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UFCJC to Provide \$100,000 in 2019 and 2020 to Support Student-Run Newspaper

The Independent Florida Alligator provides immersion opportunities for students and vital news to the community

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The [University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications](#) (UFCJC) announced today that it is providing \$100,000 to [The Independent Florida Alligator](#), the student-run newspaper and web site at the University of Florida, to help support it as a significant immersion experience for students and provider of vital news and information to the UF community.

The College will provide \$100,000 for both the 2019- 2020 and 2020-2021 fiscal years. Unlike most college newspapers, the Alligator has not received any direct financial support from the University since it became independent in 1973. This support will not affect *The Alligator's* journalistic independence going forward.

The Alligator, which has published in some form since 1906, provides journalism and media management experience for 80 – 100 students each semester. All editorial positions are held by students, most of whom are UFCJC students.

“The Independent Florida Alligator, while not affiliated with the College, has been an important venue for our student journalists, particularly those who want to pursue careers with newspaper media companies,” said Diane McFarlin, UFCJC dean. “Equally important, for more than 100 years it has been a source of news about the University and the UF community. This is a heritage that no one wants to lose.”

The newspaper reaches some 21,000 readers and its web site, [alligator.org](#), averages 117,000 unique visitors a month.

[Like most newspaper companies](#), *The Alligator* has faced a difficult environment for print advertising dollars, its main source of revenue needed to support the editorial operation, print production and distribution. Since 2010, advertising revenue has decreased 48 percent. In fall 2017, the newspaper reduced print publication from five days a week to three to cut operating costs.

“As we move forward, our focus is on diversifying and creating new streams of revenue,” said *Alligator* General Manager Shaun O’Connor, one of the few full-time employees. “This agreement with the College of Journalism and Communications is going to be huge step in that direction. I am grateful that Dean McFarlin values *The Alligator* and is willing to take an active role on helping us secure our future, all while the operation maintains its full independence.”

The financial support for the newspaper is part of a continued significant investment in real-world opportunities for UFCJC students, one of the hallmarks of the College. In the College’s Innovation News Center, student journalists work alongside professionals to provide news to 19 North Central Florida counties, on radio, TV and online. News and production students disseminate content through seven media properties housed at the College, including the local NPR, PBS and ESPN affiliates. And advertising and public relations students work with local, regional and national clients in The Agency, which also is managed by professionals.

According to the *Alligator*’s web site, “The *Alligator* was founded in 1906 as The University News, which was an independent, student-owned newspaper created to serve the University of Florida when it opened in Gainesville. In 1912, the newspaper became a part of the University of Florida administration, and was renamed the Florida *Alligator*... The *Alligator* became a daily newspaper in 1963 and ceased being printed at the (then) Gainesville Daily Sun.” In 1973, the newspaper became completely independent of UF.

About The Independent Florida Alligator

The Independent Florida Alligator, a student-run newspaper at the University of Florida, provides news and information to the UF community online and in print three days a week. Students provide all editorial content and support the *Alligator*’s business operations. The newspaper has been publishing, under various names, since 1906. It became independent from UF in 1973.

About the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications

The [University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications](#), recognized by its peers as one of the premier programs in the country, is driving innovation and engagement across the disciplines of advertising, journalism, public relations and telecommunication. The college’s strength is drawn from both academic rigor and experiential learning. It offers bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees and certificates, both online and on campus. CJC students have the opportunity to gain practical experience in the Innovation News Center, which generates content across multiple platforms, and The Agency, an integrated strategic communication and consumer research agency focused on marketing to young adults. The College includes seven broadcast and digital media properties, the Joseph L. Brechner Center for Freedom of Information and the nation’s only STEM Translational Communication Center and Center for Public Interest Communications.

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