

Political Campaigning Newsletter

UF MA/PC Program



Dr. Stephen Craig,

Director's Corner

As I wrap up my 35th year at UF, and 29th as director of the Political Campaigning Program, I find myself reflecting on how much we have achieved during that time — and especially on the success of our graduates, so many of whom have embarked on notable careers both in and outside the political arena.

(to support more students who otherwise cannot afford to pay for graduate school). For as long as I remain at UF, I will continue trying to raise the money needed for us to meet these goals.

In addition, we seek support for three projects that would greatly enhance the reputation and visibility of the Political Campaigning Program: (1) a **research center** (to conduct studies and issue reports on topics relevant to contemporary politics in Florida and nationwide); (2) a program on **ethics in politics and government** (for UF students, but also as outreach to elected officials and political professionals throughout the state); and (3) an **on-line campaigning certificate program** (the target audience being those who are unable to spend two years in Gainesville pursuing a full-blown master's degree).

It obviously will take considerable resources for the Campaigning Program to reach its full potential. I hope that UF grads, along with anyone else who believes in the importance of a strong and vibrant democratic process, will join with me in trying to make that potential a reality.

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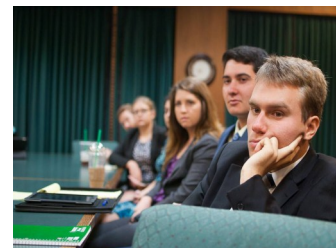
With my own career winding down, however, I can't help wondering about what the future might hold. Although the Program remains fairly small in terms of the number of students enrolled, it has earned a national reputation for blending academic and professional training in a way that is unmatched by any other university in the country.

The question now is: How do we build upon this reputation, and grow the program, in years to come under new leadership? At some point, it is imperative that we establish new **endowed professorships** (to ensure continuity of instruction), **lectureships** (to bring practitioners to campus on a regular basis), and **scholarships**

Lobbying, Demystified — Kenton Ngo (MA/PC 2014)

Both first- and second-year campaigners were enrolled during Fall semester 2013 in the latest version of the Lobbying seminar, taught once again by three noted practitioners in the field. This course provided insight into an oft-maligned industry, and allowed students to see lobbying from the perspective of those who practice it every day. Doyle Bartlett is a former Chief of Staff on Capitol Hill who now operates his own lobbying firm in Washington, DC, focusing on the insurance industry. Dave Mica, who began his political career as a campaign aide to Lawton Chiles in the 1970s, is the Executive Director of the Florida Petroleum Council. Our third instructor (and one non-lobbyist), Ian Rayder, serves as Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Shultz.

First up was Doyle Bartlett, who taught students about federal lobbying in Washington. We were divided into teams and told to devise a comprehensive lobbying strategy for reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act, a potentially contentious bill that was then under consideration by Congress. Both teams chose a core message and theme, identified key tar-



Campaigners listen to Florida senator Bill Montford on Lobby Day in Tallahassee. Special thanks to Dave Mica for organizing the trip.

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U.S. Rep Debbie Wasserman Schultz and John Barnes (MA/PC 2013) do the Gator Chomp at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, FL, August 2012.

Where Are They Now? — Class of 2013

The Political Campaigning Program is proud of its strong alumni support network. In seeking new opportunities for internships and careers for current students, we often look to our past graduates for guidance. With help from some of those graduates, members of the Class of 2013 have embarked on careers across the political spectrum and even beyond. As with all of our alumni, we look forward to seeing what the future holds for this outstanding group of former Gators.

John Barnes –Optimus Consulting

John works for digital and data analytics firm Optimus Consulting (Washington DC), which counts as clients political candidates across the country.

Christina Barker –Tampa Bay Partnership

Christina is the Public Policy Coordinator at Tampa Bay Partnership, which promotes economic development in the region.

Jeff Ivey –Representative Steve Crisafulli

Jeff is a travel aide and political assistant to State House Speaker-designate Crisafulli.

Brittany Link –Equality Florida

Brittany is a new media associate for Equality Florida, a group that promotes LGBT rights.

