data infrastructure for the benefit of many units across campus. If we build this slowly and thoughtfully, this integrated model will serve our students best, but we must work extensively to further define these dimensions in terms of goals, strategies, and tactics. As with any approach, this one will improve over time and must fundamentally remain flexible and agile to ensure UF Online remains focused on the greatest value areas for students, not entrenched organizational silos. We will spend considerable time in our next business phase to ensure dedicated strategies and supportive frameworks for each of these seven dimensions. Looking ahead, taking this multi-dimensional approach enables the organization to maintain focus on programs with the greatest benefits for our students along these seven dimensions instead of working exclusively on fortifying new organizational units and budgets.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR RESULTS 2016-17

A great, multi-dimensional vision that drives toward student academic achievement is only a vision unless it is broken into real, concrete actions and programs, which achieve incremental change through strategic management and resource allocation year after year. Summarized below are just a few highlights of UF Online's remarkable achievements in the past year, organized by each dimension:

## STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- We served nearly 3,000 students in 16 majors that include over 23 pathways to a degree.
- UF Online student figures continue to grow, with overall enrollment up 34% over the prior year.
- Student admissions selectivity has begun to climb with only 40% of applicants admitted in AY16.
- Most impressively, UF Online students are graduating and completing their degrees. Through the end of summer 2017, UF Online celebrated a total of over 950 graduates from twelve majors in six colleges.

## FACULTY LEADERS & MENTORS

- Over 360 UF faculty across 67 departments and 13 colleges continue to conduct all teaching and course design, ensuring all online students receive academic offerings of the same rigor as campus offerings.
- This year, the number of UF instructors teaching in UF Online increased by 24% with these faculty teaching 28% more courses online this year than last year.
- UF faculty have been the recipients of awards and other recognition for their online teaching efforts.



## COURSEWORK & LABS

- UF faculty developed over 50 new courses within UF Online last year for delivery in the same year, working in partnership with UF Online-funded instructional designers.
- UF faculty led the way in STEM this year, with a brand new Evolutionary Biology lab in UF Online, launched in Fall 2016 to very positive student reviews.
- UF physics faculty have also pioneered two separate physics labs for online students based on new, custom-designed at-home physics kits that were shipped out to online students to complement their online, interactive classroom experience with their instructor.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & PATHWAYS

- In fall 2016, UF's College of Journalism and Communications launched a fully online degree in Public Relations for the very first time, with admitted students tripling in fall 2017.
- In spring 2017, UF's College of Business also launched eight new online academic pathways for students into a Business Administration degree, more than doubling the options available to students seeking a degree via the popular UF Online business programs.



- Work is underway now to plan for and begin the work necessary to bring on additional high demand courses and future degrees.

## ACADEMIC ADVISING

- This past year, UF Online expanded the number of academic advisors to 13 full-time staff members.
- To guide our investments going forward, UF Online also established a minimum ratio of advisors to UF Online students of 1:250 across all colleges. UF Online intends to continue to increase our investment in academic advising with the goal of lowering this ratio even further.
- As of July 1, 2017, UF Online aims to double the outlay of revenue funds for college use in ensuring a robust network of academic advisors serving UF Online students.

## AMPLIFIED LEARNING PROGRAMS

- This past year, UF Online students completed internships, senior capstone projects, and undergraduate research projects. In just one example, last year UF Online graduated a biology major that was able to conduct independent research one-on-one with a UF Preeminent faculty member in the Biology Department, all done remotely. This current year, many

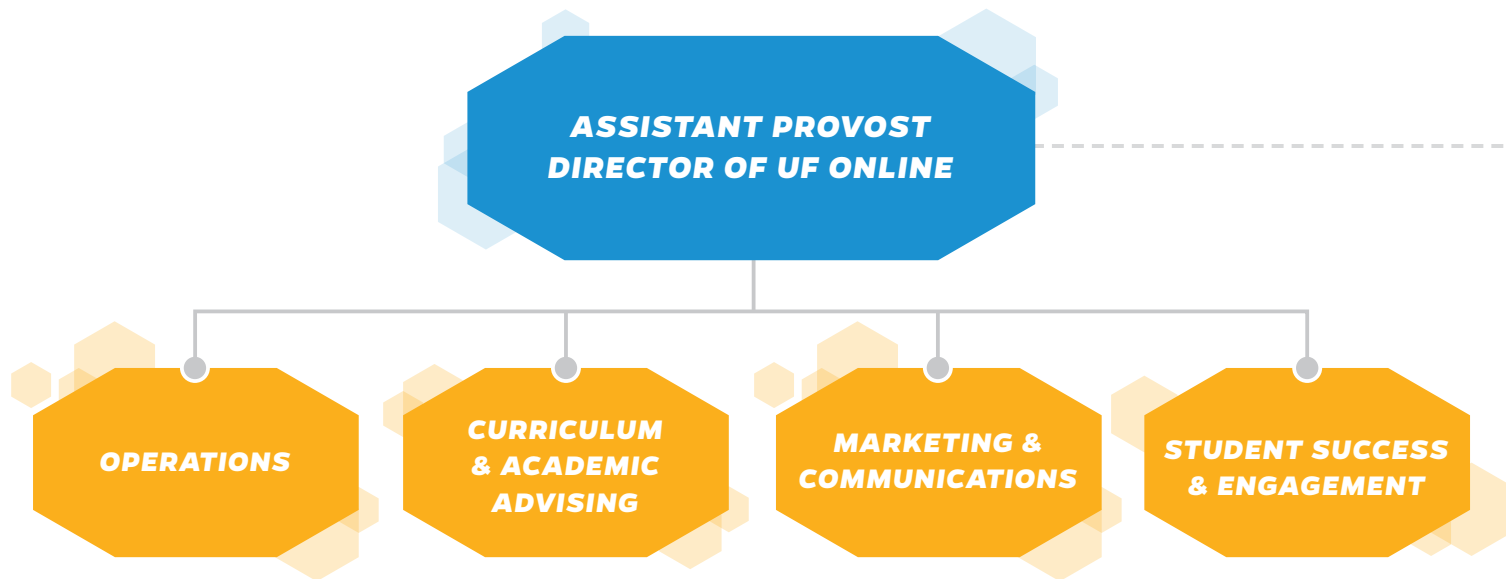
more UF Online students are participating in undergraduate research projects with UF faculty, regardless of their location.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY

- As we work to fortify a strong, thriving, and engaged learning community, UF Online was pleased to launch the country's first fully online campus for online undergraduates -- the UF Online Plaza. Following a pilot launch, UF Online completed the full launch of our virtual campus for all students in May 2017. Over 2,800 students now enjoy the UF Plaza as a thriving learning community where students can connect, share, or just reach out to their peers and form a study group.
- To increase access for our students to campus activities and services and to boost the engagement of our students with our entire campus community, we launched the Optional Fee Package for all UF Online students in 2016. This option was well-received and we have seen a significant increase in its usage by students. This Optional Fee Package keeps costs low for students that do not intend to frequent Gainesville and therefore need not pay for the local campus services.
- To further our commitment to student academic achievement, this year we established a new team dedicated to Student Success and Engagement that supports the UF Online Plaza virtually but also convenes events around the state to connect our online Gators face to face. UF Online held its first Homecoming Tailgate event in Gainesville in October 2016, our first graduation reception in April 2017, and our first PaCE Day at UF Coral Gables in May 2017, just to name a few.

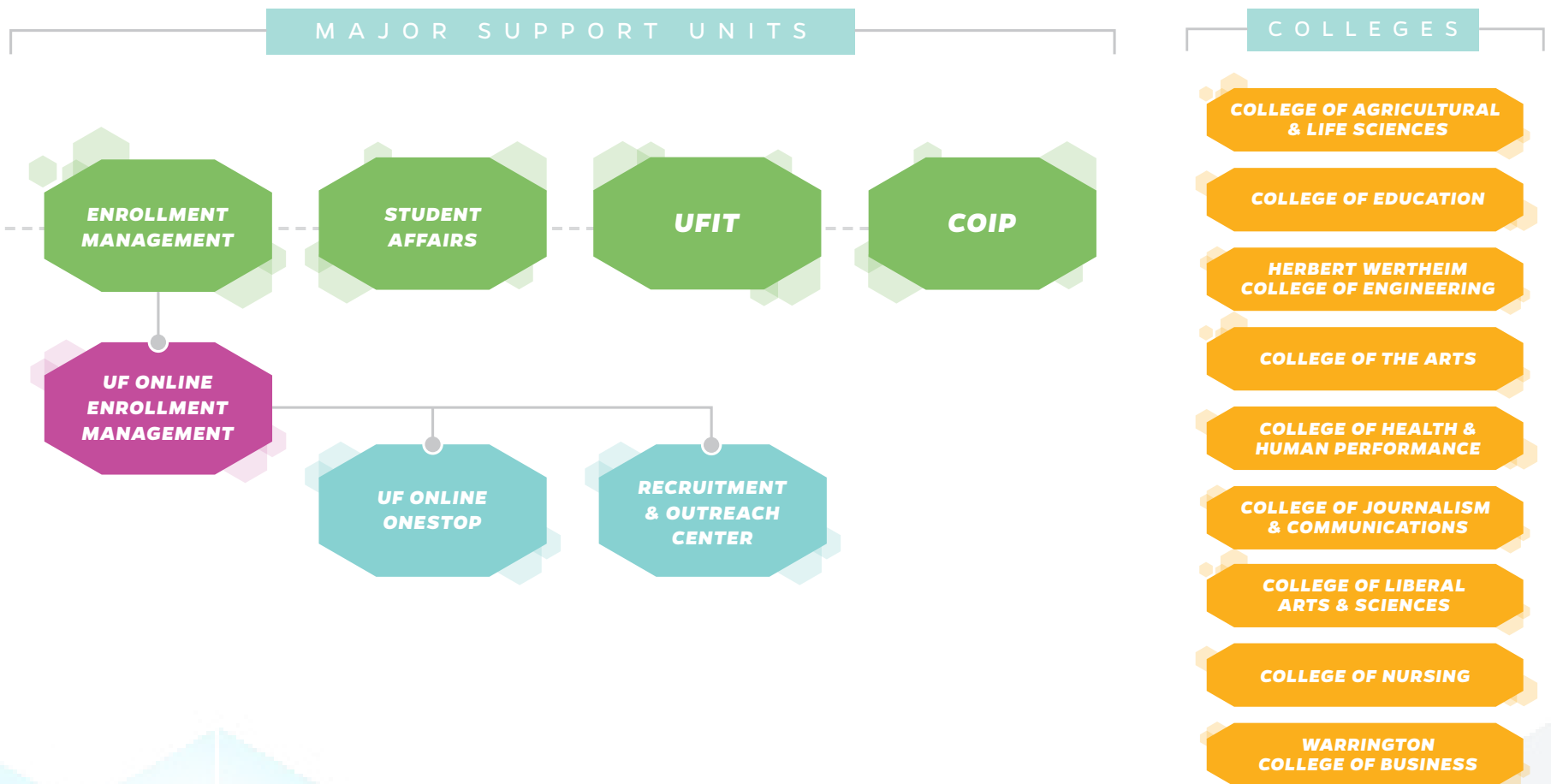
# CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL **STRUCTURE**

The UF Online program is a network of faculty, staff, and administrators across the entire campus, all focused on delivering online programs and serving this entirely new online student body. UF Online has continued to expand its in-house, central staff to take on functions previously occupied by external vendors. Most notably, our marketing and communications team has grown from one staff member to three full-time employees and three student assistants. UF Online has also now created an entirely new functional team focused on Student Success and Engagement. Furthermore, UF Online has merged its course production team with graduate online course production to form the new Center for Online Innovation and Production. In doing so, UF Online realized savings in cost production previously done by a separate unit within UF IT support. By reorganizing its course production needs and by merging the undergraduate function with graduate online production, UF is now much better positioned and faculty are better served with a central unit of experts supporting online course production.



