CASE FOR SUPPORT

GO FOR LAUNCH

THE CAMPAIGN FOR UCF'S NEXT MISSION



UCF | College of Arts and Humanities

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

WHERE INDUSTRY MEETS CREATIVE TALENT

OUR PEOPLE WORK

Walk into any high-performance industry and you'll find leaders searching for the same quality: people who can think beyond the obvious. CAH students learn to do exactly that. Their training sharpens their ability to interpret nuance, frame questions that clarify complexity and imagine approaches that do not yet exist. Such critical thinking and analytical skills have become essential not only in the arts and humanities but in engineering, healthcare, defense and technology — fields where understanding human behavior is as important as understanding the systems built around it.

CAH's partnerships give students the chance to apply these skills in real-world settings. At UCF Celebrates the Arts, they step into production roles that mirror the pace and demands of today's creative industries. Through the Universal Creative Lab, they design prototypes that test narrative, emotion and user engagement. Emerging programs in immersive design and themed experience give them a vantage point on industries that are reimagining how people interact with built and digital worlds.

Our graduates are pushing the frontiers of knowledge and imagination while bringing practical application and technical precision to their everyday work. Quite simply, they are changing the future workforce by applying the skills and attributes developed through a humanities education.

Your support for CAH bolsters these important efforts, enabling us to shape more well-rounded individuals who are prepared to lead in a dynamic, globally connected world.



LAUNCHING TOMORROW'S INNOVATORS

As technology continues to accelerate, there is a growing disparity between the foundational skills that employers need and the capabilities of the current workforce. This is especially evident in a world reshaped by automation and artificial intelligence, where cognitive computing has already begun replacing critical human functions in the workplace, such as comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation.

At UCF's College of Arts and Humanities (CAH), we address this gap by preparing students to navigate the complexities of the digital age while cultivating globally engaged citizens. Through internships, community partnerships, experiential learning, study abroad or away programs, and interdisciplinary research, our students develop the cultural understanding, insight and adaptability they need to enter their professions with confidence and meet the demands of an ever-evolving job market.

Nowhere is this more vital than in Central Florida, a global hub for themed entertainment, hospitality, simulation, the performing arts and digital media production. Our disciplines are uniquely aligned with these industries, fueling the region's economy and supplying the talent that drives immersive experiences, storytelling and innovation.

Philanthropic gifts sustain CAH's momentum and deepen its impact. Your investment strengthens the environments where creativity and critical inquiry flourish, enabling our graduates to advance the ideas and solutions that will carry us into the next era.

INVEST IN TOP-TIER EDUCATION

With your support, CAH can accelerate growth in several high-impact programs that position UCF students and faculty at the forefront of tomorrow's breakthroughs.

- **Texts and Technology (Ph.D.):** A nationally distinctive program that blends humanities and digital practice to prepare scholars who shape how we create, communicate and understand information in the digital age.
- **Themed Experience (MFA & MS):** Industry-driven graduate programs that train designers and storytellers to create the immersive environments that power Central Florida's global entertainment economy.
- **Emerging Media:** Advanced studio-based tracks that develop artists and technical creators for leading roles in animation, simulation and visual storytelling.

COMPUTER SCIENCE BUILDS THE MACHINE, BUT THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES TEACH US TO LIVE ALONGSIDE IT AND EXPAND ITS POTENTIAL.



AREAS TO GIVE

PIXEL

Our proposed Performance, Immersive Experience and Entertainment Lab (PIXEL) serves as a cross-disciplinary environment where performance, design and interactive technology converge to advance the future workforce. Through research, prototyping and creative experimentation, PIXEL supports inventive approaches to storytelling and real-time collaboration. Its work reinforces Central Florida's standing as a global epicenter for themed entertainment and offers industry partners a site for developing forward-looking creative and production practices.

UCF CELEBRATES THE ARTS

UCF Celebrates the Arts is a two-week annual festival at Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts that showcases the university's creative excellence through performances, exhibitions, presentations and interactive experiences. With an emphasis on accessibility, partnership and community engagement, the event features innovative work in performing and visual arts, immersive entertainment, digital humanities and modern storytelling, offering audiences an inside look at how artistry and technology are shaping the future of live performance and design.