Julia Rowe – Habitat for Humanity

Julia is the Director for Volunteer Engagement at Habitat for Humanity in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Zach Smith –11th Circuit Court of Appeals

Zach is a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Emmett R. Cox of the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit.

Samantha Sexton –PACE Center for Girls

Samantha is currently working in Tallahassee as the Associate Director of Government Affairs for the PACE Center for Girls.

Lobbying, Demystified

gets to lobby for votes, and recommended (in a mock pitch to potential clients) changes that would increase the bill's chances of being passed.

Next was Dave Mica, who brought us to the State Capitol in Tallahassee as part of a lesson on state lobbying. Situated in the Governor's conference room, we heard from several guest speakers with extensive experience dealing with state legislatures on issues ranging from gun control to education. With the seal of Florida hanging over their heads, the speakers shared stories of legislative sausage making in the laboratories of democracy. We were also treated to a tour of the historic Capitol, home of the original chambers of the Florida Legislature and Supreme Court, as well as (among other bits of political history) a vintage 2000 punch-card ballot machine from Palm Beach County.

Finally, Ian Rayder (a PC alum) introduced us to the basics of political fundraising — from donor research, targeting, and management to making call time more efficient and writing quality fundraising appeals. Drawing on his experience as a finance consultant on multiple

campaigns, this section of the course included practical advice on planning and implementing a fundraising plan.

The Campaigning Program stresses the importance of introducing students to practitioners in the various fields of politics and government. Lobbying is a core component in the applied section of the graduate degree. We are lucky to be able to compare and contrast what we learn in academic courses with what we learn from those who operate on the front lines of politics.



Lobby Day in Tallahassee, Fall 2013

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An Interview with Dr. Susan MacManus, University of South Florida

Dr. MacManus is Distinguished Professor in the Department of Government and International Affairs at USF. She has written extensively on state politics, serves as a political analyst for WFLA News Channel 8, and is a featured columnist for sayfiereview.com.

What's the state of the Florida governor's race, as of today?

It's going to be extremely competitive and expensive. Many analysts predict it will be the top race of the 2014 cycle.

What will decide the election?

It's an old cliché, but the bottom line is that turnout matters. Democratic base turnout drops a lot in midterm elections, primarily young and minority voters.

What will be the core themes of the Crist and Scott campaigns?

Scott's campaign will be about economic recovery: "I promised and I did it." For Crist, it will be bipartisanship and a more inclusive governing approach.

Can the Democrats recreate presidential-level turnout?

It's not impossible, but it will be challenging. You can already see that certain issues have the potential to increase minority and youth turnout, particularly felon voting rights, voter suppression, scholarship funding formulas, and the medical marijuana amendment. Education, the environment, and voting rights are all critical for turning out less likely voters in a midterm year.

Are Democrats united behind Crist, or does he have to worry about an enthusiasm gap?

It's too soon to tell. Very few polls have been taken that you can have a lot of faith in. The numbers are all over the map. I don't think Democrats will gel until after the primary. Some Democrats, particularly older women, are strongly supporting Nan Rich.

Will the proposed medical marijuana constitutional amendment affect the race?

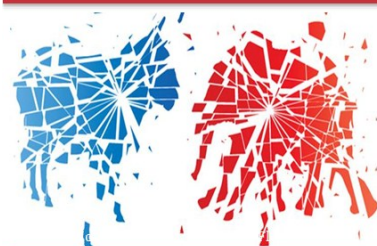
The expectation is that it will boost youth turnout. What happens in the legislature, with the "Charlotte's Web" bill, whether it makes cannabis available for families with cancer-stricken young children, is an important variable.

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Dr. Susan MacManus

THE ELECTION LANDSCAPE
2012 - 2014
Reflections and Projections



Hosted by The University of Florida's
Graduate Program in
POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING

The UF Political
Campaigning Conference
Spring 2013

UF Political Campaigning Conference 2013

Every two years, the Political Campaigning Program hosts a conference to reflect upon the most recent election, and look ahead to the next. As in the past, the 2013 conference was held at the Gainesville Hilton on February 1st. Current UF campaigners, prospective campaigners, doctoral students, and alumni all joined together at the Hilton to welcome a number of guest speakers. These included an interesting mix of academics, political operatives and consultants, journalists, and elected officials — all of whom shared their perspectives on the elections of 2012 and 2014.