*"I am just really fortunate that I was able*  
**TO COMPLETE MY DEGREE**  
*with Florida."*

- ADRIANA LEON  
(UF ONLINE ANTHROPOLOGY GRAD & PRO SOCCER PLAYER)



# ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & CURRICULUM DELIVERY

This year, UF Online offered fully online majors, minors and certificates and continued the PaCE program. The table below reflects the academic programs (majors, minors, and certificates) currently active in UF Online. We were pleased to expand our offerings in AY2016-17 through the addition of a new Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with eight distinct specializations, presenting one new degree but eight new pathways for UF Online students to choose from. In addition, this past academic year, UF Online made available six additional, fully online certificates for our degree-seeking UF Online students.

## UF ONLINE PROGRAMS

Majors	Minors	Certificates
<b>Offerings in Fall 2016</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. B.A., Anthropology</li> <li>2. B.A., Biology</li> <li>3. B.S., Business Administration</li> <li>4. B.S., Computer Science</li> <li>5. B.A., Criminology</li> <li>6. B.S., Environmental Management</li> <li>7. B.A., Geography</li> <li>8. B.A., Geology</li> <li>9. B.S., Health Education &amp; Behavior</li> <li>10. B.S.N., Nursing</li> <li>11. B.A., Psychology</li> <li>12. B.A., Public Relations</li> <li>13. B.A., Sociology</li> <li>14. B.S., Sport Management</li> <li>15. B.S., Telecommunication Media &amp; Society</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anthropology</li> <li>2. Business</li> <li>3. Geography</li> <li>4. Mass Communication</li> <li>5. Sociology</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Environmental Horticulture Management</li> <li>2. Geomatics</li> <li>3. Landscape Pest Management</li> <li>4. Medical Entomology</li> <li>5. Pest Control Technology</li> <li>6. Urban Pest Management</li> </ol>
<b>Eight (8) Academic Pathways were added in spring 2017</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. B.A., Business Administration, with eight specialization pathways:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Anthropology</li> <li>b. Computer &amp; Information Science</li> <li>c. Criminology</li> <li>d. Economic Geography</li> <li>e. Educational Studies</li> <li>f. Geology</li> <li>g. Sociology</li> <li>h. Sport Management</li> </ol> </li> </ol>		



Starting in fall 2015, the University of Florida launched the PaCE program to welcome First Time In College (FTIC) students into a new, hybrid program. These PaCE students complete the first part of their degree online and later may transition to campus at the upper division level without having to reapply. The University has seen growth in PaCE and the 50+ majors included in the program. This year, we welcomed a record number of PaCE students into the majors below that include a new suite of offerings in the Arts. The table below contains the list of majors included in the PaCE program as of September 2017. This list is maintained online at: <http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/learn/pace/majors>.

## PaCE PROGRAM MAJORS

<b>College of Agricultural &amp; Life Sciences (18)</b>		<b>Warrington College of Business Administration (1)</b>	
1. Agricultural Education and Communication <i>Tracks include Communication and Leadership Development and Agricultural Education</i>	12. Forest Resources and Conservation <i>Tracks include Environmental Pre-Law, Forest Business Management, Forest Resource Management, Protected Areas Management, Recreation Resources Management, Urban Forestry and Watershed Science and Management</i>	27. General Studies (BABA)	
2. Agricultural Operations Management		<b>College of Design, Construction &amp; Planning (1)</b>	
3. Animal Sciences <i>Tracks include Equine and Food Animal</i>		28. Sustainability and the Built Environment	
4. Botany, General Botany	13. Horticultural Science <i>Tracks include Horticultural Production, Horticultural Science, Organic Crop Production and Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology</i>	<b>College of Health &amp; Human Performance (3)</b>	
5. Dietetics		29. Health Education and Behavior	31. Tourism, Events and Recreation Management
6. Entomology and Nematology <i>Tracks include Basic Science, Biosecurity, Ecotourism, Plant Protection and Urban Pest Management</i>	14. Microbiology and Cell Science	30. Sports Management	
7. Environmental Management in Agriculture and Natural Resources	15. Natural Resource Conservation	<b>College of Journalism &amp; Communications (4)</b>	
8. Environmental Science (BA)	16. Nutritional Sciences	32. Advertising	34. Public Relations
9. Family, Youth and Community Sciences	17. Plant Science <i>Tracks include Community Food Systems, Crop Ecology, Garden Design and Management, Landscape and Nursery Horticulture, Plant Genetics, Plant Health, Restoration Horticulture and Sustainable Food Production</i>	33. Journalism	35. Telecommunications
10. Food and Resource Economics <i>Tracks include Food and Agribusiness Marketing and Management or International Food and Resource Economics</i>	18. Wildlife Ecology and Conservation <i>Tracks include Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Specialization</i>	<b>College of Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences (17)</b>	
11. Food Science		36. African American Studies	45. Mathematics
<b>College of the Arts (8)</b>		37. Anthropology	46. Philosophy
19. Art	23. Visual Art Studies	38. Computer Science	47. Religion
20. Art History	24. Music	39. English	48. Sociology
21. General Theatre	25. Music Education	40. Exploratory	49. Spanish
22. Art Education	26. Dance	41. Geography	50. Statistics
		42. Geology (BS)	51. Sustainability Studies
		43. History	52. Women's Studies
		44. Linguistics	

# DELIVERY OF CURRICULUM

To serve students in the many majors noted above, UF Online focuses on ensuring the regular delivery of rigorous and engaging courses. We were also pleased to increase our course offerings this year by 28% all while going through a vendor transition plus an internal strategic management shift in our handling of course production detailed in the next section.

The table to the right details the continued expansion of offerings by UF faculty to serve the growing number of UF Online students. The table displays the number of unique courses, sections, and instructors for each term with subtotals for each academic year. (Note that the subtotals and totals for courses and instructors are not simple sums but rather the count of distinct courses and instructors for the given time frame.)

## UF ONLINE CURRICULUM MAPS

To guide the delivery of these many courses and sections, UF Online continues to refine processes and workflows to ensure a robust curriculum and that efforts on course production are expended on the most impactful priorities. Each faculty request for course development or course update is evaluated based on the needs of the student and program to make certain that course production resources are being applied where they are most needed.

This past year, UF Online launched a new service provided to UF colleges to guide the growth of their programs and help faculty plan for growth. These curriculum maps are infused with these key elements: for each degree, which pathways are possible, with which courses, with what capacity and offered at what frequency. These maps are developed closely with UF Online's course production team and the campus-wide academic advising group. Curriculum Mapping alleviates pressure on

Term	Courses	Sections	Instructors
Spring 2014	76	77	78
AY 2013-2014	76	77	78
Summer 2014 A	16	16	20
Summer 2014 B	16	16	21
Summer 2014 C	25	32	31
Fall 2014	90	103	85
Spring 2015	109	110	98
AY 2014-2015	159	277	162
Summer 2015 A	16	17	19
Summer 2015 B	32	33	31
Summer 2015 C	30	42	40
Fall 2015	169	174	172
Spring 2016	188	192	198
AY 2015-2016	260	458	297
AY YOY Growth	64%	65%	83%
Summer 2016 A	27	27	27
Summer 2016 B	37	38	37
Summer 2016 C	61	75	72
Fall 2016	223	232	232
Spring 2017	236	253	233
AY 2016-2017	334	625	368
AY YOY Growth	28%	36%	24%
Total	360	1437	520



departments, which are managing significant needs of faculty members while delivering ambitious campus teaching schedules and rotations. These UF Online curriculum maps also assist departments in their own review and analysis of their online course offerings to establish ideal course sequencing, capacity planning, and development, all mindful of faculty effort and research project planning needs. Provided at no cost to departments, UF Online's curriculum maps are ultimately owned by the chair of each department but are used within UF Online to allocate resources. Each curriculum map is also synced with maps for supporting course

offerings, optional electives and general education requirements. These maps provide UF Online Academic Advisors with pathways that may then be tailored to each student's individual needs. Through these Curriculum Maps, UF Online is also able to ensure appropriate capacity planning and course enhancements needs well into the future. Finally, curriculum maps will improve our marketing and communication efforts to prospective students on UF Online course offerings that may suit their academic interests.

**"MY ONLINE EXPERIENCE WITH UF ONLINE**  
*was precisely what I had anticipated: hard work and proper*  
*training and preparation to ensure*  
**I WAS READY TO SUCCEED IN LAW SCHOOL."**

**- BRANDON SALTER**  
(CRIMINOLOGY MAJOR)



# COURSE INNOVATION & PRODUCTION

As we focus on the needs of faculty and continue to support them in the delivery of premier online learning, the University of Florida launched the Center for Online Innovation and Production (COIP) on July 1, 2017 to provide all course production and support for UF Online courses and graduate online courses. This new unit consists of new hires funded by UF Online for course production and faculty support, as well as resources that have been reorganized and centralized to better serve the University overall. The goal of COIP is to form collaborative partnerships with faculty to ensure that courses developed for UF Online, and other online programs at UF, provide a dynamic and engaging learning experience for students, and that faculty are able to sustain their innovation and high quality offerings over time. Using sound pedagogy and multimedia expertise, COIP provides services from conception through production, and support for UF Online courses throughout the life of the course.

