

*GAO proudly presents...*

# **The GATOR**

A **G**raduate **A**stronomy **T**reatise **O**n **R**elocating to  
Gainesville and the University of Florida

*7th Edition: July 2007*

*(Last updated by Aaron Grocholski and Catherine Cassidy with minor revisions by  
Michelle Edwards)*



# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Department Contact Info . . . . .	5
1.2	People You Should Know About . . . . .	5
1.3	Graduate Student Contacts . . . . .	6
<b>2</b>	<b>Things You Need to Know... Always</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Academic Requirements – Years 1 & 2 . . . . .	7
2.1.1	Graduate Program Core Courses . . . . .	7
2.1.2	Graduate Program Elective Courses . . . . .	7
2.1.3	Second Year Research Project . . . . .	8
2.2	Academic Requirements – Non-Thesis Masters Degree . . . . .	8
2.3	Academic Requirements – Ph.D. degree . . . . .	9
2.4	Registration Information . . . . .	10
<b>3</b>	<b>Things to Do Right Away</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1	The Gator One Card . . . . .	13
3.2	Parking Decals . . . . .	13
3.3	The Bus System (RTS) . . . . .	14
3.4	Health Care and Insurance . . . . .	14
3.5	Computer Stuff . . . . .	15
3.6	Teaching . . . . .	16
3.7	Living Accommodations . . . . .	16
<b>4</b>	<b>Things You Need To Know Less Urgently</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1	Fellowships and Grants . . . . .	18
4.2	Residency . . . . .	19
4.3	Department Events . . . . .	20
4.3.1	Journal Club . . . . .	20
4.3.2	Colloquium . . . . .	20
4.3.3	Holiday Party . . . . .	20
4.3.4	Public Night . . . . .	20
4.4	Graduate Astronomy Organization (GAO) . . . . .	21
4.4.1	Lunch with the Colloquium Speaker . . . . .	21
4.4.2	T-shirts . . . . .	21
4.4.3	Phone List . . . . .	21
4.4.4	Picnics and Parties . . . . .	21
4.4.5	Coffee Hour . . . . .	22
4.4.6	Happy Hour . . . . .	22
4.4.7	GAO Web Page . . . . .	22
4.4.8	GAO Test Binders . . . . .	22
4.4.9	Magazine Collection . . . . .	22
4.4.10	Student Government Money . . . . .	22
4.5	Graduate Assistants' Union (GAU) . . . . .	23

<b>5</b>	<b>The Really Not Urgent Things You Need To Know</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1	Banking Information . . . . .	24
5.2	Cheap Furniture . . . . .	24
5.3	Places to Eat-Especially for Lunch . . . . .	24
5.4	Places to Eat - Dinner . . . . .	25
5.5	For You Coffee Addicts . . . . .	26
5.6	Bars/Clubs . . . . .	26
	5.6.1 Campus Area (University Ave., near the department) . . . . .	26
	5.6.2 Downtown (near the corner of Univ Ave and Main St.) . . . . .	27
	5.6.3 Archer Rd. . . . .	28
	5.6.4 Others . . . . .	28
5.7	Coupons - A Good Way to Save a Little \$\$ . . . . .	29
5.8	Fun Things To Do . . . . .	29
	5.8.1 In Gainesville . . . . .	29
	5.8.2 On Campus . . . . .	30
	5.8.3 Seasonal Events . . . . .	31
	5.8.4 Out Of Town . . . . .	32
5.9	Miscellaneous Handy Tips . . . . .	33
	5.9.1 Department of Motor Vehicles . . . . .	33
	5.9.2 Airport Transportation . . . . .	33
	5.9.3 Free Bicycle Repair . . . . .	33
	5.9.4 Electronic Bulletin Boards/Classifieds . . . . .	33
5.10	The Last Thing You Need To Know . . . . .	33

# 1 Introduction

This guide is meant to provide you with information that we feel is important for someone starting the graduate program in Astronomy at the University of Florida in Gainesville. We hope you will find this guide useful. We have divided the guide into sections by the urgency with which you'll need them, hopefully. Chapters 1-3 should be read/skimmed prior to your arrival and the others reviewed at your leisure.

Also, for an online version with some helpful links see [www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao/gator.html](http://www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao/gator.html)

## 1.1 Department Contact Info

Here's our basic contact info:

Astronomy Department  
University of Florida  
211 Bryant Space Science Center  
P.O. Box 112055  
Gainesville, FL 32611-2055  
(352) 392-2052  
[www.astro.ufl.edu](http://www.astro.ufl.edu)

## 1.2 People You Should Know About

Here are a few people who you most assuredly will need to interact with in Astronomy:

*Department Chair:* Dr. Stanley F. Dermott

Dr. Dermott's office is located in room 211-E and his email address is [dermott@astro.ufl.edu](mailto:dermott@astro.ufl.edu). Dr. Dermott has an open door policy; therefore, in the event you encounter any difficulties which cannot be resolved through other avenues, he will gladly arrange to meet with you.

*Associate Chair:* Dr. Haywood Smith

Dr. Smith's office is located in room 324 and he can be reached at 392-2052 ext. 236 or [hsmith@astro.ufl.edu](mailto:hsmith@astro.ufl.edu). Dr. Smith acts on behalf of the chair in the chair's absence.

*Graduate Coordinator:* Dr. Anthony Gonzalez

Dr. Gonzalez handles the internal administrative work associated with the graduate program. Questions pertaining to classes, qualifying exams, research or anything else relative to the requirements of the program should be addressed to him. Dr. Gonzalez' office is located in room 318 and he can be reached at 392-2052 ext. 233 or [anthony@astro.ufl.edu](mailto:anthony@astro.ufl.edu).

*Program Assistant:* Catherine Cassidy

Catherine does everything from registration, deadline notifications, degree applica-

tions, and tuition waiver documentation to just about everything else administrative and connected with the graduate program. She is located in room 211 and can be reached at 392-2052 ext. 201 or ccasey@astro.ufl.edu.

*Teaching Lab Director:* Dr. Francisco Reyes

Dr. Reyes oversees the undergraduate astronomy laboratory course AST1022-L which is what most of our Teaching Assistants teach. When you are on a Teaching Assistantship expect to interact with Dr. Reyes. His office is located in room 12 and he can be reached at 392-2052 ext. 229 or reyes@astro.ufl.edu.

*Computer Support:* Ken Sallot and David Edmeades

Ken and David are the department computer support personnel. Your initial contact with them will be to set up your “@astro” email account. Their office is in room 221B and they can be reached at 392-2052 ext. 248 and ext. 252 respectively or admin@astro.ufl.edu

### **1.3 Graduate Student Contacts**

You can find names, office numbers, phone extensions, and email addresses for all of us at [www.astro.ufl.edu/People.html](http://www.astro.ufl.edu/People.html). Feel free to contact any of us if you have questions about the Astronomy program, Gainesville, etc. You might start with Michelle Edwards, Mark Keremedjiev, Margaret Moerchen or Valerie Mikles, as they are the current officers of the Graduate Astronomy Organization.

## 2 Things You Need to Know... Always

### 2.1 Academic Requirements – Years 1 & 2

**DISCLAIMER:** The following is just a general overview put together so that you'll have an idea of what is expected of you, as requirements and course availability are subject to change. A more up-to-date curriculum with requirements should be available once you arrive here, or contact the Graduate Coordinator for the latest information.

