

# CMS newsletter

Center for Multimodal Solutions for Congestion Mitigation

Fall 2007



## message from the director Lily Elefteriadou

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the CMS Newsletter. We at the University of Florida are very honored to have been awarded a Tier 1 University Transportation Center. In the years to come, I anticipate a flurry of activity at the Center for Multimodal Solutions for Congestion Mitigation as we work with the transportation community to investigate and develop innovative approaches to solving congestion problems.

Our vision for the center is crystal clear: We will develop a strong interdisciplinary network of researchers, fully integrated within UF, to develop solutions that will focus on enhanced multimodal connectivity and coordination, accessibility, system interoperability and transportation community outreach. We also feel a strong sense of responsibility to the future workforce of the

transportation community. Our plans in this area include expanding the pool of transportation professionals by supporting curricula in a wide range of disciplines that have bearing on the solutions to transportation problems.

It has been a very busy couple of months at the CMS. The center's faculty and staff have been intensely working on developing procedures, implementing plans and coordinating activities among several departments across UF. Our strategic plan was approved in early October, thanks to the collaborative effort of the CMS's Internal Steering Committee and others.

The ISC has been meeting once a month to implement plans for soliciting pre-proposals on research, education and technology transfer activities. On October 19, the CMS successfully issued its first request for pre-proposals. We had an impressive amount of high-quality research proposals submitted, which the ISC is currently in the process of evaluating with the assistance of several reviewers. Selections from this pool of pre-proposals will yield full proposal invitations. We expect that the first round of projects will start by February 1, 2008.

This academic year, we began our recruiting activities on November 6 with an informational session at UF, and we had one in early December at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. As part of our recruitment efforts, we will award up to five assistantships to incoming graduate students in transportation and up to three dissertation assistantships for students who have been accepted into doctoral candidacy and are completing their dissertations.

These dissertation assistantships can be used to fund specific data collection needs or other activities that are not typically funded by graduate assistantships. Student selection for these assistantships will begin in spring 2008. Other recruitment efforts include

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# CMS Visits the Florida Department of Transportation

CMS affiliated faculty and staff met with a group of about 30 Florida Department of Transportation personnel on October 9, 2007, at the main FDOT headquarters in Tallahassee.

The reasons for the visit were to learn about FDOT research priorities and needs, present UF transportation-related strengths and capabilities, identify areas of common interest, and to begin to foster partnerships. FDOT is providing the CMS with matching research funds up to \$1 million.

The meeting began with a presentation from CMS Director Lily Elefteriadou. She discussed the center's overall goals, operational structure, and research capabilities. Elefteriadou's talk was followed by presentations from CMS affiliated faculty. The affiliates described their research programs and discussed current projects.

The affiliates included a number of UF faculty members notably Scott Washburn, Yafeng Yin and Siva Srinivasan, of the Transportation Research Center in Civil Engineering; Janet Degner of T2; Siriphong (Toi) Lawphongpanich of Industrial and Systems Engineering; and Ruth Steiner, who, in addition to herself, represented seven colleagues from Urban and Regional Planning.



Lily Elefteriadou talks about Interchange Ramp Terminals to a group of FDOT representatives.

After the CMS presentations, the floor was opened to representatives from FDOT offices of design, environmental management, policy planning, public transportation, research, safety, systems planning, traffic operations, and transportation statistics. Each representative highlighted research priorities and needs and then met one-on-one with the UF researchers.

Elefteriadou was extremely pleased with the outcome.

"This was a good opportunity to cultivate a strong relationship with the FDOT, especially for those affiliates who do not have specific FDOT contacts and projects," Elefteriadou said.

The overall visit was valuable, and the interaction between UF researchers and FDOT personnel was charged with much energy and enthusiasm.

Doug McLeod of FDOT Systems Planning Office felt the meeting was productive.

"To see the level of participation from the FDOT offices was outstanding," McLeod said. "There was a lot of interaction between FDOT and UF professors that could lead to many projects in the future."

Representation from the various offices also helped FDOT personnel better understand common research interests and how UF and FDOT might better serve Florida in addressing congestion, he said.

McLeod is a longtime collaborator with the transportation faculty in the Department of Civil & Coastal Engineering. He has worked with Elefteriadou and her associates on various projects. He is very confident about the quality of research originating from UF.

"I have been pleased to work with them," McLeod said. "They produce some of the best research products for the department."