## A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Faculty members are required to complete training in online teaching or on how to use online teaching tools. They also have access to IT Help Desk services in addition to working with instructional designers during course production. But there is a gap between these resources when it comes to providing real-time critical support throughout the teaching of the course. This support is as critical to successful course delivery as the initial course design. To address this issue, part of COIP's new structure involves the creation of a support team of instructional designers dedicated solely to the ongoing support of faculty and their UF Online courses. Since these instructional designers are part of the course production process, they know the courses intimately and are in a strong position to provide assistance and guidance quickly in response to the needs of the faculty. In addition to lending just-in-time support, they also provide course



refresh and update services while identifying opportunities for innovation. The intent is for faculty to feel supported throughout the life cycle of their course. Our goal is to create, sustain, and improve their courses over time. The development of this team was made possible through a shift in funding in the UF Online funding model, thereby saving money that can be reallocated to the course as it evolves, not only during the initial production process.

## STEM LEADERSHIP

The challenges in online course delivery of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) courses largely center on meeting the skill practice and content application requirements necessary to produce rigorous STEM labs, as well as devising innovative methods in delivering quality laboratory experiences to online learners. By having a team with a focus on STEM, we are in a position to collaborate with faculty across disciplines and share positive results and discoveries as we work to develop solutions for barriers unique to STEM education for online learners. To this end, UF Online has chosen to give deliberate and dedicated attention to STEM by creating a team comprised of four instructional designers with STEM backgrounds.



## UF FACULTY LEADERSHIP IN STEM: PHYSICS & BIOLOGY

### Innovations in Physics I and Lab (PHY2053, PHY2053L) and Physics II and Lab (PHY2054, PHY2054L)

- **PHY 2053L: Developed Fall 2016, Piloted Spring 2017, finalized and relaunched Summer 2017**
- **PHY 2054: Developed Spring 2017, Piloted Fall 2017**

Physics I and Physics II are requirements for many non-majors in UF Online. In an effort to overcome the challenges of offering physics labs to online students, UF Online completely funded the UF Physics Department's recruitment and hiring of a highly-qualified lecturer and curriculum developer with experience and practice in online STEM education to focus on online Physics course development and delivery. The use of the newly invented IOLab combined with custom-sourced and assembled experiment materials kits that were shipped to students enables them to collect, communicate, and analyze authentic data as part of UF-developed lab experiments conducted in their homes. The Physics lecture course and lab were designed simultaneously to complement each other and provide a comprehensive learning experience.

The instructor presented PHY2053L and its use of the IOLab at the American Association of Physics Teachers conference in July 2017. IOLab is a handheld data-gathering device that communicates wirelessly to its software, and gives students a unique opportunity to see the concepts of physics in action. UF Online was one of only two universities in the country to author and deliver Physics I laboratories fully online using this remote sensing device.

### Biology, ZOO3603C: Virtual Lab Custom Co-Development Pilot, successful launch Spring 2017

Evolutionary Developmental Biology is an upper division elective course for Biology and related majors. UF Online instructional designers now housed in the Center for Online Innovation and Production, worked with faculty and a vendor to develop laboratory simulations for students on:

- Discovering genes responsible for patterning a vertebrate limb
- The power of *C. elegans* in human gene discovery
- Investigation of regenerative capabilities

In the case of this course, simulated laboratories allow students to experience content with a greater depth than face-to-face students. These custom-built simulated environments allowed UF faculty to develop experiments that used dangerous chemicals and expensive equipment that residential students could never experience. The ability to speed up time and make mistakes allows biology students the opportunity to run multiple trials and collect data to an extent not possible in on-campus labs.

ZOO3603c received the UF 2017 Online Education Excellence Award from UF for its innovative approach to online teaching and currently has IRB approval to conduct a research study comparing learning outcomes of the online versus residential version of the course. These online laboratories are now being used in both online and residential courses.

## COURSE INNOVATION & PRODUCTION: LOOKING AHEAD

Keeping abreast of innovations, trends, and challenges in the realm of online course delivery will be the focus in the coming year, as we actively assess past development work and refresh content. We will also work to identify multimedia opportunities that solve problems and enhance the student learning experience. Some highlights of our initiatives for the year will include:

- Revisit ZOO3603c, PHY2053, PHY2054 to reflect feedback from students
- Develop PHY2048 (Physics with Calculus 1) and PHY2049 (Physics with Calculus 2)
- Develop online lab skills course to prepare students for cross-disciplinary laboratory courses
- Develop and standardize processes for providing hands-on teaching and learning materials at the lowest cost to students
- Review and evaluate 200+ existing courses to identify gaps and refresh opportunities
- Establish protocols/guidance for faculty to follow as they refresh and maintain their courses each semester
- Work to identify additional tools and multimedia approaches that put more control and power in the hands of faculty
- Participate in studies of the courses we produce to determine efficacy
- Identify faculty ready to engage in higher level multimedia engagement for their courses and work with them to deliver their content in a more engaging manner

A photograph of a tall, ornate brick tower, likely the University of Florida's Old Union Hall, set against a clear blue sky. The tower has multiple levels with arched windows and decorative stonework. In the foreground, there are green trees and a fence.

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IS  
**RANKED**  
**TOP**  
**10**  
**NATIONALLY**  
AMONG PUBLIC RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITIES

\*by U.S. News & World Report

# ACADEMIC ADVISING

The academic advising community continues to build upon its solid foundation and maintain its commitment to the original pillars of success established for the program.

## ASSIGNED ADVISOR MODEL

Each UF Online student is assigned an advisor based on their major. The student will work with the same advisor as long as they remain in their major. This consistency allows for strong bonds to be formed; students often feel like they have found their personal UF Online guide to assist them in navigating their educational journey. Advisors have the opportunity to learn about each student's values, interests, and goals as well as their personal and professional commitments. After evaluating each student's current situation, the advisor and student work together to develop a personalized academic plan.

## SMALL STUDENT TO ADVISOR RATIO

UF Online has continued to maintain the desired 250:1 student to advisor ratio. UF Online delivers advising dollars to each college to maintain this ideal number. Maintaining the 250:1 ratio allows advisors to spend more time with each student and reduces the amount of time students need to wait for an appointment or response from an e-mail question. This UF Online ratio is consistent with the recommendations of the Global Community for Academic Advising (NACADA) and provides a smaller student to advisor ratio than what is found in UF's residential programs.

## ACCESSIBILITY

UF Online academic advisors continue to find ways to be available for the mostly non-traditional students they serve. Successful techniques include offering appointments during lunch hours and outside the 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. working hours, being available to "chat" in the secure Skype for Office environment, responding to e-mails in a timely manner, and making face-to-face sessions an option for those choosing to visit in person.

## CONTINUOUS SUPPORT FROM ADMISSION TO GRADUATION

Once students are informed of their admission to UF Online, their first point of contact is usually their academic advisor. The initial conversation includes a transcript

evaluation explaining to the student how any previous coursework will apply to their degree. Then, a general timeline is established based on the student's individual goals and commitment level. Finally, a first semester course plan is developed. These conversations continue as often as needed, but usually no less than once per term until the student graduates.

## LIVE PROGRAMS FOR NEW STUDENTS

Academic advisors are heavily involved in the live PaCE Preview and College of Business New Student Welcome Program. The PaCE Preview is mandatory for all newly admitted PaCE students who confirm their admission. This consists of a full day of informational sessions followed by one-on-one sessions with an advisor and concluding with first semester registration. This highly successful program resulted in 98% of confirmed PaCE students attending and registering for classes during one of the three available summer sessions. The College of Business offers an optional live New Student Welcome Program during which program-specific information is shared and group advising and registration occurs. The program also allows online students to meet others who will be participating in the same program who may also be from the same geographical location. Many phone numbers are exchanged and study groups formed during this live interactive event.

## REGULAR COMMUNICATION & MEETINGS FOR ALL UF ONLINE ADVISORS

Bi-weekly meetings are held to update all UF Online Academic Advisors on current policy changes, course availability, new programs, best practices, and any other information that will assist them in advising their students. Guest speakers are often invited to present on timely and relevant issues for the online advising community. In addition, a UF Online Dashboard that includes updates and relevant information is available as a resource for all advisors and administrators as well as a UF Online Advisors Listserv. These resources have helped solidify the UF Online advising community and assures its members are among the most educated and informed professionals on campus.

# STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT

This past year, UF Online has focused on enhancements to the online student experience. The University supports every student as they pursue and realize their academic goals and will continue to expand its support and engagement for our growing online student community. UF Online cultivates student success by promoting an individualized approach to fulfill each student's specific needs, motivations, and goals. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the Student Success & Engagement team focused on fostering a positive student experience for all online students through engagement, community and connection events.

## LAUNCH OF THE UF ONLINE VIRTUAL CAMPUS: UF PLAZA

Following an extensive design and build process by UF Online's in-house Salesforce lead, UF Online's virtual campus community, the UF Plaza, launched in the Fall term of 2016 as a beta-launch with students in the UF Online business major. Following a successful beta-launch, in Spring 2017, students from thirteen additional UF Online majors were granted access to the Plaza. All remaining majors were added by the end of Spring 2017. The key tenets of our virtual community (the Plaza) are:

- Academic engagement through intentional groups
- Social Engagement through connection events & student-created groups
- A secure space for peer connections
- Peer collaborative learning
- Sharing of resources
- Support & Encouragement
- Community

The Plaza functions by meeting students where they are with focused resources, engagement opportunities, interactions, and community. The Plaza operates to both assist and augment advisors, staff, and faculty to tailor the student's academic experience to fulfill their specific needs, motivations and goals that will ultimately lead to their academic success. To fully influence and amplify both the students' and the advisors' experiences and interactions, presentations to students and trainings for advisors and faculty on how to use and get the most from the Plaza were implemented in Spring 2017.

The structure of the Plaza allows for groupings of students both as assigned groups and as organic, student-created groups. Assigned groups based on major are led by advisors and promote academic engagement through interactions with advisors, faculty, and peers. Including campus stakeholders and the student advisory committee from the ground up facilitated the continuing improvement and evolution of the Plaza. The intent of the Plaza is for it to act as the overarching community and bring engagement and education beyond the classroom to each online student. This will continue by providing UF Online students the means to both participate in high-impact academic and social engagement activities as well as a place to find support and encourage each other.