#### 2.1.1 Graduate Program Core Courses

During your first two years in the Graduate Program you are required to enroll in and successfully complete a total of six core courses (no grade in any individual core course to be less than a “C” and maintaining a “B”/3.0 GPA average overall). At the present time the six core courses are as follows, in the order you are presently scheduled to take them:

1. Stellar Atmosphere and Radiative Processes (fall, 06)
2. Stellar Structure and Evolution (fall, 06)
3. Interstellar Matter (spring, 07)
4. Galactic & Extragalactic Astronomy (fall, 07)
5. Observational Techniques (fall, 07)
6. Solar System Astrophysics (spring, 08)

#### 2.1.2 Graduate Program Elective Courses

In addition, over the course of your first two years in the Graduate Program you are required to enroll in and successfully complete a minimum of four elective courses (no grade in any individual elective course to be less than a “C” and maintaining a “B”/3.0 GPA average overall for elective course work).

1. Star Formation (fall, 06)
2. Stellar Populations (spring, 07)
3. Active Galaxies (spring, 07)
4. Physical Cosmology (fall, 07)
5. Observational Cosmology (spring, 08)
6. High Energy Astrophysics (spring, 08)

Students are permitted to substitute up to two external upper level (5000 level course) math, physics, computer science, engineering courses for two of the astronomy electives with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator (and your research professor if appropriate). The same guidelines apply to these courses regarding a minimum grade of “C” and maintaining of a “B”/3.0 GPA average overall.

### **2.1.3 Second Year Research Project**

During the second year all students are required to complete a one-year research project. The Second Year Project is ideally small and self-contained, providing an opportunity to try out a field of work to see if it suits your interests. The steps for completing this project are currently as follows:

1. By the end of the spring semester of your first year, you need to select a research advisor.
2. By the end of your first summer, you must form a project (Supervisory) committee. This committee will be composed of your research advisor and two additional faculty members of your choice.
3. Write a one-page project proposal for submission to your committee.
4. DO THE RESEARCH !!!! Start as early as possible – you are required to have your research completed prior to the end of your second spring semester. You should begin the actual research no later than your first summer.
5. When you have completed your project, you will be required to present a summary of your work to your committee. This will take the form of both a written and an oral presentation which usually occurs around the beginning of April (dependent upon availability of committee members) of the second year. The Graduate Coordinator will attend to scheduling the project talk dates/times and will inform you accordingly.
6. After this project you are free to change your topic, advisor and/or committee when beginning work on your Ph.D. thesis.

## **2.2 Academic Requirements – Non-Thesis Masters Degree**

During the normal progression through the graduate program to obtain your Ph.D. degree you should fulfill the requirements for a Masters degree. These requirements are:

1. the successful completion of department core and elective courses
2. maintaining the appropriate grades and GPA requirements in core, elective course work and an overall 3.0 GPA
3. successful completion and presentation of the Second Year Project
4. successful completion of a minimum of 32 credit hours in letter graded course work. Note: the combination of the core and elective course requirements fulfill 30 of

these 32 credits. To minimally meet the additional credit hour requirement you will be enrolled in AST6905 Individual Study credits.

## **2.3 Academic Requirements – Ph.D. degree**

1. the successful completion of department core and elective courses
2. maintaining the appropriate grades and GPA requirements in core, elective course work and an overall 3.0 GPA
3. successful completion and presentation of the Second Year Project
4. successful completion of a minimum of 90 credit hours (graduate level courses, post bachelor credits)
5. successful passing of the written and oral exams for Admission to Candidacy to the Ph.D. program
6. successful passing of the oral examination in defense of your dissertation
7. successful presentation and acceptance by your Supervisory Committee, the department, the college and the University of Florida of your dissertation

At the end of your second spring semester or the beginning of your second summer semester, you will take the written portion of your Admission to Candidacy Qualifying Examination. This is a four-hour written examination consisting of questions relating to the content from the six core courses. Each professor teaching a core course will submit two questions, you must answer one of the two questions from each section. If you do not pass a section of the exam, you may be permitted to retake the exam the following fall term. Failure to pass multiple sections of the exam can result in dismissal from the graduate program.

After the end of the spring semester in your third year you are required to formulate a new Supervisory Committee for your Ph.D. degree. The Supervisory Committee must be composed of a chair (which must be a member of the department graduate faculty), along with a minimum of one faculty member from outside of the department but who must also be a member of the University of Florida graduate faculty, and three additional members of faculty with University of Florida graduate faculty status. In the event you wish to have an individual serve on your committee from outside of the University of Florida community you may do so. However, this individual will only hold “special member” status and cannot be a chair, co-chair or external member of the committee. This individual will be added to the Supervisory Committee and will be in addition to the other five required members. Special paperwork is required to accomplish this, see Catherine and she will handle. Changes

can be made to the members of a Supervisory Committee throughout the time spent in the program, if required. It is not, however, a good idea to change the Committee during the semester in which you intend to graduate.

After much successful progress with your research and with the approval of your research professor, you will take the oral portion of the Admission to Candidacy Qualifying Examination. This exam basically is a defense of your dissertation topic. This oral portion of the exam is in a seminar presentation format, which requires the attendance of all of the members of your Supervisory Committee and can be attended as well by other faculty, staff, students or other interested individuals. After the presentation, a brief period is allotted for the purpose of questions from any of the attendees. Afterwards all attendees with the exception of the Supervisory Committee are dismissed and the Supervisory Committee proceeds to pose any questions they may have directly to the student. Upon successful completion of the oral examination the Supervisory Committee will signoff on the Admission to Candidacy form and the student officially becomes a Ph.D. candidate.

Your second oral examination is your Final Examination in defense of your completed dissertation. This is usually scheduled in the semester that you anticipate receiving your degree. Upon successful completion of your Final Examination the necessary paperwork will be completed and presented to the Graduate School. At this point the student makes any necessary changes to the written final dissertation and submits it to the Graduate School.

## **2.4 Registration Information**

All graduate students are required to enroll in courses in every fall and spring semesters.

Students receiving Teaching Assistantships or Graduate Research Assistantships in the fall and/or spring semesters are required to register for a minimum of 9 credits in each semester they have such assistantships. If a Teaching or Graduate Research Assistantship is provided in the summer term, then students will be required to register for a minimum of 6 credits in summer “C” term or 3 credits in summer “A” and 3 credits in summer “B” terms. If the Assistantship is only for either summer “A” or “B” only 3 credits needs to be registered for to comply with the Assistantship. Tuition waivers will be provided to students receiving either a Teaching or Graduate Research Assistantship. Registration in accordance with these requirements constitutes full-time student status.

Students receiving Fellowships are required to register for 12 credits in the fall and spring semesters and 8 credits in the summer “C” semester (or 4 credits in summer “A” and 4 credits in summer “B” terms). Tuition waivers may or may not be included within the scope of the Fellowship funds. In the event they are not covered by the Fellowship, you are responsible for the payment of the fees. You should discuss this

with your professor in the hope that he/she can assist with defraying these fees. Registration in accordance with these requirements constitutes full-time student status.

In the event you do not have financial support by way of an Assistantship or Fellowship in the semester in which you anticipate graduating, students can register for 3 credits (if a fall or spring semester) or 2 credits in summer “C” semester (no summer “A” or “B” registration permitted)). If you are an International student you need to be very cautious when determining whether to register in this manner in your anticipated graduating semester. If you do so and then end up not graduating it could create difficulties with your visa.

