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Press Release

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Small Business Institute® Offers Win-Win to Local Small Businesses

Orlando, FL – Tuesday, October 21, 2008. – Starting spring semester 2009, the Small Business Development Center at UCF, in conjunction with UCF’s College of Business Administration, will re-launch the Small Business Institute® (SBI) program, which allows graduate-level business students to participate in hands-on learning experiences by providing management consulting services to local small businesses.

“This partnership between our college and the Small Business Development Center at UCF is a win-win situation for all. The graduate students apply what they learn in class to small businesses, and the clients benefit from their knowledge. The students will assist with business plans, advertising strategies, customer surveys and other essential components of their business operations,” said Thomas L. Keon, dean of the UCF College of Business Administration.

The purpose of SBI, a nation-wide program, is to provide high-quality business assistance to companies in need while providing an extraordinary opportunity for college and university students to learn through field case studies. SBI was last offered at UCF in 2006 and is a graduate-level elective course within the UCF College of Business Administration. To date, the course is fully registered for spring semester 2009 with 40 graduate students. SBI will be instructed by Professor Emeritus Lloyd Fernald.

The SBDC at UCF’s Advisory Board Council program, sponsored by Orange County, will manage the small business clients and the student case studies. A maximum of 12 small businesses will be accepted to participate as clients for the program. Each student team will have direct contact with the client and will produce a professional case report. The report is the ultimate product of the program and will be tailored to each business. Case study reports may include market research, marketing plans, competitive analysis, advertising strategy, customer surveys, strategic plans, financial analysis, human resource manuals and business plans.

The SBDC at UCF is currently accepting small business clients for the spring 2009 SBI program. Interested businesses may contact the SBDC at UCF at 407.420.4850 for further information regarding program qualifications and the application process.