

UCF Undergraduate Studies Offers Top Research Opportunities and Celebrates Research Endeavors

UCF's College of Undergraduate Studies engages in excellence and innovation through distinct, research-based, and robust integrative and interdisciplinary academic programs for leaders of a diverse society.

Some of the college's highlights from 2023 include the continued success of its Study Away program and work on a new book from Sharon Woodill, Ph.D., an associate lecturer with the college.

College of Undergraduate Studies Study Away Program

Study Away is a research intensive and high impact course that provides students an affordable option to learn, research, and experience cultures around the United States.

Enrolled students have been able to explore St. Augustine (Spring 2022), travel to New Orleans (Summer 2022), and survey Puerto Rico (Summer 2023). This upcoming Summer 2024, students will have the opportunity to learn the history, culture, and experiences of the Gullah Geechee people of Georgia and South Carolina.

Since its inception three years ago, student participation has increased by 300 percent.

Sharon Woodill, Ph.D., Associate Lecturer, College of Undergraduate Studies

In the Fall 2023 semester, Woodill has been working on a book project titled *Interdisciplinarity and the Art of Human Connection: An Epistemology for a Complex World*.

The book is under contract with Lexington Books, a Rowman and Littlefield subsidiary. In the book, Woodill proposes an epistemology of connection as the appropriate framework for Interdisciplinary Studies.

As such, it challenges typical conceptualizations of interdisciplinarity as an extension of the reductive disciplinary structure inherent in the legacy knowledge industry.

As an epistemology of connection, interdisciplinarity entails the competencies that are also essential to human connection and thus it is endowed with the power and promise to ameliorate contemporary complex challenges that it has been marshaled to address.

The current challenges engulfing the diversity and inclusion discourse serve as a helpful example, she says.

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