FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 25, 2011

THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER
CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

GAINESVILLE – The University of Florida International Center (UFIC) announced today a year-long celebration of its 20 years of service as a visible and identifiable stand-alone unit on the Gainesville campus. UFIC has accomplished a great deal in two decades and has much to celebrate. A calendar of activities can be found at www.ufic.ufl.edu. The UF community is invited to check the list of planned events regularly as it will be updated on a weekly basis. UFIC's 20th Anniversary Organizing Committee announced their Kick-off Celebration for Monday, August 29, 2011. The event consists of an outside chalking activity at the South side of the Hub, where the International Center has been housed since 2007. All are invited to join the International Center by writing words and phrases to commemorate UFIC’s 20 years of service and to celebrate internationalization. The event is scheduled from 10:00 am – 10:15 a.m.

The establishment of the International Center in 1991 created an environment in which international programs could flourish, where new ideas and innovations about internationalization could be tested, and in which our many constituencies could find a home where they would be welcomed and heard. Over the years, UFIC has organized its work in new ways, and undoubtedly will continue to do so as its role on campus continues to expand and find additional ways to promote the notion of internationalization. Dr. David Sammons, Dean of the International Center, affirms that a world class university such as the University of Florida can be nothing less than fully committed to, and engaged with, the global community. “The International Center's very existence sends a clear message to the world that UF is, indeed, an international player with respect to learning, knowledge creation, and outreach – all of which are at the heart of a great university in this period of history. Come celebrate with us!” said Sammons.

The UF International Center (UFIC) was formed in the Fall of 1991. The founding director of the Center was a faculty member who held a half-time appointment. At the time, the Center was located in Tigert Hall. As the office began to grow, parts of the office occupied portions of the third floor of Tigert Hall; the Center’s Program Development unit was housed for a time in Walker Hall and later in UFF). The founding Director resigned in the fall of 1993 and an interim half time faculty director was subsequently appointed. It was almost two years before the position was permanently filled again. In 1995, the Center moved to Grinter Hall, a building that was closer to the middle of campus and therefore more accessible to students. However, there was not enough space there for all Center staff, so the Program Development unit was relocated in Peabody Hall. The Center and its entire staff were finally moved to a renovated suite of offices in The Hub in March 2007, its current location.

This more spacious and central location has enabled UFIC to position its entire array of resources in one building where students and faculty can more easily find them. Its proximity to a common area where students eat and study creates a comfortable, accessible, and highly visible environment for the Center's work and integration with the rest of the campus. Now, more than ever, UF needs an International Center as we head into the next round of reaccreditation with the theme of “Internationalization” as a focus for quality enhancement.

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