Jennifer Fortunas (right) of the FDOT discusses research ideas with industrial and systems Associate Professor Siriphong Lawphongpanich (center) and civil engineering Associate Professor Yafeng Yin (left).

# Spotlight ON RESEARCH

## NCHRP Project 3-85: Guidance for the Use of Alternative Traffic Analysis Tools in Highway Capacity Analyses

Recognizing that many traffic analysts use a combination of Highway Capacity Manual and non-HCM based tools for highway capacity analyses, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program has initiated Project 3-85 to develop practical and useful guidance for the use of other tools, either in combination with, or instead of, the HCM. The University of Florida Transportation Research Center and T-Concepts Corp are carrying out the project.

This project will be of interest to traffic analysts because it will produce guidance for the use of simulation tools for evaluating the performance of highway facilities. The guidance developed by this project will be incorporated into the 2010 edition of the HCM.

The major project tasks are as follows:

### Survey of Current Practice

An Internet-based survey of current practice was conducted and the results have been posted on the project web site. The survey focused on the limitations of the HCM and the current use of alternative traffic analysis tools to overcome these limitations. Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of satisfaction with the HCM and to point out the most critical areas for improvement.

### Identification and Comparison of Alternative Tools

Several traffic analysis tools, both analytical and simulation-based, are commonly used for highway capacity analyses. A selection of these tools has been examined and compared with respect to their definitions, computational methodology, inputs, outputs and operating parameters.

To understand the differences in the performance measures reported by various tools, it was necessary to conduct basic experiments to examine the relationships between the inputs and outputs associated with each tool.

The findings of these experiments will help to identify situations where differences in definitions or computational methodology will make it difficult to compare the performance measures produced by the HCM with those produced by alternative tools.

### Development of General Guidance

General guidance on the use of alternative tools will be developed as a separate chapter for the 2010 HCM. The proposed topics include traffic modeling concepts and definitions, appropriate use of alternative tools, performance measures from alternative tools, application guidelines for simulation tools, traffic analysis tool selection criteria, use of vehicle trajectory analysis in comparing performance measures, stochastic aspects of simulation analysis and application framework for alternative tools.

### Development of Chapter-Specific Guidance

Each procedural chapter with potential applications for alternative tools will contain a section that provides succinct guidelines for the use of alternative tools. The organization of the material for each chapter covers the following topics:

- Strengths of the HCM procedure
- Limitations of the HCM procedures that might be addressed by alternative tools
- Development of HCM-compatible performance measures using alternative tools
- Conceptual differences between the HCM and simulation modeling that preclude direct comparison of results
- Calibration of simulation parameters to the HCM parameters
- Step by step instructions for applying alternative tools
- Sample calculations illustrating alternative tool applications

### Expansion of the HCMAG

One of the tasks in this project will focus on the expansion of the case studies in the Highway Capacity Manual Applications Guidebook. The HCMAG was developed under NCHRP Project 3-64 to illustrate how the HCM and other tools can be used to analyze traffic operations.

The current HCMAG document presents five case studies, each of which contains several problems dealing with the use of the HCM procedures as well as alternative tools.

Several simulation-based problems will be added to the existing case studies to incorporate some of the results of this project. A totally new case study based on corridor simulation tools, will also be added to illustrate the use of such tools to augment or replace the HCM procedures.

The HCMAG is available on the Internet at [www.hcmguide.com](http://www.hcmguide.com) as a readily accessible HTML document.

# Featured RESEARCHER Yafeng Yin



**Traffic congestion** is a severe problem that threatens the economic prosperity and quality of life in many societies.

Congestion in the 85 largest U.S. urban areas caused a loss of approximately 3.7 billion hours and 2.3 billion gallons of fuel in 2003, or the rough equivalent of \$63 billion, according to the Texas Transportation Institute.

Reducing traffic congestion has been an ongoing effort of many governmental authorities over the past several decades. In May 2006, the U.S. Department of Transportation launched a new national congestion relief initiative that called for new technologies and innovative ideas for congestion mitigation, and Yafeng Yin, an assistant professor in the Department of Civil and Coastal Engineering, is working hard to answer that call.

With a proper blend of theory and practice, Yin hopes to make congestion pricing, a market-based approach first introduced in 1920 by an economist for controlling congestion and managing travel demand, more pragmatic and publicly acceptable.