The department Program Assistant (Catherine) will attend to registering you for your needed courses. Students wishing to take course work in addition to the core and elective requirements and outside of the department should check with Catherine for input on how to proceed with adding such courses to the schedule.

### **Undergraduate Course Registration:**

Graduate students are not permitted to include undergraduate courses toward fulfillment of graduate degree requirements (credit hours). The exception to this rule is with *prior approval from the Graduate Coordinator and your research professor*, you may take up to 6 credits of 3000-level or higher course work. In addition, if your tuition is being paid by an Assistantship or Fellowship, unapproved undergraduate courses will not be included in your tuition waiver (you will have to pay for the course(s) yourself).

Graduate students are not permitted to “audit” a class (meaning that you are legitimately sitting in on the class).

### **Fees:**

Every semester that you are a registered student you incur tuition AND fees. Fees are separate from tuition. Fees are usually due by 3:30 PM on the 2nd Friday after classes have begun. Most people pay by check at Criser Hall or if you prefer, you can pay by credit card at a kiosk or online through ISIS (the student information system ([www.isis.ufl.edu](http://www.isis.ufl.edu))). ISIS will be able to give you the payment amount a few days prior to the due date. Usually the cost is approximately \$400 per semester. Pay your fees on time or you will incur a \$100 late payment fee. You can avoid the late fee by paying down your debt to \$99.00 – no late charges are applied for balances of less than \$100.

Some students receiving Fellowships have the payment of their FEES included.

Students receiving Alumni Fellowships will have their fees paid by the department.

Students receiving Teaching Assistantships or Graduate Research Assistantships often have their fees paid by their department professor. This is a matter to be discussed and agreed to between the student and the professor with whom they are conducting their research. Professors are not required to pay their student's fees.

Some students on Teaching Assistantships during their first year may not have the opportunity to have fees paid by a research professor. These students will bear the cost of the fees themselves.

**DO NOT EVER PAY ANY TUITION OR FEES TO CRISER HALL WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING WITH THE DEPARTMENT PROGRAM ASSISTANT.**

## 3 Things to Do Right Away

### 3.1 The Gator One Card

One of the most important things you'll need to have as a UF student is your Gator One ID card. You can get it at the ID Card Services office in Room G071 of the UF Bookstore & Welcome Center. It costs \$15 to get your card (cash, check, Visa/Mastercard, debit card) and you need to bring a photo ID with you (e.g. drivers license or passport). It is highly recommended that you get the card as soon as you can. The length of the line increases exponentially by the hour once classes start. You need your Gator One card for general identification on campus, to ride the RTS (on- and off-campus buses are free), to use the libraries on campus, to get your parking decal, and to attend sporting events.

In addition to the uses listed above, you can put money on your card to use as a vending machine debit card on campus. To do this, go to the ID Card Services office. Your card is also needed if you decide to be on a campus meal plan (see [www.bsd.ufl.edu/dining/generalinfo.asp](http://www.bsd.ufl.edu/dining/generalinfo.asp)).

### 3.2 Parking Decals

If you are going to park your car on campus (except on weekends or game days), you'll need to have a parking decal. You are allowed a student commuter parking decal, which means you can park in any lots marked "Commuter" or "All Decal." Both are denoted by *green* signs. The cost for a year-long pass is \$104 this year and the parking decal year begins on with the beginning of the fall semester. Parking Decals can be purchased (by check or MC/Visa) at the trailer-like building on the corner of North-South Dr. and Mowry Rd. You'll need to have your Gator-1 card and your vehicle registration. It is advised that you do this as soon as possible as the line for parking decals also increases as  $e^{x^2}$  once classes begin and tickets are issued. (Please note: it is possible to get a parking ticket while waiting in line to buy your decal or pay off old tickets!)

Parking tickets are generally \$20 and can easily lead to your car being booted. You will get THE BOOT if you have 3 or more unpaid tickets or if you accumulate 5 or more (paid or unpaid) tickets in the decal year. To get the your car un-booted you'll have to take an extra half hour, at least, to go to the big trailer park and pay your tickets plus a \$35 impound fee, then go back to your car and await the friendly campus police officer who will unboot your car and scowl at you. There is a \$5 fee added to each ticket that is not paid in full or appealed within 20 days of being issued.

Also, bear in mind that if you choose to drive to school, parking in the commuter lot can be very stressful. Most spots are taken by 8am. After that, you must wait for a class to end and follow a student going to their car, and still fight to get the spot. It is much less stressful and costly to take the bus, ride your bike, or walk to

school. However, should you decide ride your bike to campus, make sure you know and understand the bike rules on campus. Moving violation fines are the same amount whether you're travelling by bike or by car.

For more information, you can check out the Transportaion and Parking Services web site: <http://www.parking.ufl.edu/>

### 3.3 The Bus System (RTS)

The website for the Regional Transit System (RTS) is [www.go-rtts.com](http://www.go-rtts.com). It will tell you the hours of operation and other useful things. All UF students have unlimited access to all RTS bus service **FREE**. Some of the routes that go to/from campus (especially to the south & west) run until 2am on weeknights, and there are also a few Later Gator routes that go downtown 9pm-3am Thurs.-Sat. to help people go out and party. Just show the driver your Gator One ID card when boarding the bus. This is not valid on Special Services such as Gator Aider, etc.

The time between buses is different for each route, so be sure to check the bus schedule ([www.go-rtts.com/routes/index.html](http://www.go-rtts.com/routes/index.html)) in advance. The buses do not strictly adhere to the printed schedule, especially on the less frequent routes. It's best to come five minutes before the scheduled departure time in case the driver decides to leave early, but bring something to read since buses are frequently late, especially at the end of the day due to increased traffic. What can we say, the system is erratic but it's free!

Here are some places where you can get a printed schedule, once they come out: on any bus, the Reitz Union Information Center (located just inside the Reitz Union on the first floor), in the Alligator, in the Gainesville Sun, and the APO Kiosk (the blue shack at the bus stops near the HUB).

Note: There is (essentially) no bus service on Sundays.

### 3.4 Health Care and Insurance

The University of Florida now provides health insurance to eligible graduate students. Directly from the new GatorGard Care webpages:

"...Graduate students on an appointment as a graduate assistant, teaching assistant, or research assistant may participate in the GatorGradCare Health Plan beginning January 2007. To be eligible, University of Florida graduate students must be enrolled in a graduate degree program, on an appointment through University of Florida, appropriately registered and appointed 0.25 FTE (full-time equivalent) or greater for a particular semester."

A full list of eligibility requirements, enrollment information, and brochures are available at: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/benefits/gatorgradcare.htm>

A few students purchase insurance independently, without the university subsidy for Scarborough and PSI. (<http://www.medhealthinsurance.com/individual.htm> has a sizable list of quotes.) Some students may also be on their parents' plan through age 25, though this is given up if you become a Florida resident. For general questions about insurance, try calling the benefits office at (352) 392-1225.

Also Remember that Shands Hospital and the Physicians at Shands both have Charity Programs. These programs will cover 100% of all procedures (e.g. surgery), use of the hospital, doctors etc. The maximum income in order to qualify for 100% coverage was \$19,000/year in 2005. For more information, talk to Cynthia.

You also pay, in your fees, to use the Student Health Care Center, aka the Infirmary. Be aware that if, for some reason, you are not registered for a semester (sometimes this happens in the summer) you will either have to pay \$74 per summer semester to use the infirmary or have \$60 added to your total bill. You will only pay 20% of this \$60 fee, so if you are going for a one time visit, the latter option might be the better choice. If you will need to visit the infirmary several times over the summer, you may want to pay the semester fees.