## UF ONLINE CONNECTIONS PROGRAM: COMMUNITY, CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATION

Launched in 2017, the UF Online Connections Program works to foster a thriving learning community across all online students, faculty, academic advisors, and staff. Coupled with strong academic programs, a vibrant and engaged online student experience assures UF Online students not only gain the skills they need but also the connections and network to support them after they graduate. This past year, the Connections program emphasized providing community and networking opportunities with key strategic in-person events. Themes and highlights of UF Online student engagement events include:

- *Celebrating UF Traditions* with online students: UF Online's Homecoming event for online students and their friends and families.
- *We Come to You* help sessions: For the first time, in March 2017, UF provided a local site visit in Coral Gables, FL to answer questions about PaCE and help students and their families to make an informed decision.
- *Celebrating our Graduates*: UF Online graduation celebration held in May 2017 welcomed over 140 UF Online students in their caps and gowns, along with their families, in UF's famed "F Club" right near the Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. UF Online students were invited over, with close proximity to the university's main graduation events, for a special reception in their honor. Many brought loved ones including their children to the reception and enjoyed the complimentary official photos of them and their families in their UF graduation regalia. Best of all, online students mingled in person with their faculty and academic advisors, sometimes, for the very first time.

## PARTNERSHIPS

As UF Online works to serve online students, we collaborate and join with existing student activities and events whenever possible. This past year, UF Online collaborated with the CALS/MCB department to facilitate working dinners during their on-campus Lab Bootcamps. UF Online introduced students to the Plaza and sought feedback on resources they needed and hoped to see in the virtual campus. Based on student responses, the collaboration with the Career Resource Center was strengthened, as evidenced by the development of Virtual Career Fairs and Career workshops. This helped to keep all UF Online students informed of the Career Resource Center's virtual resources. UF Online also partnered with UF Admissions to engage high school guidance counselors at the High School Guidance Counselor Breakfasts (September 2016) and with prospective students and their families at the campus admissions welcome events for admitted students and their families, Florida Days (May 2017). Florida Days are campus-wide events that welcome newly admitted students to campus to learn more about UF as they make their final enrollment decisions. Presentations at Florida Days by UF Online staff helped to better inform students and their families about UF Online and the PaCE Program.

### **"ANY OF MY SUCCESSES FROM HERE ON OUT, I OWE TO UF ONLINE.**

*If it was not for UF Online, I would not feel as confident about my future as I do now. I would have never been able to call myself a Gator, because I'm not living in Florida and couldn't attend the University of Florida on campus. UF Online gave me the*  
**OPPORTUNITY TO MEET OTHER GATORS, TO CHALLENGE MYSELF IN SCHOOL, AND TO BUILD MY FUTURE."**

**- ALURA ROMERO**

(TELECOMMUNICATION MEDIA & SOCIETY MAJOR)

## UF ONLINE OPTIONAL FEE PACKAGE: USAGE ON THE RISE

In April 2016, the University announced that online students would be eligible to opt in or remain out of a set of student activity fees. Starting in the Fall 2016 semester, students who opted in would have access to additional services. This optional package keeps costs low, puts UF Online students in the driver's seat, and funnels revenue directly to the services online students would like to utilize. This past year, we have seen a rise in students opting into the fee package and have heard very positive feedback from students and their families about the availability of this option.



## ***DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS***

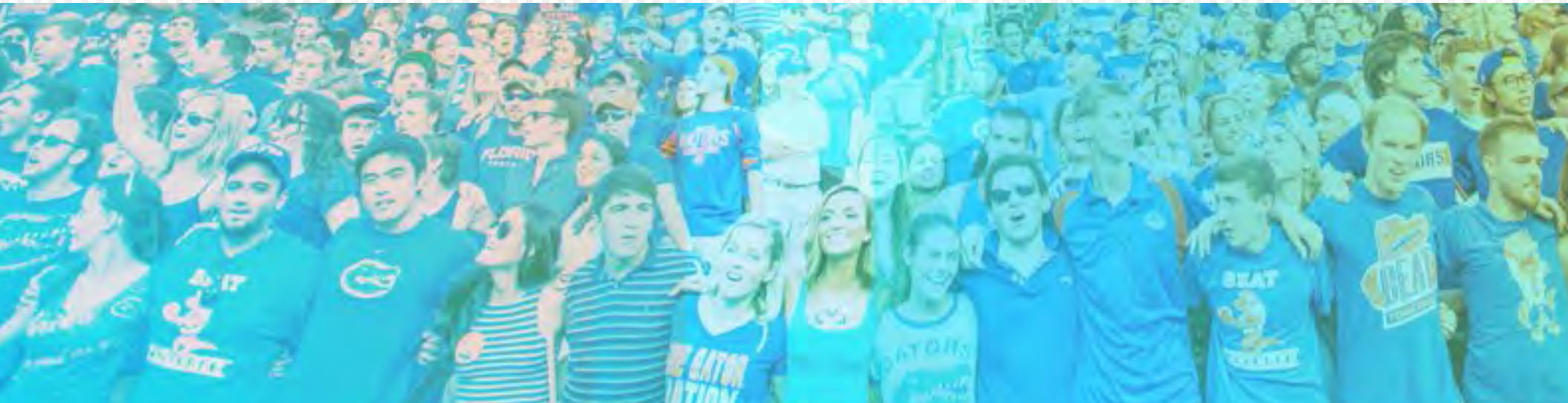
During the 2016-17 orientation cycle, New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) was able to enhance the transition process for PaCE students by adding additional in-person Preview Orientation sessions. The addition of more sessions allowed for more suitable registration options for students. NSFP also tailored the Links for PaCE online orientation to be program specific. This revamped online orientation now address pre-Preview information, as well as post-Preview needs of transitioning students.

For UF Online-specific orientation initiatives, NSFP increased communication with campus partners to better enhance student services initiatives available for UF Online students. This included the creation of

student Plaza specific pages and UF Online Optional Fee Package information within the Links Orientation for UF Online students. Additionally, quizzes were added to each of the modules within the Links Orientation. Doing so enhanced student learning and knowledge acquisition through orientation.

Communication on orientation cycles and timelines were shared with campus partners at the beginning of the academic year, so as to clearly communicate the new student timeline for the upcoming year. NSFP has also begun the bi-annual orientation remodel for the 2018 orientation cycle. Remodeling the orientation process involves engaging campus partners, both student affairs and academic affairs, to address individual department needs for onboarding new students.

Other UF Online initiatives include:



**MANDATORY  
TITLE IX TRAINING  
FOR ALL NEW  
STUDENTS**

**MARKETING &  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES FOR THE  
UF ONLINE OPTIONAL  
FEE PACKAGE**

**ONLINE SECTIONS  
OF FIRST YEAR  
FLORIDA**

**REVAMPED  
ORIENTATION FOR  
UF ONLINE STUDENTS,  
SLATED FOR  
SPRING 2018**

**IN-PERSON  
ORIENTATIONS FOR  
PACE ADMITS**

**FEE PACKAGE &  
WELCOME WEBINARS  
WITH UF ONLINE  
ONESTOP**

**INCREASED  
MARKETING AROUND  
NEW STUDENT  
CONVOCATION**

**ONLINE CAREER  
& ACADEMIC FAIRS  
OFFERED THROUGH  
THE CAREER  
RESOURCE CENTER**



# COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

After launching an in-house marketing and communications team in the last fiscal year, activities in this cycle focused on establishing processes and strategy, further developing messaging and tools, tracking and analyzing the campaigns and growing the team to meet demand.



## OVERALL UF ONLINE MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS FUNNEL

A focus on strategy and process led to the development of the UF Online Marketing and Communications Funnel. The development of this funnel allowed us to visualize processes in place and identify gaps to make adjustments.



A photograph of a university campus featuring a large red brick building with many windows. In the foreground, several students with backpacks are walking along a path. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent red geometric shape consisting of several overlapping polygons. Two thin white diagonal lines intersect at the center of the text.

WE'RE NOT JUST SHAPING GRADUATES,

**WE'RE SHAPING  
GATORS**

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PHASE I: AWARENESS & LEAD GENERATION ACTIVITIES

In Phase I of the funnel, the marketing team is the primary driver of activities in this stage and the UF Online Recruiting and Outreach Center (ROC) provides support. There are two goals in this phase — to create awareness about UF Online programs and to generate leads. The primary activities in this phase were:

- **Advertising** – The advertising budget is the largest part of the marketing budget and more than \$1.8 million was spent on campaigns for this cycle.
- **Sponsorships and Partnerships** – Additionally, UF Online created relationships with key entities to enhance and complement advertising efforts. The three key partnerships for this cycle were:
  - **UF Athletics Association** – A branding strategy employed by many corporations is to sponsor a championship sports team to associate their brand in the minds of consumers with a winning team. Since UF is known for its championship winning sports teams, we partnered with the UAA through their marketing entity, IMG, for a sponsorship that included advertising in football email blasts, in arena logo placements, game announcements, radio ads/mentions and contests.
  - **UF Alumni Association** – UF alumni are spread all over the world and by working with our alumni association and the programs they have created, we begin building interactive relationships that not only benefit us from a marketing perspective but also from the vantage point of student engagement as well. Full-page ads ran in the alumni print publication and there was outreach to Gator clubs around the country on social media.
  - **Finish@UF** – To create more awareness about the existing articulation agreement between the University of Florida and state colleges, UF Online created the Finish@UF program to highlight how state college AA graduates have an accelerated and defined pathway for admission to UF Online programs where they meet the requirements. This program launched in Spring 2017 and was a major focus of the advertising campaign for that cycle.
- **Promotional Support** – The UF Online marketing team collaborated with Enrollment Services on many levels to provide a variety of brochures, specialized major flyers and other materials. The ROC attended a variety of high school college fairs, state college transfer fairs and corporate education fairs. Additionally, the undergraduate campus admissions team distributed UF Online brochures and materials to high school students, parents, high school guidance counselors, and state college academic advisors.
- **Social Media Interaction** – The marketing team employed an organic social media strategy that would complement social advertising campaigns and create interest and activity for students and prospects. Additionally, UF Online added a Snapchat account to its existing channels of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- **Website Redesign** – In March 2017, UF Online launched a new website that fully incorporated the look and messaging of the brand established in the previous cycle. This complete redesign of the site also featured a new component to our messaging – the Gators Online Advantage.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF PHASE II: LEAD NURTURING & DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Once a prospect submits their information to UF Online, they enter Phase II of our marketing funnel. All prospects are entered into our CRM and marketing automation system so they can receive planned communications and outreach from the marketing and recruiting teams. While marketing is still the lead in this phase, there is heavy involvement and interaction with the recruiting team. Our goal in this phase is to provide a self-service pathway where prospective students can find the information they need through mediums like our website, automated email campaigns and virtual information sessions (VIS). However, prospective students may reach out to the ROC at any time for assistance from an admissions officer. The two most prominent activities in this phase are:

