
UCF Forum

8-4-2016

UCF Forum's New Opinion Columnists to Begin Wednesday

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STARS Citation

Kruckemyer, Gene (2016). UCF forum's new opinion columnists to begin Wednesday. UCF Today, 2016-08-04. Retrieved from <https://today.ucf.edu/undefined-68/>

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UCF Forum's New Opinion Columnists to Begin Wednesday

By gkruckemyer
Thursday, August 4, 2016

The UCF Forum opinion series welcomes nine new columnists Wednesday to share their thoughts on local and world affairs, social issues, personal challenges, life lessons and other commentaries.

For the next 12 months, the new columnists – faculty and staff members and one student – will take turns writing for the series each week.

They are replacing the current panel of writers who have spent the past year providing their observations on topics such as: ["The United States Could Use a Therapist General,"](#) ["Want to Make it in This World? Better Learn to Collaborate"](#) and ["Political Ads Might Not Change Your Vote – But They May Get You to the Polls."](#)

For all their contributions to the UCF Forum this past year, thank you columnists **Michael Bass** (College of Optics & Photonics), **Traci Evison**(Human Resources and Research & Commercialization), **Heather Gibson**(School of Performing Arts), **Yolanda Hood** (Curriculum Materials Center),**Barry Jason Mauer** (Department of English), **Michael Preston** (Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities based at UCF), **Elizabeth Santiago** (junior majoring in psychology), and **William Steiger** (College of Business Administration).

The new columnists will bring new experiences and viewpoints to the UCF Forum. Their diverse backgrounds are in philosophy, marketing, engineering, athletics and other fields. Some are fairly new to UCF and others have been at the university many years.

Here are the columnists who will share their opinions during the fifth year of the UCF Forum:

Ali P. Gordon

Ali P. Gordon is an associate professor in the UCF Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering. Prior to joining UCF in 2006, he earned a B.S. in mathematics at Morehouse College and a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from Georgia Tech. He serves as the faculty advisor for the campus chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He authored *A Handbook for Experiments in Mechanics of Materials* and *Dictionary of Experiments of Mechanics of Materials*, and his research interest are mechanical behavior of materials and structures, failure analysis, and machine design. He can be reached at ali@ucf.edu.

Germayne Graham

Germayne Graham is the associate director of UCF's LEAD Scholars Academy, which is dedicated to helping students develop leadership abilities through course work, service learning and campus engagement. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Spelman College, her master's from Troy University and her doctorate from Auburn University. She came to UCF in 2001 as a staff psychologist in Counseling and Psychological Services. While at UCF, she has been presented with the Black History Month Legacy Award, the Multi-Cultural Student Center Faculty Woman of the Year Award, and several recognitions from her department, Student Development and Enrollment Services, but she says mentoring students has been her biggest accomplishment. She also teaches dance to young girls and is active in her church. She can be reached at Germayne.Graham@ucf.edu.

Bruce Janz

Bruce Janz is a professor in the UCF Department of Philosophy and co-director of the Center for Humanities and Digital Research. He also is a faculty member in the Texts and Technology Ph.D. program. He earned his master's degree and doctorate in philosophy at the University of Waterloo in Canada. He has been at UCF since 2003 and served as department chair 2008-13. He is the author of *Philosophy in an African Place*, co-author of *A Neurophenomenology of Awe and Wonder: Towards a Non-Reductionist Cognitive Science*, and numerous chapters and articles on theories of place and space, African philosophy, hermeneutics and phenomenology, French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, digital humanities, and contemporary European philosophy. He has also taught in Canada, Kenya and South Africa. He can be reached at Bruce.Janz@ucf.edu.

Gerrod Lambrecht

Gerrod Lambrecht is director of UCF football operations under new coach Scott Frost. Before coming to Orlando in 2015, he was a corporate-strategy consultant to various organizations in the health care industry. From 2008-14, he served as the chief operating officer for an Indianapolis-based health care company, and from 1998-2008 he was a divisional vice president for Healthcare Services Group Inc. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and management from Concordia University in Nebraska, where he also played football and coached the offensive line a year. He also later coached the offensive and defensive lines at Valparaiso University 2000-02. He and his wife, Sarah, are expecting their fourth child this year. He can be reached at Gerrod@athletics.ucf.edu.