Since the infirmary does not supply dentists and other specialists, here is a list of local doctors recommended by people in this department:

Dentist: The dental school at UF offers cleaning and minor dental work for *very* cheap prices. (Ask Margaret for more info.) For more extensive work (like root canals) Dr. Julia Thaler comes very highly recommended. Some students enroll in the CompDent dental plan offered through Student Government. It costs about \$60 per year plus co-payments for procedures performed. There are many dentists in Gainesville who accept this insurance plan.

Eye Doctors: W.H. Marshall, Newsome

MDs: Ann Grooms (at the infirmary)

Veterinarians: The UF Veterinary School of Medicine can see pretty much any type of animal. For those of you who are cat lovers, All Cats Healthcare is a very good place to take your pet.

### **3.5 Computer Stuff**

You'll want to get your computer account set up right away. Our computer administrators are Ken and David in Room 221 (x248 or x252). Their email address is [admin@astro.ufl.edu](mailto:admin@astro.ufl.edu). You may also want to pick up the UF Software CD for \$3 at the technology center in the bookstore; it is for PCs and Macs and has ssh, ftp, zip-ping/unzipping programs, and other potentially useful software. Also note that there

is a department laptop (Windows) in Ken and David's office which is available for checkout.

### 3.6 Teaching

In order to maintain control of your class you should differentiate yourself from your students. You should dress differently, carry yourself differently and command an authoritative presence. You can be nice later, but the first day, it is very important that your students see you as an authority figure.

Your syllabus is a good way to make a clear outline of what you expect from the students. Giving them a clear idea of what they must do to pass the class and what they must do to get a good grade is an important part of successfully teaching a class. A good syllabus can prevent problems when it comes time to assign grades to your students. You must also give your class a clear outline of how you expect them to complete their lab reports. Talk to former TAs or Dr. Reyes for suggestions or sample syllabi and lab report outlines. There are also some teaching resources kept in the printer area of Rm. 309.

Be consistent with your grading. This is the most difficult task, but one of the most important things you'll do as a TA. A good approach is to decide how many points you want to make each section of a lab worth, *before you grade the labs*. Also, at least in the beginning, take the time to check and make sure you have been consistent with your point deductions.

*Do NOT date your students!* The university does not support that kind of behavior. It is an obvious conflict of interest, but TAs have lost sight of this in the past. The consequences of such behavior is usually termination of your teaching assistantship.

The U.F. Teaching Center (<http://www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu>) organizes optional teacher training workshops during both fall and spring semesters that are designed for TAs. They cover a variety of useful topics, and you are given a certificate of completion if you go to enough of them.

### 3.7 Living Accommodations

There are many different kinds of living accommodations available to graduate students in Gainesville. There are some university-owned graduate apartments, but many of these are for married graduate students or those with children and they have long waiting lists (over 1 year). However, there are many apartment complexes in the city with varying price ranges. Decent 1 BRs start in the mid \$500s, and decent 2BRs start in the mid \$600s. Another option is renting a home with other students.

The best sources of information tend to be the classifieds in the Gainesville Sun ([www.sunone.com](http://www.sunone.com)), the Independent Florida Alligator ([www.alligator.org](http://www.alligator.org)), and the

Gainesville Apartment and Condominium Guide ([www.gainesville-rent.com](http://www.gainesville-rent.com)). You can find renter feedback for many apartment complexes at [www.apratings.com](http://www.apratings.com). There is an apartment finding and roommate matching service in town called Apartment Hunters ([www.apartmenthunters.com](http://www.apartmenthunters.com)). You can easily go there in person; it's on University Ave. just west of 13th St. The apartment finding is free but roommate matching costs \$6 for 3 days, \$20 for 30 days, and \$30 for 60 days. Other than that, most large apartment complexes have web pages, and the maps from the Regional Transit System ([www.go-rts.com](http://www.go-rts.com)) show the locations of most of the major complexes. [www.watsonrent.com](http://www.watsonrent.com) and [www.bosshardtrealty.com](http://www.bosshardtrealty.com) have some house rental options. If you will not have a car, you will want to make sure you choose a place either within walking distance of campus or on a bus route.

Some students wait until they arrive in Gainesville to find an apartment, and they generally have not had any problems finding accommodations. However, it is also possible to arrange renting an apartment over the internet or phone before you arrive here. If you choose to rent an apartment or house before your arrival, you'll want to set up utilities and phone service ahead of time too. Utility service can be set up through Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) at [www.gru.com](http://www.gru.com), (352) 334-3434 or 1-800-818-3436. Phone service can be arranged through BellSouth at 1-800-753-2909. Cable service is available via Cox Communications at 1-888-269-9693. If you are setting up an apartment "sight unseen" you may want to speak to some of us who live in Gainesville just to find out if it's in an OK neighborhood and what sort of students usually live there—there are some complexes that tend to be more undergraduates, etc.

## 4 Things You Need To Know Less Urgently

### 4.1 Fellowships and Grants

Most fellowships and grants have deadlines in January and February. The most obvious ones to apply for are (1) the NASA Graduate Research Program (NASA GSRP), which awards a \$18,000 12-month salary and an additional \$6,000 for travel and University expenses (like tuition and fees) renewable for up to three years, (2) the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF GRF) which awards a \$30,000 12-month salary plus a cost-of-education allowance of \$10,500 to cover tuition and fees only, awarded for three years (**N.B. This deadline is in November!**), and (3) the NASA Florida Space Grant (NASA FSG) which awards a \$20,000 9-month salary renewable for up to three years. The FSG's target group has shifted somewhat to engineers, so that we seldom apply for it now. However, if you are doing instrumentation work, it's worth a try. Other significant fellowships include the Michelson Fellowship, the Amelia Earhart Fellowship (for women, available to international students), and the one-semester U.F. CLAS Dissertation Fellowship (call the CLAS Dean's Office at 392-2230 for info). There are others which you can find out about by searching the web (try [fundingopps.cos.com](http://fundingopps.cos.com)).

It is recommended that you apply for fellowships and grants as soon as you have selected an advisor and settled on a dissertation topic. Many students apply even before they have a dissertation topic. **Eligibility to apply for the NSF GRF is limited to 1st or 2nd year students (or undergraduate seniors)**. Also note that you are only considered a PhD candidate for fellowship purposes after your *oral candidacy exam*. The qualifying exam, a.k.a. the written comprehensive exam, at the end of your 2nd year does not make you a PhD candidate. (This can be a good thing for some fellowships.) We hope to put together a book of successful proposals to give you an idea of what one is like. We already have a number of students who have received these fellowships, so you can ask them about the details. For all applications, be sure to keep the grants secretary (Debra) in the loop! Applications must go through the university, and they may need a week or more for processing time.

The Department of Astronomy sometimes offers incoming students fellowships like the Grinter and Alumni. As of 2004, the Alumni Fellowship paid \$16,000 a year for 4 years and paid all tuition and fees. Students on this fellowship receive payments of approximately \$650 every 2 weeks. Taxes are not taken out but see the paragraph below for information on how to pay taxes as you go; otherwise you end up owing several hundred dollars come April. Students on fellowships are still required to TA for at least one year which counts as one of the four fellowship time periods.