- **Email campaigns** – A combination of targeted email blasts and automated nurturing email campaigns deployed during this cycle. The targeted messages for the email blasts varied from promoting attendance to a VIS (at least five emails are sent for each VIS), application deadline reminders, and announcements about rankings and program enhancements. The five-email series nurturing campaigns are customized for each recruiter and have key messages with clear calls to action. More than 1.5 million emails were sent during this cycle.
- **Virtual Information Sessions (VIS)** – The ROC hosted 79 VIS events during this cycle. The topics for the sessions varied: at least one VIS for each of our 19 majors, Finish@UF sessions, a session dedicated to high school guidance counselors, and general sessions on all programs.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PHASE III: YIELD

Submission of an application moves a prospect to the next stage of the funnel. It is also at this stage where the Enrollment Services team takes the lead and the marketing team is in a support role. The same automation and tracking tools are used in our lead development and nurturing. One area of support the marketing team provides at this stage is:

- **Yield Postcards and Sunglasses** – The marketing team worked with the OneStop to produce a congratulatory postcard and gift of sunglasses to newly admitted students. This yield activity has a theme of “Your Future’s So Bright, You’ve Got to Wear Shades.” There is also messaging on the postcard that reaffirms the steps to enroll in UF Online.

A person moves to the final stage of the funnel when they enroll. The marketing team continues support in this stage while Student Engagement and Success takes the lead.



# STRATEGY & ANALYSIS OF MARKETING PROGRAMS

## STRATEGY & STAFFING ENHANCEMENTS

The marketing and communications team continued to make progress from the very beginning of the cycle. The most significant areas to note are:

- **Campaign Targeting** – For each cycle, tweaks and adjustments were made to enhance results for advertising campaigns.
  - **Fall 2016** – In our Spring 2016 campaign, UF Online had ads and messaging for each major. For Fall 2016, the focus was narrowed. The majority of campaigns were general and only a few majors had targeted advertising – biology, business, environmental management, public relations and sport management. Additionally, the media channels used were narrowed down to Google Search and Display, Facebook, The Trade Desk, Billboards, NPR and Spotify.
  - **Spring 2017** – Enhancements for this cycle focused on three key areas. First, an in-state awareness campaign was added. This addition included newspaper ads, airport ads, and bus wraps. Target markets were Gainesville, Miami, Orlando, Tallahassee, and Tampa. Second, an in-state campaign supporting the Finish@UF program was implemented. Specific messages were created for several state colleges. The message was “Start a (school mascot), Finish a Gator.” Finally, there was a shift of the funds spent in-state versus out-of-state. For prior campaigns, the split was 70 percent out-of-state and 30 percent in-state. This cycle, the distribution was changed to 41 percent out-of-state to 58 percent in-state.
- **Messaging – Gators Online Advantage** – The launch of the new UF Online website included an enhancement to our messaging. This messaging put forth the specific value proposition for Future Gators. The Gators Online Advantage highlights the following:
  - UF Online Student Experience
  - UF Academics
  - UF Reputation
  - Network and Career Opportunities
  - Research Opportunities
  - Flexibility of UF Online
- **Staffing** – To meet the demands of marketing our growing program, staffing was increased in the marketing and communications area. While already part of the UF Online team, a senior graphic designer was moved to the marketing area full-time in August 2016. Additionally, three student assistants were hired. While two left at the end of the semester, one remained until the end of the fiscal year and assisted with social media and market research. In December 2016, a full-time marketing specialist was also added to the team. The addition of this staff allowed for further enhancements in social media, graphic design and email marketing that had an immediate impact on marketing results.

## MOVING FORWARD

Looking ahead to the next year, the marketing and communications team is focusing on:

- Boosting UF on-campus communications.
- Partnerships with agencies that specialize in international students.
- Continued enhancements in analytics.
- Focus on more consistent content production.
- Analysis and investment changes to focus on lead quality versus lead volume.



# ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT

UF Online Enrollment Services is part of the Division of Enrollment Management and is under the leadership of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Enrollment Management. The unit includes the UF Online Recruitment & Outreach Center (ROC) and the UF Online OneStop Student Services Center. Both centers are geographically located on the university's main campus and share physical office space on the third floor of Criser Hall. The OneStop was established in Spring 2014 and the ROC was established in Spring 2016. Together, the unit currently has 17 full-time professional and clerical staff members, all of whom support UF Online students at various cycle of the enrollment cycle.

The UF Online Recruitment & Outreach Center and the UF Online OneStop Student Services Center work with a high degree of cohesion to accomplish a shared mission. Our mission is to provide UF Online prospective students, current students, and alumni first-class customer service throughout the entire enrollment life cycle, with a specific interest in increasing student enrollment and retention.

The Recruitment and Outreach Center (ROC) and the OneStop jointly support UF Online Admissions. The ROC is charged with recruiting the highest quality applicants to join the Gator Nation through UF Online's program. Admissions Officers are responsible for direct outreach to all UF Online prospective students, including freshmen, lower division transfers, upper division transfers, international candidates, and readmits. Once prospective students apply to the program, the OneStop Student Services Center provides all back-end admissions support to UF Online applicants. The OneStop student services team is responsible for application services, screening, and transfer evaluation. Once admitted, the ROC provides personalized support and outreach to admitted students to help ensure they are registered for classes and have the resources they need to be set up for success in the program.

## UF ONLINE STUDENT SERVICES

Once admitted, the OneStop Student Services Center becomes a primary resource to UF Online students. The OneStop Center is a cross-functional services unit that provides convenient and centralized support for UF Online students on behalf of the Office of the University Registrar, Student Financial Affairs, and the University Bursar. Instead of having to contact three separate offices for multiple questions, UF Online students contact the OneStop and speak with staff members who are cross-trained in all of these areas. One website. One phone number. One email address. In addition, the OneStop serves as a centralized resource for campus partners who interact with UF Online students.

The ROC and OneStop communicate with prospective and current students through a variety of channels. The offices maintain extended hours to accommodate the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students. Together, the two teams coordinate activity to attract, engage, enroll, and retain the highest quality students in UF Online.



# ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES: **YEAR IN REVIEW**

UF Online welcomed additional new programs into the UF Online degree portfolio this past year and we have seen a growing number of prospective students interested in learning about online enrollment. As a result, the Recruitment & Outreach Center hired two additional Admissions Officers to join our phone-based recruitment team. We also introduced and hired for the role of a Student Enrollment Specialist to join the Recruitment and Outreach team. At the OneStop Student Services Center, application volume and customer service inquiries increased steadily. In addition, the responsibility of coordinating UF Online readmissions applications was transitioned from the Office of Admissions to the OneStop. For these reasons, we hired an additional Admissions Coordinator this past year to join the OneStop team.

## **SERVICE MODEL REDESIGN**

UF Online Recruitment and Outreach Center - Over the last year, the demand from prospective students to learn about and eventually apply to UF Online sharply increased. As a result, we redesigned our service models for both the ROC and OneStop with specific goals to increase internal efficiency and to enhance external student service. Based on the new ROC service model, Admissions Officers could now focus exclusively on pre-applicant outreach while the Student Enrollment Specialist could focus on providing an enhanced layer of support to applicants and admits. In our new service model, a higher number of prospective students can learn about the Gators Online Advantage and UF Online applicants/admits receive increased support throughout the entire admissions process. Another noteworthy change is that UF Online's recruitment strategy for the South Florida market was reworked so that we could maximize our new resources at UF Coral Gables, which opened its doors in February 2017 and now acts as a storefront for the university.

UF Online OneStop Student Services Center - The service model at the OneStop was also redesigned this past year to appropriately support the program's enrollment goals. In the old model of service, the OneStop Coordinators were cross-trained in admissions processing and customer support. However, as UF Online's application volume increased, customer service inquiries for a growing number of our current students also peaked. To ensure that our applicants continued to receive timely admissions decisions and our current students continued to receive excellent service, we redesigned our service model so that the OneStop staff would have more narrowly defined roles. Applicants and current students would continue to receive the same services from our unit, but the OneStop roles were differentiated to maximize our resources and maintain high quality service through the entire student life cycle.

# NEW INITIATIVES

Now that the ROC and the OneStop both have established business practices and stable infrastructures, we have piloted new recruitment tactics and introduced additional tools and technologies. Below are the key ways that UF Online Enrollment Services invested our resources in the last 12 months to enhance the UF Online student experience.

## RECRUITMENT

- Experimented with extensive in-state travel to increase UF Online's brand awareness among students and key influencers
- Focused on building stronger relationships with state and community colleges
- Rolled out new content and a more comprehensive schedule of Virtual Information Sessions
- Overhauled UF Online's presentation of admissions content for re-design of website
- Developed a strategic communication plan for admitted students

## STUDENT SUPPORT

- Built an entirely new UF Online Admissions Application (To be released during the 2017-2018 Academic Year)
- Re-designed the phone tree and call queues for the Onestop
- Added additional CRM automations and enhancements
- Provided significant input into the new Student Information System

The initiatives we have undertaken this year all have made a direct impact on how we serve the Gator Nation and how we build the Gator family.