Carolyn A. Massiah

Carolyn A. Massiah is an associate lecturer in the UCF College of Business Administration's marketing department. She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration at the University of New Mexico, her master's at the University of Colorado, and her Ph.D. at Arizona State University. She has been at UCF 11 years. Her research focuses on intergroup relations among consumers, student engagement, student entitlement, mass section instruction, and delivery modes. She has been published in several business journals and has won UCF awards including the 2013-14 Faculty Advisor of the Year, 2014 College of Business Administration's Excellence in Faculty-Student Engagement Award, and the 2010 and 2015 Teaching Incentive Program Award. She was inducted into the Young Alumni Hall of Fame of the Anderson School of Management at the University of New Mexico in 2010. She can be reached at Carolyn.Massiah@ucf.edu.

Amanda Osorio

Amanda Osorio is a UCF junior majoring in humanities and cultural studies, and minoring in magazine journalism. She moved from California to Miami in third grade, and then to Orlando to attend UCF. She is of Puerto Rican descent and said she is passionate about sharing her Latin culture with others. She loves to read mystery, fantasy, romance and fiction novels, and to binge watch to catch up on her favorite TV shows such as *Game of Thrones* and *Orange is the New Black*. She said she admires some past eras – such as the 70s – because they were simpler times. After graduation she hopes to work for a magazine and/or a digital media production. She can be reached at amandaosorio08@yahoo.com.

Meg Scharf

Meg Scharf is associate director for communication, assessment and public relations at UCF Libraries. She has participated in the growth and change at the university for 32 years and is interested in the library's role in bringing together people, technology and information resources. She holds a master's degree in library science from Indiana University Bloomington and an MBA from the University of Central Florida. She holds a bachelor's degree in English and German from St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She has published in several professional journals and has been a presenter at numerous library conferences. Before coming to UCF she worked in advertising and marketing in Orlando and as a librarian for the Ohio Legislative Service Commission Research Library. She can be reached at meg@ucf.edu.

Jim Smith

Jim Smith is assistant director of the UCF Valencia Osceola Campus, part of UCF's Regional Campuses. He has worked at UCF for 20 years, starting at the Cocoa campus in 1996 as an audio video specialist/marketing coordinator before transferring to student services two years later. He moved to the UCF Valencia Osceola Campus in Kissimmee as coordinator of student services in 2012 and later was promoted to assistant director. In this position, he collaborates with Valencia College and community agencies to grow the campus programs and student population, which currently is more than 400 each semester. He graduated from UCF with a bachelor's degree in human resource management and a master's in public administration, and has been a member of the Space Coast Chapter of the UCF Alumni Association since 1998. He can be reached at Jim.Smith@ucf.edu.

Nathan Vink

Nathan Vink is the assistant director of UCF's Outdoor Adventure, which oversees adventure trips, the campus challenge course, equipment rentals, climbing tower and Lake Claire. Before coming to UCF in 2012, he lived in Utah and spent eight years working with the Colorado Outward Bound School as a wilderness instructor, course director and program manager. He is a certified wilderness first responder and climbing-wall instructor, and previously was a certified whitewater river guide and swift water rescue technician. He holds a master's degree in higher education and policy studies from UCF and a bachelor's in journalism from Butler University. While at

Butler, he played on the men's soccer team four years. Following graduation, he worked as the assistant editor of Appliance Magazine. He can be reached at Nathan.Vink@ucf.edu.

Their opinion columns, which are a project of the UCF News & Information office, post each Wednesday on the UCF Today website. They also are printed on various other platforms locally and nationally, such as the Huffington Post. Columns are read by the writers on WUCF-FM (89.9) on Sunday mornings between 7:50 and 8 a.m., and the columns also are archived as podcasts by the radio station.

To read all of the UCF Forums since the series started four years ago – more than 200 by individuals from all over the university – go to UCF Libraries' new [STARS](#) digital repository. The chronological list can also be searched by author or topic.