CENTER FOR HUMANITIES AND DIGITAL RESEARCH

UCF's Center for Humanities and Digital Research (CHDR) connects faculty and graduate researchers with community partners and grant-making institutions through project planning, technical expertise and grant writing supported by the college's scholarly and literary journals. By harnessing CAH's intellectual resources and digital capabilities, CHDR drives innovative interdisciplinary research and disseminates its findings across campus and throughout Central Florida.

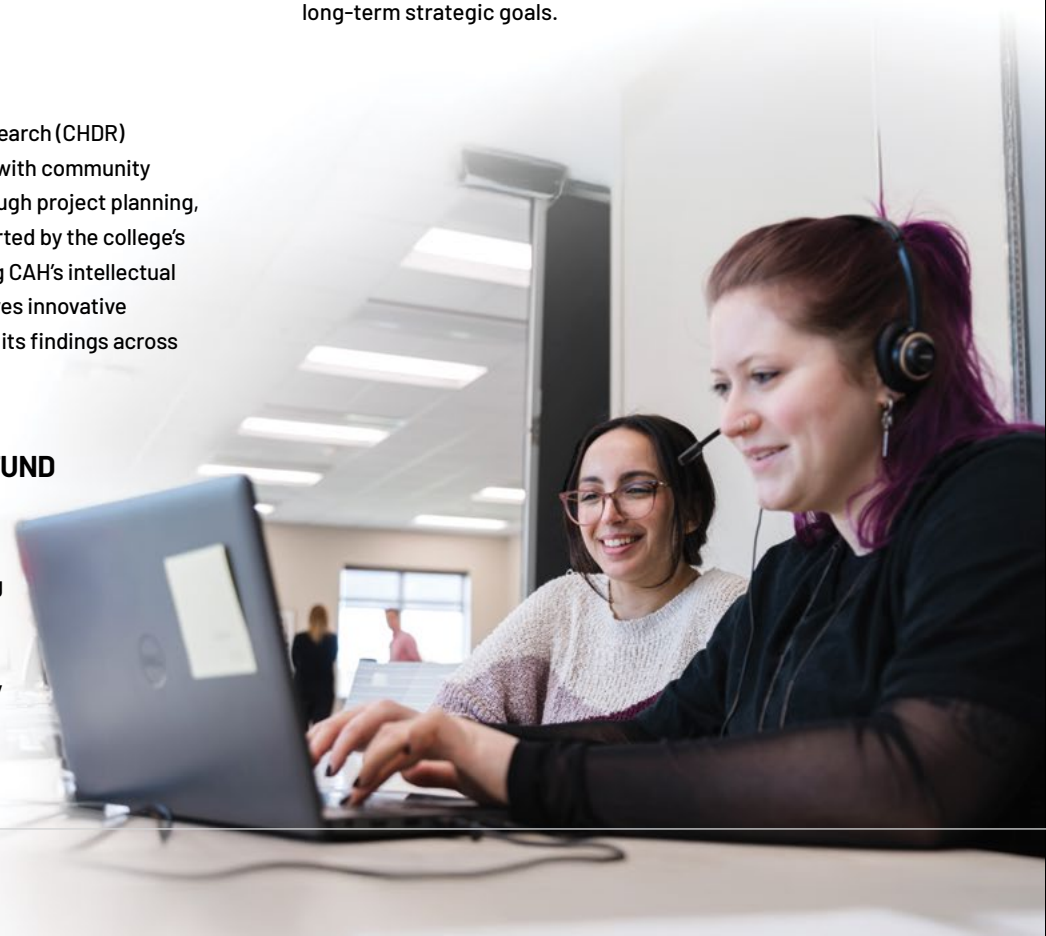
ARTS AND HUMANITIES IMPACT FUND

The Arts and Humanities Impact Fund provides flexible resources for CAH's most critical projects and programs. By directing support where it is needed most, the fund sustains student and faculty initiatives and enables the college to respond thoughtfully to emerging academic priorities and institutional challenges.

WAYS TO GIVE

CAH offers many meaningful ways to make a difference. From establishing a named scholarship to funding interdisciplinary programs and facilities, you can create life-changing opportunities for the next generation of dreamers, doers and innovators — all while building your philanthropic legacy.

- Endowed Professorships and Directorships support faculty who are not only reshaping their fields but empowering students to think critically, communicate effectively and lead with purpose.
- Scholarships reward our exceptionally talented students and help them bridge the gap in financial aid, focus on their studies and complete their education on time.
- Planned gifts such as bequests, beneficiary designations and charitable trusts create a lasting legacy at CAH by providing long-term support for students, faculty and innovative programs.
- Naming Opportunities offer donors a chance to support CAH while honoring the memory of a loved one or paying tribute to someone who has shaped their lives.
- Corporate Partnerships offer companies direct access to exceptional creative talent, interdisciplinary research and collaborative opportunities that drive innovation and support long-term strategic goals.