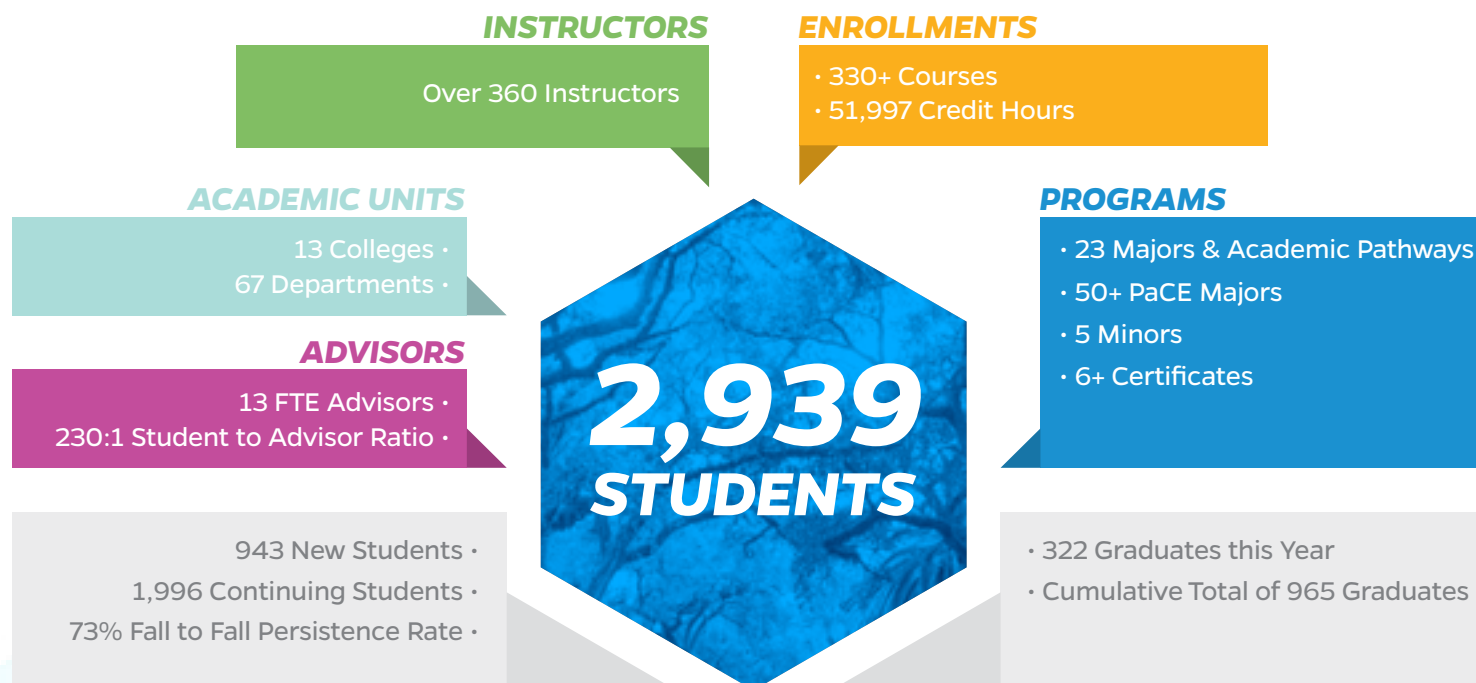


# UF ONLINE BY THE NUMBERS

Numbers alone do not tell the full story of UF Online. The stories of individual students, the adversities they have overcome, and the support they have received from advisors, family, and others to achieve their goals are part of what make up UF Online. The full story of UF Online must also include the advancements of UF faculty working with instructional designers to produce engaging and effective courses as well as the innovative policies developed by administrators – policies that are responsive to the needs of these non-traditional students while remaining true to the traditions of the University.

This year we present a more holistic view of the University's progress through UF Online, in the data and charts below. We intend for these additional data vantages to provide a much more accurate view of UF Online, the scope of the program, and the many factors that contribute to the success of our students and their families. Student academic achievement is at the core of our efforts so we maintain a close watch over these outcomes to insure that all of our efforts contribute to student success in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The following charts and tables contain important metrics from the 2016-2017 academic year (i.e. Summer 2016, Fall 2016, and Spring 2017).

## NUMBERS SUMMARY 2016 - 17

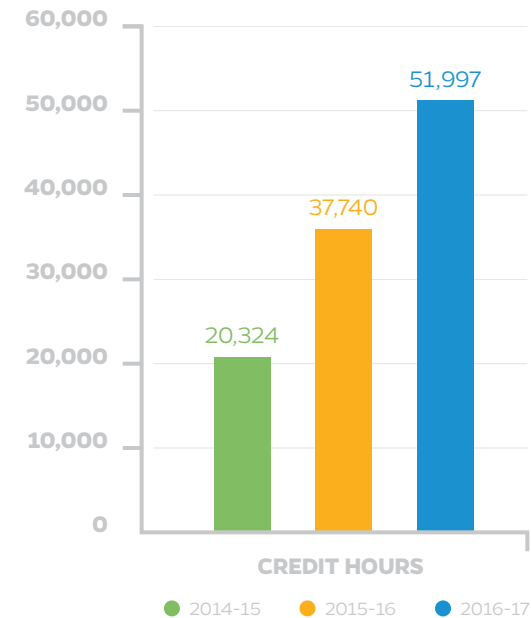
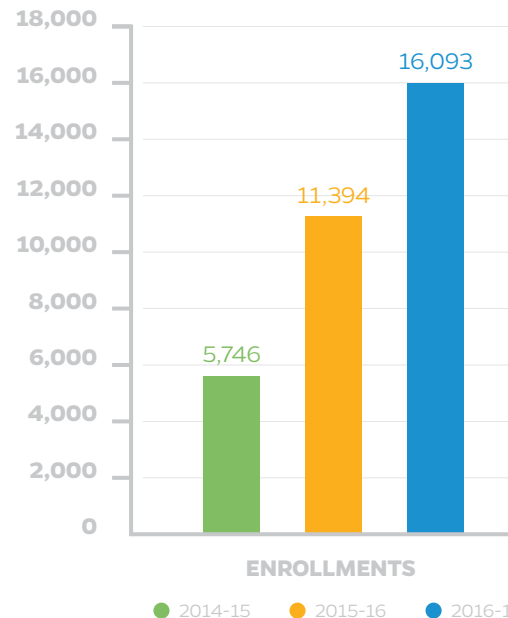
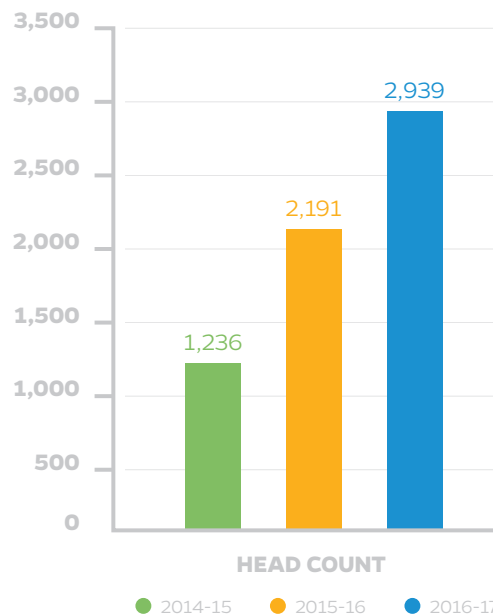


# ENROLLMENT

Enrollments in UF Online are reaching a sustainable year over year growth at around 30%.

Term	Head Count			Enrollments			Credit Hours		
	In State	Out of State	Total	In State	Out of State	Total	In State	Out of State	Total
2014 Summer A	83	14	97	112	19	131	336	57	393
2014 Summer B	74	10	84	97	10	107	287	29	316
2014 Summer C	425	5	430	740	7	747	2,943	19	2,962
2014 Fall	849	42	891	2,130	130	2,260	7,641	411	8,052
2015 Spring	919	49	967	2,361	140	2,501	8,147	454	8,601
AY 2014-2015	1,172	68	1,236	5,440	306	5,746	19,354	970	20,324
2015 Summer A	204	20	224	269	25	294	807	72	879
2015 Summer B	266	26	292	362	32	394	1,115	96	1,211
2015 Summer C	572	23	595	928	33	961	3,632	105	3,737
2015 Fall	1,524	120	1,644	4,461	356	4,817	14,644	1,100	15,744
2016 Spring	1,641	128	1,769	4,574	354	4,928	15,058	1,111	16,169
AY 2015-2016	2,009	191	2,191	10,594	800	11,394	35,256	2,484	37,740
AY YOY Growth	71%	181%	77%	95%	161%	98%	82%	156%	86%
2016 Summer A	365	34	399	497	47	544	1,447	125	1,572
2016 Summer B	402	35	437	521	42	563	1,560	122	1,682
2016 Summer C	863	56	919	1,431	98	1,529	5,236	308	5,544
2016 Fall	2,092	147	2,239	6,316	448	6,764	20,147	1,391	21,538
2017 Spring	2,151	142	2,293	6,254	439	6,693	20,344	1,317	21,661
AY 2016-2017	2,725	214	2,939	15,019	1,074	16,093	48,734	3,263	51,997
AY YOY Growth	36%	12%	34%	42%	34%	41%	38%	31%	38%

## UF ONLINE ENROLLMENTS



### UF ONLINE HAS HELPED ME TO ACHIEVE ONE OF MY BIGGEST GOALS-

receiving my B.A. Thus, wherever the military will take us, I will have my degree to take with me. Even more so, because of UF Online, I was able to receive my bachelor's degree and not worry where we might have to go. I really loved knowing that UF offered an entirely online B.A. degree and I never had to worry about not being able to finish because I had to move or something. I could take my school with me! Pursuing my BA at UF Online has been one of the best decisions I have ever made and **I AM SO THANKFUL I HAD THE OPTION OF RECEIVING**

**MY DEGREE ONLINE.**

**- PAIGE PRITCHETT**  
(SOCIOLOGY MAJOR)



# FALL 2016 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

## GENDER

**57.8%**  
FEMALE



**42.2%**  
MALE

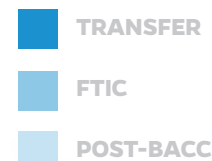
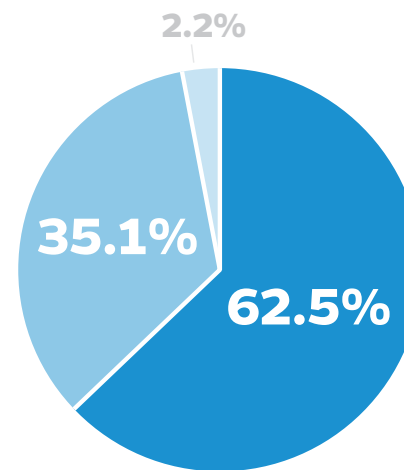
## FULL / PART-TIME