Once you get a fellowship, the university will no longer withhold taxes from your income. This does not mean that you do not have to pay income tax, however. A tax law passed in 1987 stated that income for graduate students through fellowships and grants is taxable. To avoid paying a huge lump sum in April, some graduate fellows

pay quarterly tax. It is a simple process; the IRS website has more info. Most students pay around \$300 quarterly, which offsets most of what they owe the government at the end of a year. **WARNING:** Most CPAs will disagree with you that you must pay taxes on this income, but carefully read the documentation which Debra will give you when your fellowship begins. Note: TAs will have income withheld, even if they are on a fellowship.

Travel money and small research grants are available from the university, some via the Graduate Astronomy Organization (described below), and applications for these are often successful. Individuals can apply for RGP graduate student travel funds, CLAS travel funds, and GSC travel and research grants. GAO as an organization can apply for travel funds from CLASSC or BOCC. External sources of money include NASA Academy's Soffen Memorial Fund Travel Grant and the Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research Program. Minorities should look into the South East Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (SEAGEP).

## 4.2 Residency

Florida residency is no longer required for grad students. It may be a good idea if you decide to take classes on the side, want to vote in local elections, etc., but it may also remove you from your parents' insurance coverage. The process takes a year, so you will want to begin well in advance. In order to apply for residency, you should try to have as much supporting documentation as possible with dates that are a year old. Some important documents are:

- Florida driver's license
- Declaration of Domicile
- Florida vehicle registration
- Your tax return
- Your parents' tax return
- A copy of your rental lease

Thus, you should apply for a Florida driver's license, register to vote, and if you have a car, get it registered in Florida. The Declaration of Domicile does not have to be dated for one year so you can file that any time before you apply for residency. It costs \$12.00 in cash or check. You can obtain it at the Circuit Court Clerk. These documents will usually be enough to grant you residency. The important thing about residency is you must show that you've lived in Gainesville for 1 year **AND** that you can't claim residency elsewhere. This means that if a) your parents claim you as a dependent and they are out of state or b) your driver's license and/or car registration show another state, then the application will be rejected.

When you have resided in Florida for a year and have all the necessary documentation, you should obtain a Request for Change in Residency Status and fill out the appropriate information attaching with it copies of the supporting documentation.

You may have already received this form in the mail, but if not you can get it from the graduate secretary or from the Admissions Office in Criser Hall.

### **4.3 Department Events**

#### **4.3.1 Journal Club**

Journal Club is an opportunity to find out what is new in many different areas of astronomy. Also, it is an opportunity for you to fine tune your listening and speaking skills. Anyone (student, faculty, or post-doc) is welcome to sign up and present an article that he/she has read in an astronomical journal and found interesting. Typically, two articles are presented at each Journal Club (one faculty, one student). This way, a wide range of topics will be discussed. If you are not teaching during Journal Club, it is expected that you will attend.

#### **4.3.2 Colloquium**

Colloquium is normally held one day a week, in the afternoon from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. The day changes based on room availability and, especially during faculty searches, colloquia may be held multiple times per week. Cookies and soda are served at 3:45pm until the talk begins. Colloquium is an opportunity to meet visiting scientists and to learn about different areas of astronomy. Occasionally, faculty or graduate students from UF will give colloquium talks. You are expected to attend every colloquium, unless you are observing or at a professional meeting. Therefore, do NOT schedule your office hours (or anything else) during colloquium.

#### **4.3.3 Holiday Party**

There is a Holiday Party held every December before Winter Break. It is usually scheduled once classes and exams are finished, to accomodate the students who are taking classes.

The Holiday Party, like most department functions, is announced by email to everyone and usually become a pot-luck plus donation event. That is, typically everyone brings something little and donates a small amount of money to purchase general items such as paper plates and plastic ware, etc. Sign-up sheets are on Catherine's desk as the event nears and she usually collects the donations.

#### **4.3.4 Public Night**

Public Night is held every Friday night (while classes are in session) from 8:30 to 10:00pm at the Campus Teaching Observatory (located off Museum Road behind the New Physics Building). Typically, a half dozen telescopes are set up for the general public to view whatever is interesting that night—the moon, planets, nebulae, clusters etc. A TA is in charge of running Public Night, but extra help is greatly appreciated! This is a great chance to interact with the public, answer some astronomy questions

and get a chance to actually look at the stars for once. For more details, visit the Public Night webpage at [www.astro.ufl.edu/public.html](http://www.astro.ufl.edu/public.html).

## **4.4 Graduate Astronomy Organization (GAO)**

A few years ago, we established the Graduate Astronomy Organization (GAO), which is a registered student organization with the University. GAO currently has a formal system of elected officers (president, secretary, treasurer, student-faculty liaisons) as well as a number of ad-hoc positions and committees that are created when deemed necessary. You can find the current list of GAO officers on the GAO web page (<http://www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao>).

The purpose of GAO is first and foremost to promote a sense of community among the graduate students and the department as a whole. In addition, GAO seeks to improve communication between students and faculty, as well as provide a link from the Astronomy Department to the University's Graduate Student Council. With these goals in mind, GAO oversees and organizes numerous events and activities described below.

### **4.4.1 Lunch with the Colloquium Speaker**

Every week that we have an external colloquium speaker, the graduate students have an opportunity to take this person out to lunch. This is a student-only event and a great chance to talk to this person in a fairly informal setting. If you are interested in organizing a lunch, talk to the faculty member in charge of colloquium. If you are interested in going to lunch, just show up!!! (We usually go around noon to someplace cheap and yummy.)

### **4.4.2 T-shirts**

Periodically we have designed UF astronomy T-shirts. If you want more info on this or are interested in helping out with a new T-shirt, come to the first GAO meeting!

### **4.4.3 Phone List**

GAO maintains an Astronomy Home Phone List containing both home and office phones for the grad students in the department. We've enclosed a copy of last year's list; however, beware that this info will not necessarily be correct when you get here. An updated list will be available shortly after you arrive and we'll tell you where to get it and who to send your info to.

### **4.4.4 Picnics and Parties**

We try to have 1-2 department picnics a year (fall and/or spring). Usually, they are held at Lake Wauburg (a facility owned and operated by the University of Florida, free to all students, faculty and staff). These are typically fun events involving volleyball,

kayaking, water guns, and lots of food! The set-up is similar to most department events in that everyone signs up to bring something and also donates a small amount of money.

#### **4.4.5 Coffee Hour**

“Coffee Hour” is somewhat of a misnomer, since it runs only from 10:30 to 11 AM, and you might also have tea or cocoa. It is an informal gathering open to all in the department to meet and converse, ideally encouraging interaction between those who wouldn’t otherwise see one another in the department. In the near future we would like to have a set of astro-ph or similar articles posted (watch for a web page!) for discussion as well. Coffee Hour is held in the conference room at present, and has also previously occurred at 2 PM. Cookies and hot drinks are provided, and donations are always welcome. Contact Margaret or Suvrath if you’re interested in helping out.

#### **4.4.6 Happy Hour**

We have a departmental Happy Hour at various drinking establishments on a semi-regular weekly basis, currently on Thursdays starting around 6pm. Sometimes it’s near the department, sometimes it’s downtown, depending on the whim of the reigning Beer Baron(ess).

#### **4.4.7 GAO Web Page**

Our web page at [www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao](http://www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao) includes an online version of this Guide (with links), however, sometimes the paper version and web page don’t get updated simultaneously.

#### **4.4.8 GAO Test Binders**

With approval from the faculty, GAO maintains binders of old tests from the core classes. This is to provide all students in graduate courses with equal access to all study material. The binders are currently located in Rm. 309, in the printer area.