The first panel of guests began by analyzing the 2012 presidential elections. Among the topics discussed were the technical advances of Barack Obama's Organized for America campaign, the effects of religion on voting, and the critical role played by young adults in helping the president to win re-election. Students were then invited to ask questions, and many found the Q&A portion of the conference to be the most enjoyable. According to Samantha Sexton, then a second-year campaigner, "The wonderful part about being able to interact with panel members came in two forms: One, both students and consultants were given the opportunity to challenge the academics on lessons learned in the field; and two, professional relationships began to organically form as conversations often continued outside the conference room."

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Eric Morgan (MA/PC 2014) and
Brittany Link (MA/PC 2013)
listening to panel discussion at
the Campaigning Conference in
February 2013.

2014 Midterm Preview — From Left and Right

"Shadow day revealed just how short a legislative session is in Florida. Legislators, staff, and lobbyists have to cram a year's worth of lawmaking into 60 days.

It's a tough task."

— Ansley Tuten (MA/PC 2015)



Senator Maria Sachs and Kenton Ngo (MA/PC 2014) in Tallahassee on Shadow Day 2013.



Senate President Don Gaetz and John Barnes (MA/PC 2013) on Shadow Day 2013.

"I listened as education issues were taken up by House members, including the role of guidance counselors and when the school year should begin and end. Even issues that seemed straightforward led to heated conversations among members who saw unintended consequences of the proposed bills."

— Christina Barker (MA/PC 2013)

The Left — Joel Mendelsohn (MA/PC 2015)

As we barrel into campaign season, Democrats are looking for some big wins to avoid the dreaded midterm curse. After getting pummeled in 2010 by the Tea Party and a resurgent Republican Party, 2014 doesn't appear to be quite as dire for Democrats. At the same time, however, it's an enormous challenge for either party to capture or hold congressional seats in an incumbent president's sixth year in office (Bill Clinton notwithstanding).

Even though generic congressional ballot polls currently give Democrats a narrow lead, the party's chances of taking back the House from Republicans are slim. Instead, Democrats must look to maintain their advantage in the Senate and turn over some state governorships.

Holding the Senate will be difficult given that several incumbent Democrats in more conservative states are either retiring or face stiff opposition for reelection. Seats currently held by Sens. Jay Rockefeller (WV), Max Baucus (MT), and Mark Begich (AK) are just a few examples of seats that could flip to the GOP. Rockefeller is retiring, Baucus was just named U.S. Ambassador to China, and Begich faces a stiff challenge from Republicans in a very red state.

It's not all sour for Democrats, though, as the party prepares to mount a strong challenge in traditionally conservative states such as Kentucky and Georgia. As this is written, Kentucky's secretary of state Alison Lundergan-Grimes is in a statistical tie with Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. In Georgia, Michelle Nunn, the daughter of former Sen. Sam Nunn, leads most of her possible Republican foes. Both candidates have high name recognition, are fundraising machines, and might be able to pull off upsets in their respective states.

In Florida, most polls show former Gov. Charlie Crist to have a modest lead over Republican incumbent Rick Scott. Scott's job approval ratings remain low, while Crist remains relatively popular throughout the state and gives Democrats perhaps their best chance at winning a gubernatorial seat

currently occupied by a Republican.

Georgia is another state that could see the upset of an incumbent Republican governor. Democratic state senator Jason Carter (grandson of former president Jimmy Carter) is challenging Nathan Deal in what will probably be one of the more closely watched governor's races outside Florida.

It remains to be seen whether Democrats can avoid a second consecutive disappointing midterm election. But with some possible big upsets looming, Democrats have reason to be excited about 2014.

The Right — Michael Christ (MA/PC 2015)

The third time may be the charm for national Republicans. The GOP is virtually certain to hold the House of Representatives, and may even pick up seats. It gets a little trickier in the Senate.