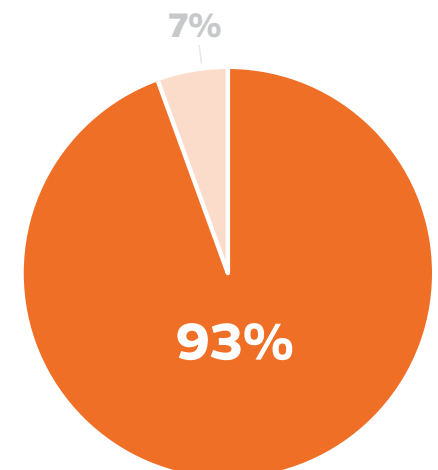
**54.2%**  
PART-TIME

**45.8%**  
FULL-TIME

## STUDENT TYPE



## RESIDENCY



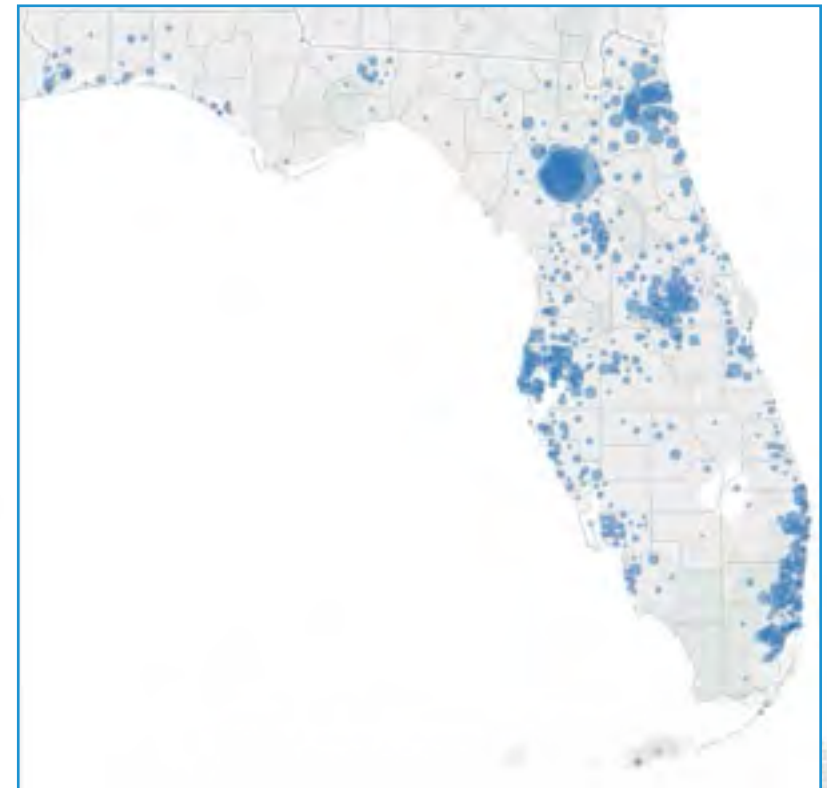
ETHNICITY	%
White (non-Hispanic) including Middle Eastern peoples	<b>64.5%</b>
Hispanic	<b>17.6%</b>
Black (non-Hispanic)	<b>7.2%</b>
Asian (including Indian subcontinent)	<b>4.8%</b>
Not reported	<b>3.8%</b>
American Indian or Alaskan Native	<b>1.1%</b>
Nonresident Alien	<b>0.8%</b>
Hawaiian Pacific Islander	<b>0.3%</b>

AGE	%
<20	<b>27.4%</b>
20 - 24	<b>21.7%</b>
25 - 29	<b>16.7%</b>
30 - 34	<b>12.5%</b>
35 - 39	<b>7.7%</b>
40 - 44	<b>5.9%</b>
45 +	<b>8.1%</b>

(AVERAGE AGE: 28)

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

In Fall 2016, UF Online students resided in over 40 states and across Florida. Around 91% of students resided in Florida, and the image (right) shows the geographic distribution of those students.



# FALL 2016 OPTIONAL FEE PACKAGE SUBSCRIPTIONS

The table below contains the number of students who opted into the optional fee package for Fall 2016 and the credit hours generated by those students.

Student Type	Applied Term	Opted In & Registered	Student Credit Hours	Total Registered	% of Total (Opted in & Registered)/(Total Registered)
Non-PaCE	Prior to Fall 2016	20	198		
Non-PaCE	Fall 2016	14	177		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>1,689</b>	<b>2%</b>
PaCE	Fall 2015	28	346		
PaCE	Fall 2016	240	3,090		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>268</b>	<b>3,436</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>302</b>	<b>3,811</b>	<b>2,245</b>	<b>13%</b>



We inform incoming and continuing students of the optional fee package and provide them the ability to estimate their tuition and fees if they were to opt into the optional fee package. This screenshot (left) shows the web page which students can use to calculate these estimates.

# FALL TO FALL PERSISTENCE RATES

The tables below contain fall to fall persistence rates for non-PaCE and PaCE students comparing Fall 2015 with Fall 2016.  
The overall persistence rate for both PaCE and non-PaCE students was 73%.

## NON-PACE STUDENTS

Major	Fall 2015 Enrolled	Fall 2015 minus Grads	Fall 2016 Enrolled	Persistence
Anthropology	5	5	5	100%
Biology	28	28	20	71%
Business Administration	612	488	341	70%
Computer Science	50	50	32	64%
Criminology & Law	182	152	106	70%
Environmental Management	35	32	25	78%
Geography	1	1	1	100%
Geology	30	30	21	70%
Health Education & Behavior	141	102	71	70%
Psychology	118	102	71	70%
Sociology	33	33	28	85%
Sport Management	98	80	60	75%
Telecommunication Media & Society	52	49	40	82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1385</b>	<b>1152</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>71%</b>

## PACE STUDENTS

College	Fall 2015 Enrolled	Fall 2015 minus Grads	Fall 2016 Enrolled	Persistence
<b>AG</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>AR</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>BA</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>FA</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>HH</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>JM</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>LS</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>82%</b>

## FALL 2016 STATUS OF PACE STUDENTS

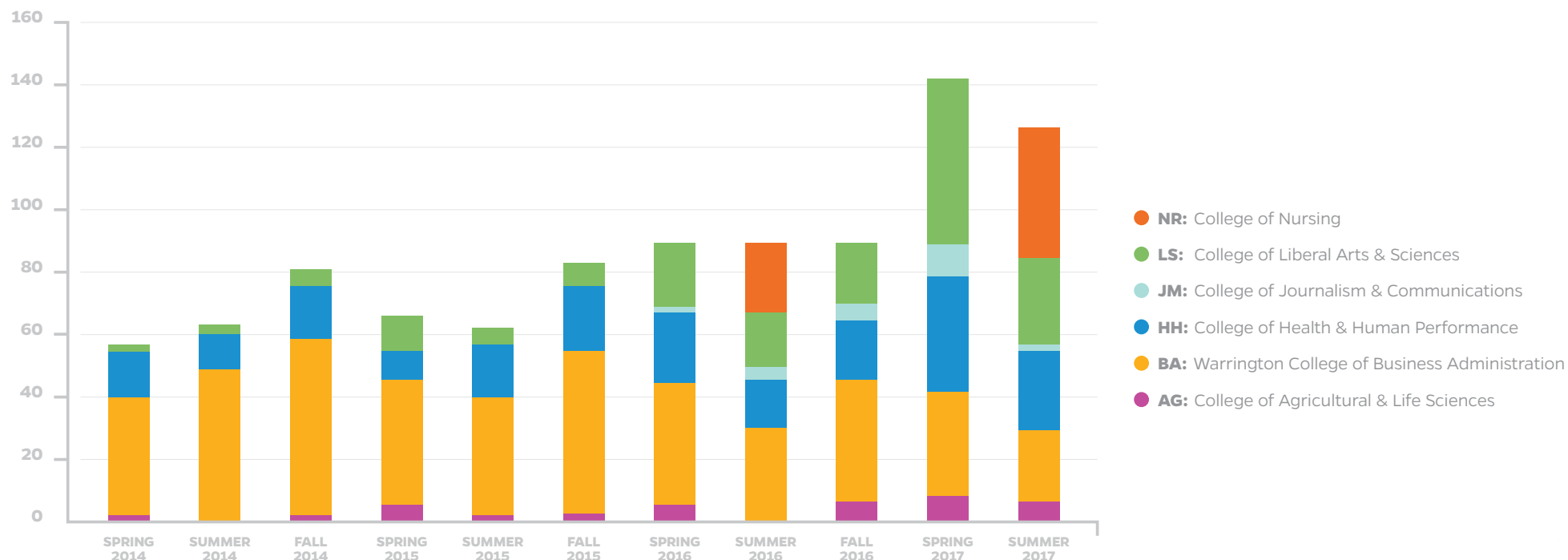
This table (right) contains the Fall 2016 status of  
PaCE students who first enrolled in Fall 2015.

College	Cancelled	Inactive Readmission Required	PaCE & UF Online	Transitioned to UF Main	Transitioned to UF Online	Total
<b>AG</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>59</b>
<b>AR</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>BA</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>		<b>67</b>
<b>FA</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>HH</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>17</b>
<b>JM</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>LS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>259</b>

# GRADUATES

The table (right) and chart (below) contain the number of graduates from UF Online by term and college. Our graduates take many paths to graduation. While FTIC (First Time in College) students have been admitted to and graduated from UF Online, the average UF Online graduate finished high school over ten years before they were admitted to UF Online. Most of our graduates take around two years to earn their degree with some taking as long as four years.

Term	College						Total
	AG	BA	HH	JM	LS	NR	
2014 Spring	1	40	16		2		59
2014 Summer		49	11		3		63
2014 Fall	1	58	15		7		81
2015 Spring	3	43	8		12		66
2015 Summer	1	39	18		5		63
2015 Fall	1	55	17		10		83
2016 Spring	3	42	24	1	20		90
2016 Summer		31	16	2	19	22	90
2016 Fall	5	43	18	5	19		90
2017 Spring	6	38	36	8	54		142
2017 Summer	4	25	25	2	28	42	126
Total	25	463	204	18	179	64	953

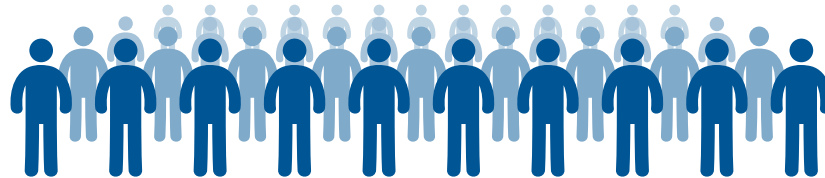


# NEW APPLICANTS & ADMITTED STUDENTS

The numbers of applicants, admitted and newly enrolled students for 2016-2017 are displayed in this chart (right).