#### **4.4.9 Magazine Collection**

GAO has subscribed to several magazines of interest such as “Sky and Telescope” and “Astronomy”. These magazines are accessible to all faculty and students and are currently located in Rm. 309, in the printer area.

#### **4.4.10 Student Government Money**

As a student organization, GAO is able to get student government money. In the past, this has been applied to magazine subscriptions, bringing in our own colloquium speaker, Public Night materials, and travel to conferences. If you have any suggestions, or are interested in getting money for travel, talk to the GAO Treasurer (currently Dave Clark).

## 4.5 Graduate Assistants' Union (GAU)

This is the union that represents teaching and research assistants. You are not required to become a member, but it is something that you should consider. The union takes responsibility for presenting student grievances to the university and negotiating solutions, securing cost-of-living pay raises, etc. Recent successes have included health insurance for all graduate assistants, suspension of the \$50 per semester extra fee for international students, and a fee reduction for out-of-state and international GAs, who now pay in-state rates. Dues are 1% of your paycheck. To join, ask around for the current GAU steward for our department (one of the grad student TAs or RAs).

## 5 The Really Not Urgent Things You Need To Know

### 5.1 Banking Information

There are many banks that you can choose from. Here is a list of the most popular banks. Give them a call so you can decide for yourself which one has the most benefits.

Wachovia 1-800-922-4684

Bank of America 1-800-299-BANK

Sun Trust 1-800-786-8787

Campus USA Credit Union 1-800-367-6440

### 5.2 Cheap Furniture

The Alligator and Sun advertise furniture sales, sometimes you can get a deal there. There are lots of Salvation Army stores in town and some places where one can get used furniture, like Dumas Discount and many others located on Main Street (addresses can be found in the phone book). Other places to get cheap-ish furniture are Target and Walmart. Futon Corner has been a popular choice. Also, look for signs that people post at your apartment complex, especially at the ends of semesters when they get desperate.

### 5.3 Places to Eat-Especially for Lunch

If you can't eat at the same place every day, here are a few suggestions, all within walking or delivery distance:

- **Reitz Union** *Subway, Wendy's, Sushi & Noodle Bar, Capeesh* (Italian), *Home Zone* (American), *Java City*, and (downstairs) *Taco Bell, Orange & Brew* (American), and *Freshens Yogurt*. Also, the 4th floor has *Arredondo Room*, a buffet with soup, salad, and at least 2 meal options for around \$5.
- **Hub** - The food court has *Chick-Fil-A, Einstein's Bagels, Starbucks, and Zia Juice*.
- **Racquet Club** - *Burger King, Java City, Salad Garden, Steak City Cheesesteaks, Boar's Head Delicatessen* (sandwiches), and *Cranberry Farms* (American).
- **Broward Dining Center** - *Fresh Food Company*: all-you-can-eat food with great selection and reasonable prices.
- **A CHEAP vegetarian lunch option** The Hare Krishnas set up a table on the Plaza of the Americas at noon, serving all-you-can-eat vegetarian food for a \$3 donation.

- **Off Campus** Here is a selection, mostly within walking distance of the astronomy building: *Joe's Deli*, *Sub Station*, *Copper Monkey* - American, *Swamp* - American, *Cafe Gardens* - American, *Fritanga Grill* - Cuban, *Pita Pit*, *Larry's Subs*, *Leonardo's* - good pizza by the slice, *Italian Gator* - addictive pizza by the slice, *Smoothie King*, *Planet Smoothie*, *McDonald's*, *Saigon Cafe* - Vietnamese, *El Indio* - Mexican and inexpensive, but a little farther walk, *Caribbean Spice*, *Gator City*, *Steamers*, *Sweet Dreams*, *Farah's On the Avenue* - Middle Eastern, and *Ben & Jerry's* - technically not lunch, but oh well.
- **Delivery** *Papa John's*, *Domino's*, lots of other pizza places, *Orange Garden* - Chinese, *Szechuan Panda*, *China Express*, *Jade Gardens* - Chinese, *Allen's Deli*, *Joe's Deli*

## 5.4 Places to Eat - Dinner

- *Liquid Ginger* - A popular Pan-Asian restaurant located near the Hippodrome. A bit expensive, but the portions are always filling.
- *Dragonfly* - The best sushi place in town. And, they have a wall of tv's showing samurai movies!
- *Emiliano's* - An excellent Caribbean/Puerto Rican style restaurant with AMAZING desserts.
- *Amelia's* - Very tasty Italian restaurant. This is a good place to bring a date!
- *Harry's* - Cajun style cooking that will definitely fill you up.
- *Tapas 12 West* - Tapas style dining downtown. They have some pretty innovative items on their menu.
- *The Melting Pot* - A Fondue restaurant. Not cheap but yummy and lots of fun, although be prepared to work for your dinner! The chocolate fondue is excellent. Reservations are recommended
- *Carrabas Italian Grill* - Excellent Italian cuisine, great atmosphere. We recommend you call ahead to get on the "call ahead list" before you go.
- *Chopstix* - A department favorite. Pan-Asian, with nice decor, huge windows overlooking a lake with alligators, and outside tables; great at sunset!
- *Dinner* - Yes, that's the name! Located in Thornbrooke Village, it's one of the rivals for "best food in town" (377-0996).
- *Bentos* - Japanese food and bubble tea; good stuff!
- *Sonny's* - An excellent place to get good southern BBQ. Keep an eye out for their all-you-can-eat ribs.

- Tex-Mex recommendations - *On the Border* and *Don Pablo's* are good for large parties or fancy dates.
- Mexican food recommendations - *Las Margaritas*, *La Tienda*, *El Norteno*, *La Cabana* (more Caribbean than Mexican). For a complete guide to Mexican food in Gainesville, [www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao/gmexfood.html](http://www.astro.ufl.edu/~gao/gmexfood.html) has Carlos' amazingly thorough review.

## 5.5 For You Coffee Addicts

There are several convenient places to get your coffee fix. Here's a partial list of the town's coffee houses with some comments. For the most part, we've only included the places frequented by the grad students:

- *Java City* - located on campus (in the Racquet Club food court and the Reitz Union). Doesn't have great coffee but is close to the department.
- *Maude's Classic Cafe* - 101 SE 2nd Place (next to the Hippodrome). Great atmosphere - they even have a live jazz band occasionally - plus desserts and other drinks, too. The quality is not necessarily the best; avoid the cappuccino if you are a coffee aficionado, though the macchiato is quite acceptable. Great place for sitting outdoors and pondering the meaning of 'grad school'.
- *Starbuck's* - If you've never heard of Starbuck's you just don't drink enough coffee. They have multiple locations in town: included the HUB, Library West, downtown, Newberry Road next to the cinema, Newberry Road next to Oaks Mall, and Magnolia Park on NW 39th Ave.
- *Coffee Culture* - 5221 NW 43rd St. Independent cafe w/ very good coffee, free wireless, & amusing slogan: "That other place sucks." Drive-through window is very convenient.

## 5.6 Bars/Clubs

Here's a sampler. Since it's a college town, there's a pretty decent selection :-). Thanks to Craig for the original list!

