Living a life of leisure

Leisure courses give students a chance to relax and learn new skills.

By Camelia Negoiita
The Gator Times staff

Ask University of Florida students what their favorite courses are, and you will probably get leisure courses as the answer.

Judging by the wave of applicants that took over registration Wednesday morning, the courses must be that popular.

Although sign-up for the spring semester started only at 10 a.m., three hours later the ceramics, pottery, jewelry making, and wine tasting classes had already been filled.

Developed and administered by the UF Arts & Crafts Center, the leisure courses program offers various non-credit classes, from arts, music, language and dance, to computer skills, martial arts and yoga. Everyone is welcome to register.

Kate Corder, an English major, will discover the fun of leisure courses for the first time this semester.

"I wanted to learn more about pottery, but the class was full when I tried to sign up," Corder said. "I decided to take an intermediate tennis class instead because I hope to improve my skills and have fun without worrying about getting a grade."

James Maloney had the same principle. As a physics senior, he wanted to explore all the experiences UF has to offer.

His class will be a relaxing one, and the skills he will learn will be with him for a long time. Golf, his choice, is one of America's most popular ways of spending its leisure time.

"Golfing on a Friday morning for a couple of hours seemed the perfect opportunity for me to relax," Maloney said about the class. "I do hope to learn the basics of golf during the six sessions of the class."

During the 20 years she has been teaching ceramics at UF, Mary Ann Cole has seen many phases of popularity among the classes offered.

"Some classes are very popular for a while, and then they fade out," Cole said.

This semester it seems the spotlight was on the hands-on classes.

Hope White, UF's jewelry making instructor, said the appeal of this kind of class relates to several aspects of today's society.

"Crafts classes teach you how to use your hands, to take time for yourself and talk to a friend in the same time. People miss that these days," said White.

Walk-in and online regular registration took place Jan. 16 and Jan. 18. By paying a late registration fee of $5, students can register Tuesday through Thursday at the Arts & Crafts Center for classes that have seats open. The center is located on the Reitz Union basement level.

Nana Guar, a business sophomore, signed up with a membership at the Arts & Crafts Center after she found out the ceramics class she wanted had no more open seats.

Membership fees for the semester-long classes are $25 for UF students and their spouses and $35 for those not registered with the university.

To check the availability of classes go online at www.union.ufl.edu/leisure or contact the Art & Crafts Center.

CAMELIANEGOITA
news@gatortimes.com