WHAT STUDENTS SAY



DESIGNING THEATER FOR THE FUTURE

When **Gil Bloom** came to UCF, he wasn't sure if he wanted to major in video game design or theater design technology. He ended up choosing theater — but he still had a passion for video games. It wasn't until later in his studies, when he began learning more about production design, that he thought, "Why not blend the two?" From his perspective, video games and theater share a common feature: They both happen in real time. "You can program a game for years," he says, "but once it goes out into the world, that's it. It's live."

That foundational understanding of game design helped Bloom, who's now a senior, take an innovative approach to designing the production of Theatre UCF's recently sold-out show *The River Bride*. The setting takes place in the Amazon rainforest and offers a cornucopia of visual delights: a flowing river teeming with wildlife, lush tree canopies, falling rain. But rather than take the conventional route of painting a physical set or using standard projections, Bloom made these elements come alive, using a popular 3D digital creation tool called Unreal Engine. Traditionally, images on a projector are pre-recorded and played back, but Unreal Engine can render images and project them in real time, creating a seamless, immersive experience for the audience.

"In my opinion, the future of live entertainment in theater is game design," says Bloom, who has two internships with design companies — one now with Center Stage, and the other with EPS after he graduates. **"As technology advances, audiences are starting to want more and more immersive experiences. At UCF, we are already doing that. We don't have this idea of separation between theater and immersive technology and digital media. For us, they're one and the same."**

WHAT FACULTY SAY



EMBRACING THE JOURNEY

Equipping students to think critically and work through complex problems in the age of AI is no easy task, but Associate Professor of Writing and Rhetoric **Shane Wood** is optimistic about the next generation. Wood directs UCF's First-Year Composition Program, which serves nearly 6,500 students annually. But where traditional composition classes focus on alphabetic text, Wood emphasizes multimodality and multiliteracies: encouraging students to reflect on their knowledge and think intentionally about their purposes for writing.

He understands that composition today encompasses everything from written texts to visual media to virtual reality. As technology continues to shape communication and storytelling techniques, those entering a modern workforce will need the tools and skills to adapt.

"Just as important as knowing how to use the technology or medium you're working with is understanding how to navigate its opportunities and limitations," Wood says. **"I think that plays a big role in how we're looking at the intersection of writing and innovation here at UCF. We're teaching students a new way of engaging with composition. We want them to focus not so much on the result or the finished product — but on how they got there."**

WHY UCF, WHY NOW

BOLD FUTURES START HERE: At the University of Central Florida, we anticipate the challenges of tomorrow and rise to meet them today. Our researchers are solving the world's most pressing problems, and with every breakthrough, we transcend boundaries and defy expectations. This relentless pursuit of excellence has put UCF on the map — and in the stars.

As a newly designated preeminent institution and one of the nation's top 15 most innovative public universities, UCF is boldly creating a future the world has only begun to imagine. You see that vision coming to life every day in the College of Arts and Humanities.

From designing immersive environments to advancing creative storytelling, our students and faculty are redefining how we understand and engage with an ever-changing world. Their work exemplifies the spirit of a university that turns ambition into impact and illuminates new pathways for human possibility.

Your investment fuels this progress, and your investment unlocks potential and elevates student success. Whether through a one-time gift, pledge, planned giving or endowment, you have the power to transform our arts community and improve lives.

Join us on our mission. Go for Launch is more than a campaign — it's our commitment to shaping what's next. Together, we are building a future without limits. The engines are ignited, and the trajectory is clear: innovation, impact and opportunity for generations to come. The future starts now — and it starts at UCF.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES BY THE NUMBERS

#4
ANIMATION COLLEGE AMONG U.S. PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (#21 AMONG ALL INSTITUTIONS)
Ranked by Animation Career Review

13.4%
PROJECTED JOB GROWTH FOR HUMANITIES DEGREES BETWEEN 2021 AND 2031
Source: Lightcast, 2022

30+
DEGREE PROGRAMS

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES IS A DYNAMIC INCUBATOR FOR ARTISTIC EXPLORATIONS OF EVERY KIND. VISIT CAH.UCF.EDU TO LEARN MORE.

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