In Minority Leader Mitch McConnell's quest to take back the Senate, his team came up short in 2010 and 2012. But 2014 looks to be different, with the National Republican Senatorial Committee taking steps to prevent the self-inflicted wounds of years past — namely, divisive primaries and flawed general election candidates.

Democrats currently hold a 55-45 majority (counting two independents who caucus with the party), which means that the GOP needs to net 6 seats to recapture the Senate. There are numerous pathways to the magic number of 51. First, there are three Democratic retirements in red states that are likely to fall into the GOP column: Montana, South Dakota, and West Virginia. The GOP has favorable midterm demographics along with better candidates in these states. But this is where it gets tricky. There are four Democratic incumbents up for reelection in states that Mitt Romney won in 2012. If the GOP can win three of these four seats, they will have a Senate majority. In Alaska, incumbent Mark Begich (D) has always treaded on thin ice, winning his first term by beating a convicted felon (the verdict later overturned) by less than 4,000 votes. That's hardly a mandate in deep-red Alaska.

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2014 Midterm Preview

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Incumbent Democrats Kay Hagan (NC), Mary Landrieu (LA), and Mark Pryor (AR) have carved out the “blue dog” label for themselves, but Republicans intend to tie President Obama and the Affordable Care Act as an albatross around their necks. If that onslaught is successful, these candidates could be heading home when January 2015 rolls around.

There remain a few alternative scenarios. Georgia, Kentucky, and Michigan present turnaround opportunities for Democrats. The race in Georgia favors Republicans, but an upstart Democratic nominee and a bloody GOP primary could put the seat in play. Kentucky presents the same dilemma. The man hoping to become Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, faces a tough race against a young, female Democrat: Alison Lundergan-Grimes. If 2014 becomes a GOP

tidal wave (as in 2010), Michigan could become a Republican pickup opportunity. The GOP nominee, Terri Lynn Land, is running a flawless campaign so far, and she has amassed a sizable war chest with which to wage battle against Rep. Gary Peters. Any of these three races has the potential to shake up the political handicappers, and to throw control of the Senate to either party.

If I had to call the Senate today, I'd give the Republicans a slim 51-49 seat majority. The GOP will take South Dakota, Montana, West Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Alaska. Louisiana may flip as well, but the incumbent, Mary Landrieu, will be difficult to beat. If these predictions hold up, President Obama is certain to have a long and difficult final two years in office.



Julia Rowe and John Barnes (both MA/PC 2013) at a mock press conference in the Advanced Strategy module dealing with earned media (taught by Damien Filer).

An Interview with Dr. Susan MacManus

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The other variable is news from Colorado and Washington. Early reports show that recreational marijuana use has brought about some unintended consequences. Voters may be concerned with whether medical use is a gateway to recreational use. It needs 60% to pass, and current polls have support between 66 and 82 percent.

Since becoming a Democrat, Crist has consistently supported Obamacare. What's the strategy behind that?

He certainly can't run away from it, there's too much awareness. If he tried to run away from Obamacare, voters would think he doesn't have strong beliefs about anything. He has to be thinking the numbers will improve by the time the election comes around, or that the framing of the issue will change. Democrats could frame the issue around the insurance industry. People view the insurance companies like they view Congress. Crist has taken the advice of liberal Democrats: Don't apologize, embrace it. This contrasts with Alex Sink in FL-13, who took the middle ground and lost.

Will the contrast between the economic record of Governor Crist and Governor Scott prove decisive?

The economy is still the number one issue — the economy and jobs. Despite economists saying the recession is over, poll after poll says the public thinks otherwise. The question is how much credit do the voters give to governors versus presidents. Historically, the public gives most credit to the president. Scott will have to convince voters he deserves the credit. He needs to run on the results of the platform he promised in 2010: job creation.

If Crist wins, how will he work with the Republican-led Legislature?

If Crist wins, he'll have a tough time. He'll have rejected the party that is in control. It's hard to believe that a party switcher would be embraced by his former party in the legislature.



Our PC Class of 2014 award winners (from left): Daniel Dean, who received the Ralph E. Gonzalez Independent Spirit Award; and Kenton Ngo, winner of the Walter ("Skip") Campbell Leadership Award.

