New Smartphone App Serves Students

In order to improve the student experience, a new Maharishi University App for iOS and Android devices has been created that offers useful campus information as well as a social media platform for communicating and sharing.

The app is expected to be available February 1. See mum.campusapp.com.

The goal is to improve communication with students, increase engagement, and encourage use of campus resources.

“I’m hoping students will use the app in a similar way as they use Instagram or Facebook, but with an exclusively MUM audience,” said Leslie Doyle, MUM student satisfaction and retention specialist.

“It will be a great tool to meet new people and build a stronger campus community. Students will be able to reach out with their questions, find others with similar interests, and engage with peers they may not otherwise have had the opportunity to talk with.”

Ms. Doyle and others working on the app are incorporating as many tools and resources as they can think of. Features include an events calendar, information on campus services, dining hall menu, campus maps, and information related to courses the students are taking.

The app has been created in conjunction with Oohlala, a company that has built similar apps for universities nationwide.
of agriculture to one that is more sustainable.

“They couldn’t find a course like this elsewhere and were eager to sign up when they saw what we offered,” said Dr. Thimmaiah, who is directing the program.

They’re interested in growing their own food, and want hands-on experience.

“Other universities might offer one course, but no one else is offering a whole crop cycle the way we are — from seeds to sales,” he said. “What we have is unique.”

The students will get hands-on experience that will include planning their small farm, starting seeds in greenhouses, preparing the soil, planting, fertilizing, growing, harvesting, and then cooking or selling their produce.

The new building will be located about 150 feet northeast of the old building currently on the campus farm north of the grain elevator on Highway 1.

The old building had originally been planned to be remodeled to house the new program, but organizers found that it would be prohibitively expensive to bring it up to code for a classroom building. It will now be used for processing and storage of produce, as well as for the storage of tools and implements. An attached greenhouse is being constructed on the south side.

The students will divide into groups of four or five, with each group responsible for planning and farming a quarter of an acre. If they are ambitious, they can farm a larger area. A total of 24 acres is available.

In addition to Dr. Thimmaiah, other faculty teaching the students will include John Fagan and Sam James, both of whom are internationally known for their expertise.

Adjunct faculty will include local experts Dean Goodale, Jim Schaefer, and Francis Thicke, covering topics such as planning biodiversity and soil science.

“Many new donors have stepped forward to support this program,” Dr. Thimmaiah said. “They appreciate the program’s vision to change the world’s approach to agriculture.”

Regenerative agriculture reverses soil loss, sequesters carbon, and helps to reverse climate change.

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FROM THE FOUNDER

“Transcendental Meditation came out to be the practical approach to direct experience of that transcendental field, that unified field at the basis of all diversity. And that is the field of enlightenment. When it opens to our awareness, then our awareness, whether it is speaking or not speaking; whether it is physically expressed or non-physically expressed, whatever it is, it has that level of transcendental at its basis.”

— Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Nov. 6, 2002 press conference

Study Finds Reduced Trauma in Female Prisoners

Following a study last fall on reduced stress in male inmates, a new randomized controlled study published in The Permanente Journal has found that the Transcendental Meditation® technique significantly reduces trauma symptoms in female prison inmates.

Led by Sanford Nidich, director of MUM’s Center for Social and Emotional Health, the study was conducted at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville, Oregon. It’s the first study focused specifically on female inmates with high levels of trauma symptoms.

According to Dr. Nidich, women have become the fastest growing population in U.S. prisons, nearly double the rate of increasing male incarcerations. Along with the increasing confinement of female offenders, researchers have found that women carry the burden of proportionally higher amounts of traumatic experiences, with higher rates of mental/emotional trauma and sexual abuse than men.

High levels of trauma contribute to poor lifestyle choices, psychological and physical chronic diseases, and increased risk for returning to prison, Dr. Nidich said. Further research has shown an association between traumatic stress exposure and various forms of cancer in a predominantly female population.

The results showed that after four months of practicing the Transcendental Meditation technique, the women inmates in the meditation group had significant reductions in total trauma symptoms, including intrusive thoughts and hyperarousal compared with controls.

“This study is a valuable addition to the research literature in women’s mental health, showing a natural and effortless alternative approach to reducing trauma symptoms,” Dr. Nidich said. “Previous studies on the Transcendental Meditation technique have shown reduced trauma in other populations, including veterans and African refugees.”

Participants said they felt less stressed and a greater sense of inner freedom.

“I feel so open and have gained such a deep sense of surrender to my life and the feelings surrounding my incarceration,” one subject said. “I no longer feel imprisoned. I now feel my freedom from the inside of me.”

Coauthors of the study included Angela Seng, Blaze Compton, John Salerno, and Randi Nidich of MUM and Tom O’Connor of Western Oregon University.

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The Review

Editor: Jim Karpen
Contributing Writer: Livia Cole

Maharishi University of Management
1000 N. 4th St., MR #694
Fairfield, IA 52557

jkarpen@mum.edu
641-472-0778
www.mum.edu/review

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Dr. Schneider gives keynote at India conference, meets with Gov’t ministers

India continues to show interest in MUM’s science-based approach to traditional systems of prevention-oriented healthcare. Most recently Robert Schneider, dean of the Maharishi College of Perfect Health, was invited to deliver the keynote address at an international conference and teach two public seminars in the nation’s capital of New Delhi.

In his 10-day tour in India in late December, Dr. Schneider also met with two central government ministers and high-level officials to discuss collaborations between MUM and the government of India.

“In the meetings we explored our joint interests in how we can integrate science-based Vedic health care into modern health care,” said Dr. Schneider, MD, FACC. “The new government wants to bring this traditional knowledge to the world – and back to India in a contemporary scientific framework.”