### 5.6.1 Campus Area (University Ave., near the department)

- *Gator City* - Sports Bar with TVs, pool tables, video games, and a good restaurant. A good low-key place to go and hang out. Wed night is ladies night. Usually no cover. (Free pool weekdays until 7pm!)
- *The Grog House* - Bar with several TVs and a small stage and dance floor area. Can get crowded at times, but can be good if you get there early and get a table. Wed night is ladies night. Fri is beat the clock and Sat is free beer and karaoke. Sometimes a cover.

- *The Salty Dog Saloon* - Bar. Very good beer selection and a good place to go, sit at a table, and hang out. Happy Hour is 3-7pm every day. No cover.
- *Balls* - Hole-in-the-wall bar. No cover.
- *The Swamp* - Bar and restaurant with outside seating and free wireless. A good place to start out the night; the beer's a bit expensive, but the happy hour deals are good. Monday night is unofficially sorority night (so you can be there/avoid it that night as you prefer). Live music usually Wed and Fri. \$5 cover after around 9pm some nights.

### 5.6.2 Downtown (near the corner of Univ Ave and Main St.)

- *Durty Nelly's* - Irish Pub. Good place if you get there early enough to get a table. Live Irish music on the weekends. Cover is usually \$2.
- *Market Street Pub* - Bar/Club with pool and darts. One room has lots of tables and a bar. Another room has two bars, more tables, and a large stage/dance floor area. Very good beer selection. Thursday is ladies night (\$5 cover). Friday is '80s night (no cover). Cover varies from nothing to \$5.
- *Bank* - Bar/Club with several rooms each with a bar. Cover usually \$5. 2-for-1 martinis and drafts before 11:30 on Thurs-Sat.
- *Sky* - Bar/Club on the roof of 8 seconds. A few tables and a dance floor area; expect to stand in line and be looked up and down to get in. Sat night is their big night. Cover usually \$5.
- *Side Bar* - Can be good if it's nice outside because you can sit/stand outside. Cover usually \$5. Live music inside on the weekends. Free beer 9pm-1am Thursdays.
- *Stubbie's* - Small bar with over 100 different beers. Good place to hang out if you get there early enough to get a table. Non-smoking.
- *The Top* - Best happy hour downtown, with 2-for-1 drafts (full size pints) and single liquor drinks 5-7 weekdays and 6-8 Saturdays. Good food & vegetarian options.
- *Silver Q* - Pool hall with a basketball hoop and video games.
- *Happy Hour* - Another pool hall, with cheap, HUGE beers.
- *Palace* - Club with a stage for occasional live music. Cover charge.
- *238 West* - Club with several rooms. Cover charge.
- *Fat Tuesday* - Bar/Club with dance floor area. Usually crowded on Tuesday nights. Sometimes a cover charge.

- *Simon's* - Bar/Club with multiple rooms. Cover usually \$5.
- *Speakeasy* - Dark and smoky; find a seat on one of the couches or stand in the crowd at the bar to be seen. Good people-watching.
- *Faces* - A good venue to see local bands; will likely be crammed full like sardines in there.
- *8 Seconds* - Club. Avoid at all costs if you don't like country music and rednecks.

### 5.6.3 Archer Rd.

- *Ale House* - Sports bar and restaurant. Wed is ladies night. No cover. NFL direct ticket.
- Various other restaurant/bars including *Chili's*, *TGI Friday's*, *Hops*, *Bennigan's*, *On the Border*, and more.

### 5.6.4 Others

- *Gators Dockside* - Sports bar and restaurant near SW 34th St. & University. Good place to start out the night. Thursday is ladies night. \$1.50 domestic pints all day every day. NFL direct ticket.
- *Calico Jack's* - Sports bar and restaurant near SW 34th St. & 2nd. Ave. Happy Hour is 3-7 and 11-close every day. NFL direct ticket.
- *Dugout* - Bar with pool and darts. Located behind CJ's.
- *JP Gators* - Pool hall near SW 13th St and 16th Ave.
- *Shamrock* - Irish pub on University and W. 10th. Has novel vegetarian options, like a vegetarian Reuben. Also lots of live music there, rarely just Irish.
- *Mellow Mushroom* - University and W. 12th. Has great bucket-o-beer deals, great pizza/calzones/hoagies, and Monday night trivia. Free wireless.
- *Common Grounds* - On Univ. and W. 9th. Most likely place to see touring bands through Gainesville. Also has good local shows.
- *Eddie C's* - On S. Main St.; bar of the people. Bring your own pint glass or drink your 8 ounces with a smile. Good for pool, darts, and live music.

## 5.7 Coupons - A Good Way to Save a Little \$\$

A good source for coupons is the Gator Greenbacks. These are available in the Student Government Office located on the third floor of the Reitz Union, at the APO and around town. In addition, keep your eyes open when reading *The Alligator* because it also has good coupons. Of course, for you hard core coupon clippers, there's always the Sunday edition of *The Gainesville Sun* which is full of your standard Sunday circulars.

## 5.8 Fun Things To Do

### 5.8.1 In Gainesville

A good place to find out what is going on around town is *Scene* magazine in the *Gainesville Sun* on Fridays. The Department of Cultural Affairs maintains a handy website at [www.gvlculturalaffairs.org](http://www.gvlculturalaffairs.org), too.

- Rent movies - *Blockbuster* - not the cheapest, but they have a good selection; *Hollywood Video* - you can rent new releases for five days. The public library and university library systems also have good collections of movies that can be checked out for free. The university collection is currently in Library East; the front desk has binders that list their films alphabetically.
- Go to movies - *Butler Plaza*, *Royal Park*, or *Oaks Mall*. There are student-run movies for cheap or free at the *Reitz Union*. The *Hippodrome State Theater* also shows foreign and independent films, as well as musicals and plays.
- Going out to eat - At one of the fine restaurants listed in this guide.
- Bowling - *Alley Katz* has large rooms and cosmic bowling. The *Reitz Union* is the cheapest and is on campus. The Union also has a game room with pool, foosball, air hockey, and video games. (And the ever-entertaining *Dance-Dance-Revolution*.)
- Mini golf and roller skating - *Fun Works*
- Golf - There are three public courses, two private and the University of Florida Golf Course in town, along with two lighted driving ranges.
- Going to the mall - *Oaks Mall* is really the only traditional mall in town, but *Butler Plaza* has an amazing array of stores.
- *Community Playhouse* 376-4949 or the *Acrosstown Repertory Theater* 375-1321
- Natural sites - *Paynes Prairie*, *Morningside Nature Center*, *Thomas Center Gardens and Historic Center* (located at 302 NE 6th St.), the *Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail* (a 15 mile paved trail, mostly through the woods), *Poe Springs Park* (fishing, boating, picnicking, camping, and hiking), *Kanapaha Botanical Gardens* - 372-4981, and the *Devil's Milhopper sinkhole*.

- *Santa Fe Community Art Gallery* - 395-5621 - on Santa Fe Community College Campus - local artists
- *Thomas Center Galleries* - 334-2197 - "reflecting the diverse talents and aesthetic interests of the whole community in a splendid Renaissance Revival setting"
- *Dance Alive* - Professional dance company. Call 371-2986.
- *Fred Bear Museum*
- *Gainesville Rock Gym* - Get a serious workout via rock-climbing! Call 335-4789.
- *Storyreading* - For those of you with literary interests, we get together every few weeks to read stuff aloud to each other: children's stories, science fiction, poetry, excerpts from novels, interesting or entertaining articles, things people have written themselves, and so forth. Nor does anyone have to read—you're welcome to just come and listen if you like! Contact Eric for more info.
- Music - Downtown, live every weekend. Jazz at Maude's, Irish singing at Dirty Nelly's, etc. Also choral and instrumental concerts are held periodically by several in-town groups.