Term	Applied			Admitted			Newly Enrolled			PaCE
	In State	Out of State	Total	In State	Out of State	Total	In State	Out of State	Total	
2014 Summer	195	26	221	75	1	76	73	0	73	
2014 Fall	596	106	702	328	28	356	304	15	319	
2015 Spring	429	69	498	254	20	274	226	11	237	
AY 2014-2015	1,220	201	1,421	657	49	706	603	26	629	
2015 Summer	490	123	613	191	24	215	158	11	169	
2015 Fall	1,093	286	1,379	541	68	609	464	42	506	259
2016 Spring	773	121	894	427	35	462	359	20	379	
AY 2015-2016	2,356	530	2,886	1,159	127	1,286	981	73	1,054	
2016 Summer	420	86	506	184	18	202	151	10	161	
2016 Fall	805	195	1,000	395	56	451	342	37	379	427
2017 Spring	817	148	965	443	45	488	376	27	403	
AY 2016-2017	2,042	429	2,471	1,022	119	1,141	869	74	943	427

**APPLIED:**  
**2471**



**ADMITTED:**  
**1141**

46% Admit Rate



**NEWLY ENROLLED:**

**943**

83% Yield Rate



# FINANCIALS

UF Online's financial model looks holistically at the relationship among revenue streams, expenses, income from student fees, and the role of carry forward balances. This past year we focused on completing our transition away from our previous online vendor, the growth of in-house expert teams and functions, and our ever-expanding portfolio of programs, student services and course offerings, all with increasing enrollments at only 75% of the tuition rate for in-state students. We are proud to present a healthy financial overview that will guide our expansion in 2018 and beyond with strong and steady revenue flows, strategic investments, and cash reserves that were held largely intact during this transition despite our plans to utilize them if needed during this time of transition and financial uncertainty. In summary, UF Online ended the year with a balance of \$2,408,906. Separately, UF Online students paid fees totaling just over \$1.4 million.

Going forward, we will continue sound financial management to serve more and more students with a preeminent online academic program supported by a vibrant learning community. We will continue our sound stewardship of appropriated funds and tuition revenue to strategically approach our budget to maximize investments in our core value for students.

## SUMMARY

FY '16	FY '17	
\$ 4,312,639	\$ 3,533,617	CARRY FORWARD BEGINNING BALANCE
\$ 10,409,570	\$ 11,342,479	TOTAL REVENUES
\$ 11,188,592	\$ 12,467,190	TOTAL EXPENSES
\$ 3,533,617	\$ 2,408,906	REMAINING BALANCE
\$ 777,258	\$ 1,412,459	FEE REVENUES FOR UF THAT ARE PAID BY UF ONLINE STUDENTS

## DETAILED FINANCIAL BREAKOUT

For the first year, we depict here each of the major components of the UF Online financial model in the charts that follow in detail: revenue, expenses, carry forward and lastly, student fee revenues. This past year saw rising costs as we invested in academic expansion but also significantly in marketing including a national ad campaign, an in-state awareness campaign, the launch of Finish@UF, and the development of an in-house communications and marketing team. During this final transition phase from a large Online Program Management company, UF Online utilized carry forward funds to mitigate uncertainty while ramping up in-house functions. Balances were held in reserve in this manner to ensure a smooth and invisible transition for all of our students, staff, and faculty during CY16 and CY17 while not jeopardizing current services and allowing for a considerable expansion of services. Going forward, UF Online will no longer utilize the carry forward method to this extent, opting instead to maximize the investment toward our academic core by fueling all seven dimensions of the UF Online program. Presented below are revenues and expenses from fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

	FYE 30-Jun-16	FYE 30-Jun-17
<b>Carry Forward Beginning Balance</b>	4,312,639	3,533,617
<b>Tuition:</b>		
In State	\$4,409,682	\$5,064,895
Out of State	\$961,430	\$1,277,584
<b>Total Tuition Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,371,132</b>	<b>\$6,342,479</b>
<b>State Subsidy</b>	<b>\$5,038,438</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,409,570</b>	<b>\$11,342,479</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Production	\$1,126,245	\$1,329,852
Delivery	\$3,171,000	\$4,302,309
Enrollment Management	\$419,379	\$772,736
Direct Administration	\$738,233	\$484,782
Pearson Services	\$1,846,445	\$1,223,079
UFT	\$285,097	\$0
Student Services	\$1,583,614	\$356,311
Marketing	\$1,406,928	\$2,840,977
Proctoring	\$172,743	\$194,010
Advising		\$555,766
Operating Expenses	\$160,421	\$32,563
Facilities Operations	\$5,543	
RCM Taxes	\$272,944	\$374,806
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$11,188,592</b>	<b>\$12,467,190</b>

## UF ONLINE STUDENT FEES

Finally, we present a detailed breakout of revenues generated by UF Online student fees.

Required fees for all UF Online students:	FY16	FY17
Capital Improvement Fee	267,858	361,370
Financial Aid Fee	286,807	386,451
Technology Fee	207,192	280,766
<b>Optional Fee Package:</b>		
Activities and Services Fee	6,344	158,182
Transportation Fee	3,106	78,017
Athletic Fee	625	15,811
Health Fee	5,325	131,361
<b>Total Fee Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 777,258.46</b>	<b>\$ 1,412,458.81</b>

# LOOKING AHEAD: **CHALLENGES**

As UF Online grows and moves through its phases of maturation as a program, UF Online eyes key challenges common to other institutions growing their online programs yet also some distinct challenges as we grow UF Online as part of the fabric of a large, leading public research university. These areas are articulated below and shape our future focus.

## **CLIMBING DENIAL RATE OF OVER 60% OF ALL APPLICANTS TO UF ONLINE PROGRAMS.**

This past year we saw another increase in the overall applicant denial rate – both those applying from within the state and those across the country, but with the out-of-state denial rate 10% higher at 70%, when compared to an in-state denial rate of 60%. While we anticipated a moderate denial rate in light of the University's overall admissions selectivity and the growing interest and awareness in the University's online programs, this increase is a cause for concern given our goal to expand access to University programs.

To address these, we will focus efforts going forward on lowering media spend that appears to be generating pools of unqualified applicants and shifting those resources to more supportive recruitment pathways that help best ensure applicant preparedness for the University of Florida admissions criteria and process. Augmenting our website with tools for applicants to self-evaluate their own preparedness will also help prospective students better understand and prepare for the UF admissions criteria. Similarly, where we are seeing the most significant denial rates with out-of-state students, we will examine pilots where we can put in place transfer equivalency tools for out-of-state applicants to better assist them in preparing their application for successful UF admission and the acknowledgement of transfer credits.

## **MAINTAINING AFFORDABILITY WHILE EXPANDING PROGRAM OFFERINGS.**

Given that the number of UF Online students continues to grow, and that the majority of our students benefit from a 25% lower tuition rate, UF Online is reexamining our ideal allocation of revenue. The state appropriations remain a critical fuel for academic program builds, delivery payments, select faculty salaries, and academic advisor salaries but over time, UF Online is seeing a need to provide funds for numerous additional faculty hires across colleges and boosts to existing academic advising funds to ensure we are increasing teaching and advising capacity to meet student demand.

As faculty and academic advisor salaries grow within the UF Online budget to meet student demand and maintain UF's quality programming and student support services, investments in marketing and other programs will likely need to decline. As a result, enrollment levels may slow their growth if not fueled by a significant marketing investment to ensure awareness in a crowded online post-secondary market. However, UF Online has reexamined the ideal use of revenue and will not slow its investment in the seven dimensions of value for our students while maintaining affordability to achieve our mission of expanded access. We simply anticipate that the reach of this valuable program will decline as we divert a greater proportion of UF Online revenue to faculty hires and salaries to meet student demand and in doing so, decrease marketing spend outside the state of Florida. As always, we will continually work to increase program efficiencies and decrease costs wherever possible, funneling any savings to the highest value areas for our students and faculty.

## **ENSURING ONE-ON-ONE, PERSONALIZED ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR A DIVERSE POPULATION OF LEARNERS AT UNIQUE LIFE & CAREER STAGES**

UF Online is still in a transition phase as we map our ideal future – one that remains focused on academic rigor but which is also a welcoming, flexible option for students regardless of their life stage. We are successfully serving students in various life stages from many parts of the state and the country. UF Online therefore provides a dedicated advisor for each student to help them define an ideal academic pathway. However, this model is high cost and intensive for academic advisors and faculty to administer. Financially, we are prepared to enter an exciting yet dynamic next five years serving these transformative students in the digital undergraduate realm but we anticipate costs to remain high throughout this period and hopefully declining thereafter.

## **COMMUNICATING THE VALUE OF AN ACCREDITED, RIGOROUS PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS**

A key aspect of any successful launch of a transforming educational offering involves not only agility but also clarity of value. Prospective students now are evaluating the changing market with their own information, often relying on commercials and marketing websites that appear to be objective. What may be getting lost is basic information about the value of accreditation as well as the value of faculty with both life experience and academic training. In addition, prospective students seeking an online educational pathway are well-advised to ensure that real and direct faculty engagement is a key component of any online university program they chose to enroll in for their education. UF Online marketing and communication campaigns therefore take on a larger role in not only working to penetrate the market with the value of UF Online programs, but also in providing guidance to prospective students on how to evaluate and compare online programs.

**WITH UF ONLINE,** *I was able to achieve my academic goals and be prepared as a competitive candidate for acceptance into a top university's graduate program. Best of all, UF Online allowed me the flexibility to meet my family and work commitments. I did things on my terms and how it worked best for me.*  
**IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST DECISIONS I HAVE EVER MADE!**

**- SHAYCE JOHNSTON**  
(PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR)





**UF** ONLINE  
UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA



# CONCLUSION

*Each year, UF Online is proud to report on its annual results, growth, and positive impact on the academic careers of our students. This year marked a significant rededication to the core management principles and strategies in the comprehensive business plan along with a major transition from the private partner. While embarking on this important transition for UF Online, we continue to evolve and grow our operations to ensure UF Online remains dynamic and nimble while supporting faculty leaders and the academic goals of our students. The University of Florida welcomes students into the Gator Nation – online and on campus – by ensuring they have the best academic options available and, now, even more choices to tailor their own student services and keep costs low. As we progress through this transition and continue to fortify the foundation of UF Online for long-term sustainable growth, we will continue to learn and grow in our service to students seeking a premier online education.*