Dr. Schneider met with India’s Minister of Science and Technology, Harsh Vardhan, and the Minister of AYUSH, Shripad Naik. AYUSH includes ayurveda, yoga, and homeopathy.

Amongst their wide-ranging discussions, Dr. Schneider, the ministers, and their staffs discussed two specific proposals: 1) the effects of the Transcendental Meditation technique and a Maharishi YogaSM asana program on the brain and heart related to aging, and 2) a study on the effects of five traditional herbal preparations or rasayanas on the biological and psychological markers of aging. These projects would be conducted in collaboration with medical centers in India and the U.S.

Dr. Schneider gave the opening address at the annual meeting of the World Association of Vedic Studies. Speaking to an audience of about 300, he described how Maharishi AyurVedaSM programs may slow or reverse aging in Western and Indian populations. His audience included scholars, officials, and leaders who are integrating Vedic science and technologies into modern society.

His well-attended public seminars were sponsored by India’s Institute for Contemporary Consciousness and addressed the topic of “Super Aging,” how modern science has discovered ancient wisdom of Maharishi AyurVeda and the Transcendental Meditation technique for longevity, health, and happiness.

Dr. Schneider’s media coverage was viewed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who invited Dr. Schneider to meet the next time he’s in India.

Film Producer Selects Four Students for Screenwriting Awards

Four applicants to the new MFA in screenwriting program have been selected as winners of the Peter Farrelly “Excellence in Screenwriting Award,” based on creative portfolios they submitted.

The four winners, Marcia Buhler, Michael Jackson, Nicole Himmel, and Josh Lee, were chosen from a large group of candidates by acclaimed screenwriter/director/producer Peter Farrelly, known for Something About Mary, Dumb and Dumber, and Shallow Hal, among other hit films.

Chosen for their outstanding screenwriting skills, each will each receive a $2,500 award to be presented by Mr. Farrelly in February during a 10-day residency to be held on campus.

This residency is the first of five writing retreats the 20 students will attend as a part of the low-residency David Lynch MFA in Screenwriting program. Over the next two years, these graduate students will return at the beginning of each semester, while the rest of their instruction will take place online under the guidance of a mentor.

According to screenwriting program director Dorothy Rompalske, students will be traveling to Fairfield to attend this intensive residency as a way to dive deep into their craft while interacting with fellow students and attending lectures, panel discussions, master classes, staged readings, and workshops led by a combination of university faculty members and internationally recognized entertainment industry leaders.

Students will also meet program founder David Lynch and other industry notables during a fifth and final residency in Los Angeles, during which they will hone the skills they need to market their thesis screenplays to agents, producers, and studio executives.

Low-Cost Taxi Service

Cost: $2 each way within city limits. Call to schedule: 1-800-227-6390 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., Monday–Friday.

Free Panel Discussion on Creativity

The public is invited to a panel discussion on Transcendental Meditation and the Creative Process, February 15, 7:30 pm, in Dalby Hall. Featured panel participants will include local creative professionals who will discuss ways their regular practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique enhances the way they work and create.

This program is being presented by the Screenwriting MFA Program in the David Lynch Graduate School of Cinematic Arts.

For more information, please contact Erika Richards at (641) 209-6015 or erichards@mum.edu.

Room for Rent

Long/short-term furnished room rentals in Vastu house on MUM campus near Domes & Market, with kitchen/laundry access. Starting at $485/mo. One room w/ private bathroom and one with shared bathroom. Can do weekly. Couples and alumni welcome.

Contact estrada.steven26@gmail.com or see Fiftytwo Vastu on Facebook.
Students Move into Gender-Inclusive Residence Hall

A number of students have taken advantage of a new opportunity to live in a dorm that MUM has designated as “gender inclusive,” with the purpose of meeting the needs of students who aren't comfortable with living in gender-specific residence halls with community bathrooms.

“For a transgender student in the process of transition, or for students who identify somewhere on the gender spectrum other than ‘male’ or ‘female,’ it could feel uncomfortable or inappropriate being asked to identify as one gender or the other in order to be given housing,” said Leslie Doyle, student satisfaction and retention specialist.

A wing of an existing dorm has been designated as gender-inclusive, and each floor of the wing has available a private bathroom and dressing room.

Transgender students (whose gender identity doesn't match their birth sex) will be afforded privacy not available in the other dorms with shared bathrooms and showers. This will also benefit students who identify as non-binary — meaning that their gender identity doesn't fit into a male or female assignment.

In addition, among those moving into the gender-inclusive dorm are “allies,” heterosexuals who support civil rights, gender equality, and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) social movements.

The new arrangement came about as a result of an initiative of the student club MUM Queer Coalition. Interested students were invited to fill out an application on which they could indicate whether it was a need or preference, but to protect their privacy no further information about their gender identity or sexual orientation was asked of them.

Gender-inclusive housing and bathrooms are part of a larger campus initiative on LGBTQ awareness, training and support. This initiative is based on input from LGBTQ community leaders from the organization One Iowa, legal opinion, research into other universities, student discussions and surveys, and Maharishi’s view on ideal education and the core values of the University.

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MUM Online

2 Online Courses Beginning This Month!

- **Bhagavad Gita I (MVS 510)** – starts February 6
  Chapters 1–3. Enjoy Maharishi’s systematic exposition of the development of human consciousness. Learn the solution to the fundamental dilemma at the basis of human suffering.

- **Science and Technology of Consciousness (STC 508)** – starts February 13
  Gain experience and understanding of consciousness as the unifying basis of all branches of knowledge. Understand the relationship between your individual self and your universal Self.

- **Bhagavad Gita II (MVS 511)** – coming April 24
  Chapters 3–6. Learn the relationship of human consciousness to knowledge, and its application to improve the quality of individual and collective life and accomplish anything.

[www.mum.edu/mum-online]