### 5.8.2 On Campus

- *Lake Wauberg* - Free for students, nice picnic area. You can get 1 canoe or 2 kayaks per student ID. They also have a climbing wall and frisbee golf, which is surprisingly fun! (Well, not in the summer...)
- Watching the bats at the bat house at sunset (near Lake Alice).
- Going to *Lake Alice* to see the alligators
- *Harn Museum of Art* - 392-9826
- *Center for Performing Arts* - 392-1900
- *Natural History Museum* - 846-2000. The museum has excellent displays, including a collection of Florida fossils and artifacts and a hall for traveling exhibits. In August 2004 another exhibit, the Butterfly Rainforest, opened. The Rainforest supports 50-60 species and hundreds of specimens. If you are particularly interested, yearly passes to the rainforest are available through the museum. Otherwise tickets cost \$6.50 for Florida students.
- *University Galleries* - 392-0201 student and faculty art
- Going to sporting events - football, basketball, gymnastics, baseball, soccer, tennis...

- *Astronomy Public Nights* - Fridays 8:30 - 10pm at the Campus Teaching Observatory
- Rec Centers: Offer a variety of activities, including racquetball, tennis, gatorobics (including Yoga and Tai-Chi), weight rooms, indoor and outdoor basketball courts (at SW Rec), intramurals, etc.
- Intramural Sports - We usually have a softball team, but other sports such as soccer, flag football, ultimate frisbee, etc. are available.
- Leisure Courses - Available both at UF and at the Santa Fe Community College.
- Student Organizations - See [www.union.ufl.edu/sac/organizations.asp](http://www.union.ufl.edu/sac/organizations.asp)
- *Gator Nights* - Lots of great free activities on Friday nights at the Reitz Union, designed to give students an alternative to drinking themselves into a stupor at the bars :-). See [www.union.ufl.edu/gatornights/](http://www.union.ufl.edu/gatornights/)
- Campus Events - Two good places to keep track of campus events are the StuffToDo webpage ([www.union.ufl.edu/stufftodo/](http://www.union.ufl.edu/stufftodo/)) and the UF Calendar ([calendar.ufl.edu](http://calendar.ufl.edu)).

### 5.8.3 Seasonal Events

- **February:** *Hoggetowne Medieval Faire*
- **Spring sometime:** *Zucchini fest*
- **March:** *Gatornationals* - car racing
- **April:** Spring arts festival
- **April and October:** *Friends of the Library Booksale* - A 5-day event held twice a year; has really cheap prices and an amazingly huge selection for a town Gainesville's size, filling a whole warehouse!
- **May:** *Pioneer Days* in High Springs
- **June:** *Watermelon Festival* in Newberry
- **Late August:** moonlight canoe trip on the Santa Fe River with anthropologists
- **Late September or early October and May** - Kanapaha moonlight walks
- **October:** *UF homecoming* - we even get a day off school
- **November:** *Downtown Arts and Crafts Festival*, Alachua County Fair
- **December:** *Madrigal Dinners*, *Christmas on the Boulevard*, *Festival of Trees*, *Nutcracker* and probably lots more, but it is time for finals and then time to get out of town!
- There are also lots of seasonal events in *Cedar Key* (see below).

#### 5.8.4 Out Of Town

- Beaches - *St. Augustine*: beautiful beaches near a small town and historic fort (and an outlet mall). About a 2 hour drive. *Clearwater/Sarasota*: white beaches about 3 hours away. *Cedar Key*: NOT a beach, but a small fishing community about an hour away.
- Tubing/Rafting - *Ichetucknee River* - nice because there is a shuttle that brings you up river and returns you to your car. *Ginney Springs, Blue Springs, Manatee Springs* - offer tubing and some scuba diving
- Canoeing - Santa Fe river and lots of the area's springs are good for this.
- Organized outdoors activities - Check out *TRiP* ([www.union.ufl.edu/trip](http://www.union.ufl.edu/trip)) or the *Outdoor Adventure Recreation* club ([grove.ufl.edu/~oar/index.html](http://grove.ufl.edu/~oar/index.html)). The *Florida Trail Organization* organizes MANY canoe and hike trips, and there is also a local *Sierra Club* chapter.
- *Silver Springs* - kind of expensive, but there are discounts available. They have glass bottom boat tours and many kinds of animals. There is also a Wet 'n' Wild next door to this.
- *Homosassa State Park* - A cool state park and cheap (most state parks are \$3 or so to get in), and this one has manatees!
- *Pick-your-own farms* - Lots of U-pick options, especially blueberries from May-July.
- *Ocala* - large town about a half an hour south. There is an excellent Indian food restaurant there.
- *Ocala National Forest* - springs and hiking, outlet mall off I-75
- *Kennedy Space Center* - about 3 hours away, to see a launch go to NASA web page or contact state senator
- *Jacksonville* - about 1.5 hours away, the Pier, good fireworks on the 4th of July, good beaches, brewery, professional football (Jaguars), minor league baseball
- *Orlando* - (c. 2 hour drive) - *Disney parks, Universal and MGM Studios, Sea World*, etc... the parks usually have a discount for Florida residents and/or students in March or other times, *Downtown Disney* - free to get in - it is a shopping area and *Pleasure Island* is located there, *Church Street Station, Winter Park, Beall's Outlet Mall* with over 100 stores at the junction of the Florida Turnpike and Interstate 4, lots of other shopping and a lot of other stuff to do

- *Tampa* - (c. 2 hour drive) - Busch Gardens, Adventure Island, Museum of Science and Industry (with Omnimax theatre), Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, Florida Aquarium, Lowry Park Zoo, and professional hockey (Lightning), football (Buccaneers), and baseball (Devil Rays).

## **5.9 Miscellaneous Handy Tips**

### **5.9.1 Department of Motor Vehicles**

When visiting the DMV to get a Florida driver's licence, renew your licence, etc., you can schedule an appointment online at <https://oasis.hsmv.state.fl.us/oasis.php> to avoid waiting in line. (Note: Gainesville is in Alachua County.)

### **5.9.2 Airport Transportation**

There is currently a shuttle service to Jacksonville's airport called Runways that is reasonably cheap. (See [www.rnwy.com](http://www.rnwy.com))

### **5.9.3 Free Bicycle Repair**

UF's Student Government offers free bike repair (flat tires, minor adjustments) on weekdays, located outside along the north wall of the Reitz Union.

### **5.9.4 Electronic Bulletin Boards/Classifieds**

There are several electronic bulletin boards for buying, selling, donating, finding roommates, etc. Shands Hospital has one at <http://intranet.shands.org/phpbb/index.php> and the International Student Center has one at <http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/issbb.htm>; anyone is welcome to use them. Alachua Exchange (<http://www.alachuaexchange.com>) is a county-run donation service.

## **5.10 The Last Thing You Need To Know**

### **Dangerous Places to Avoid**

As in most cities, Gainesville has depressed areas where crime tends to occur more frequently than in other places. Here is a list of places we know of that generally make one feel uncomfortable.

- The corner of 6th Ave and 8th St
- Most places East of 6th St between University Ave and SW 16th Ave after dark
- Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail and Payne's Prairie after dark
- Payne's Prairie during alligator mating season (May-June)
- Any ATM by yourself after dark
- And, finally, anywhere within 20 feet of a real alligator. They only look sleepy...