Political Campaigning Alumni Profile

Two recent alumni discuss the lessons they learned from the program, their career accomplishments, and how current students can benefit from their experience at UF.

Becca Guerra

Becca earned her B.A. in History and Latin American Studies and a Masters of Arts in Political Science, all from the University of Florida. She currently works as the Southeast Regional Organizer for the NAACP and is based in Atlanta.

Describe the work that you've been doing since finishing the Political Campaigning Program.

As Regional Field Organizer, I work with over 1,000 units representing more than half of the national membership of the NAACP. My work focuses largely on campaigns that deal with our national priority areas: civic engagement, criminal justice, education, health, and financial freedom. I've worked extensively to expand the Moral Monday movement that started in North Carolina to other parts of the South; this movement is now growing in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Alabama.

Previously, I served as Statewide Field Director for America Votes in Florida, and on the Board of Directors for both Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando and the Central Florida Gator Club. Prior to returning to Florida, I was the Region VII Field Director for the NAACP, serving the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, where I became the first Latina Regional Field Director in the history of the Association. I have also served as Program Specialist for the Criminal Justice and Education departments at the NAACP, specifically working with issues relating to capacity building of the units, re-entry, death penalty, immigration, and the school-to-prison pipeline. Finally, I've worked for NARAL Pro-Choice America and the Democratic Party of New Mexico.

What advice do you have for current and prospective students?

The Campaigning Program provides a wealth of knowledge that will enhance the experience you gain in the field. The program will put you in contact with both professors and alumni who are gurus in their respective areas, so students should take advantage of those contacts. Learn as much as you can, because undoubtedly you will use pieces of that information again in your work. In particular, learn the details of a strong field program as it will help you immensely no matter what area you pursue after graduating.

**Becca Guerra
(MA/PC 2008) and
President Obama**



Joe Pileggi

A lifelong Gator, Joe earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Florida in Political Science. Currently, he is Regional Political Director for the National Republican Congressional Committee.

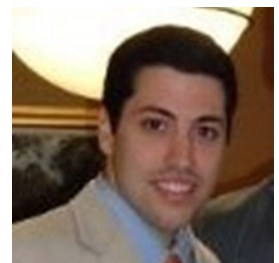
How have you moved to the various jobs you've held in the political world?

I've always tried to put everything I had into my campaigns even if it meant sacrificing things like a social life. People notice hard work whether you win or lose, especially those with whom you maintain relationships. If you want a job on campaigns or at a party organization, try to meet with as many political consultants as you can. They are always looking for good, talented people to work on their races. Also, be willing to take an internship or a low-paying job just to get your foot in the door. I once moved halfway across the country to take a job on a gubernatorial campaign for a 50% reduction in salary just to get more experience. Being willing to take a risk to gain experience will pay off in the long run if you put in the work. People will notice.

What have you enjoyed most about your time in politics?

I've had the opportunity to work on numerous competitive campaigns. There's no greater feeling than to see the work you put in translate into a victory on Election Day. Everyone loves to win, but sometimes it's in the losses where you learn the most. My first job as a Campaign Manager was the most targeted state senate seat in Florida in 2006. We won and were the only seat to go from Democrat to Republican that year. Over the next six years, I worked as Political Director, Deputy Campaign Manager, and Campaign Director on two U.S. Senate races and a gubernatorial campaign. All were losses. Campaigns and politics can be humbling but you have to keep putting in the hard work and take whatever opportunity you can get. In 2012, I had the chance to manage a statewide ballot campaign in Missouri. It ended up being the closest referendum race in the history of Missouri elections and we won. Losing makes you really appreciate when you do get another win, but you have to keep working for it. Just recently, I was fortunate to lead the NRCC's efforts to help David Jolly win the special congressional election against former Florida CFO Alex Sink. Not many people thought we would pull it off, but we did. If you take the right opportunities and work hard, you'll see the fruits on your labor on Election Day.

**Joe Pileggi
(MA/PC 2005)**





Campaigning students making candidate presentations in their Advanced Strategy seminar.

*"Lunch was a great opportunity to network and also catch up with alumni who made the trip back to Gainesville to attend the conference."
— John Barnes
(MA/PC 2013)*

*"The wonderful part of being able to interact with panel members came in two forms: One, both students and consultants were given the opportunity to challenge the academics on lessons learned in the field; and two, professional relationships begin to organically form as conversations often continued outside the conference room."
—Samantha Sexton
(MA/PC 2013)*

UF Political Campaigning Conference 2013

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Before delving into what the future might hold in the 2014 midterm elections, participants and attendees took a break for lunch and mingling. The Q&A portion of the first panel continued on for some, while others spoke to guests about upcoming campaigns and job opportunities. "Lunch was a great opportunity to network and also catch up with alumni who made the trip back to Gainesville to attend the conference," noted second-year campaigner John Barnes.

The second panel began shortly after lunch, with participants discussing numerous aspects of the upcoming midterm. These included the possible return of former Gov. Charlie Crist, the re-election challenge facing incumbent Rick Scott, and the future of the Republican Party in general. Former State Senator Paula Dockery (R) turned heads with her honest and insightful advice for the Florida GOP. Campaigning alum Kevin Schafer explained, "As a Republican who is constantly assessing the 2012 election and how the party might be moved in a more viable direction, it was good to hear discussion on this topic. Though I disagreed deeply with some of the prescriptions, that discussion is worthwhile to have." The second panel dealt mainly with state politics and the upcoming 2014 gubernatorial election. Julia Rowe, second-

year campaigner, enjoyed this shift to a narrower focus: "Florida politics was the most interesting part of the conference for me. From how President Obama managed to win our state, to how Charlie Crist might fare in a Democratic primary, I learned a lot from the panelists."

No matter what the 2014 elections have in store, the UF Political Campaigning Conference of 2013 was undoubtedly a success. Students, professors, and alumni enjoyed hearing the panelists' insights, as well as the exchanges that occurred during the Q&A portions.

The UF Campaigning Program would like to thank Kevin Akins, Paula Dockery, Barry Edwards, Damien Filer, Becca Guerra, Adam Goodman, David Hill, Jim Kitchens, Susan MacManus, Seth McKee, Adam Smith, and Ken Wald for their participation as panelists.



**Not about campaigning, but ...
Go Gators !**

Learning about Political Polling

A key element in the Political Campaigning curriculum is a course in Political Polling, taught biennially by Jim Kane of Fort Lauderdale. Kane owns his own polling firm (offering services to both Democrats and Republicans), served as the Florida pollster for President Clinton's reelection campaign in 1996, and for several years was editor of *Florida Voter* (a bipartisan newsletter based in part on periodic surveys of the Florida electorate).

Students in the class learn about the various intricacies of polling — including sampling techniques, question wording and formatting, and how to avoid bias. Campaigners point to Kane's real-world experience and unorthodox lecture style as highlights of the course. According to first-year campaigner Ansley Tuten, "Having someone who's done polling for decades gives us unique insight into how the profession has improved over time." Adds classmate Joel Mendelson, "I've learned the most from writing my own survey questions. I now understand techniques to objectively ask questions in order to achieve the most accurate polling results possible."

Political Polling, along with the other practical courses offered by the Campaigning Program, helps students to make the connection between academic research and the real world. This robust commitment to a broad-based degree gives our graduates the kind of foundation needed for a successful career in politics.



The University of Florida's Graduate Program in Political Campaigning (UF/PC) is designed to provide students with the skills, insights, and experiences that are so critical for success in the ever-changing profession of politics and political consulting. Unlike other programs in professional politics, UF's M.A. in Political Campaigning combines the best of both academic study and practical experience.

By incorporating academic study in the fields of voting behavior, political participation, public opinion, political parties, and political communication, students are presented with a sound theoretical basis that can be used to better understand the "how and why" of political campaigns.

Political Campaigning Program (UF/PC)

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Yes! I want to Support UF/PC

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Checks should be payable to the *University of Florida Foundation*, with the name of the fund on the memo line. Please mail your check to:

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