Recently funded by the National Science Foundation and in collaboration with Siriphong Lawphongpanich, an associate professor in the UF Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, Yin is investigating the rigorous framework and methodologies necessary for developing pricing schemes amenable to gaining public acceptance and leading to sustainable (environmentally and otherwise) transportation systems.

This research represents a departure from the principle commonly advocated and seeks a congestion pricing scheme that makes no one worse or better off, and aims at reducing both congestion and traffic emissions. The latter is essential to achieving an environmentally sustainable transportation system.

Yin also hopes his self-learning dynamic pricing approach can be applied to improve the current practice of managed or HOT lanes, a centerpiece of Federal Highway Administration's Value Pricing Pilot Program (FDOT plans to open HOT lanes on Interstate 95 between Fort Lauderdale and Miami next year). Yin's idea is to estimate motorists' willingness to pay by their lane choices as well as predict the short-term traffic demand. This would be done by mining the data collected from strategically-located traffic sensors. The toll rates would then be optimized for the subsequent rolling horizon to maximize the freeway throughput, while ensuring the managed lanes stay free from congestion.

But Yin's research program extends beyond congestion pricing. He is also looking at ways to improve transportation decision making under demand and supply uncertainty.

"Virtually every decision in transportation planning and management is made under uncertainty," Yin said. "When the consequence of ignoring uncertainty is severe, we need to proactively address it in the decision-making process. The notion of robust optimization may be helpful to obtain a robust decision, whose performance may be less sensitive to any realization of the uncertainty."

Yin says that the key is to view nature as neither friend nor enemy, but somewhere in between.

"It may not be cost effective to design a transportation system against a worst-case scenario that may occur with a very slim chance," he added.

Yin also collaborates with his colleagues at the department, Scott Washburn and Lily Eleftheriadou, on impacts of lane closures on roadway capacity, and with Siva Srinivasan on time-of-day travel demand modeling.

Before arriving at UF in 2005, Yin was an assistant research engineer with the California Partners for Advanced Transit and Highways at the University of California, Berkeley. He also served as a lecturer at Tsinghua University in China from 1996 to 1999. Yin received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Tsinghua University in 1994 and 1996, respectively and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo, Japan in 2002.

As a junior faculty member in the Department of Civil and Coastal Engineering, Yin is working hard to make substantial contributions to the field.

## Back in China

Born in Huishui, a small town in the Guizhou Province of southwest China, he is one of three highly educated brothers with advanced degrees in engineering or medicine. His parents are both physicians who worked at a hospital in Huishui. They are both retired and live in China.

Yin's interest in transportation dates back to his senior year as an undergraduate student at Tsinghua University. While assisting a civil engineering professor with a travel demand modeling study, he soon realized that he enjoyed the field of transportation and began graduate studies in that area.

"The motivation initially was to make some money and get access to computers, but the experience turned out to be rewarding," Yin said. "Later on, when I applied to graduate schools, I did not like much experimenting with concrete and steel, so logically I chose transportation."

## Transportation according to Yin

Transportation engineering is a discipline that involves the understanding of multiple discipline areas in order to correctly diagnose and treat various corridor infrastructure problems. Yin says that cross-disciplinary collaboration is important.

"The transportation system is very complicated, involving humans, socioeconomic factors, and infrastructure," Yin said. "Therefore, solving transportation issues always requires knowledge from multiple disciplines, such as civil/transportation engineering, urban planning, economics, operations research, communication, sociology and others."

The use of advanced information technologies such as telecommunications and ITS have provided many opportunities to better manage and improve transportation systems, and he foresees a fundamental change in the way transportation systems are financed and managed.

"For example, gasoline taxes may be gone and a pay-as-you-go scheme will be likely imposed," he said.

## The wise educator

Yin enjoys teaching, and he is especially thrilled when his students understand a difficult concept he has explained in class.

But Yin takes his teaching philosophy one step further by encouraging students to acquire knowledge outside the classroom. Yingyan Lou, a doctoral student working under the guidance of Yin, explains.

"Dr. Yin does not restrict his students to a certain area," Lou said. "Instead, he encourages students to broaden their perspectives of transportation by attending various seminars to exchange knowledge with fellow students by organizing a reading club, which has been held by his group each Friday for the past year."

Lou considers Yin an excellent engineer and scientist because he is enthusiastic about the subject, has deep knowledge in his chosen field and possesses innovativeness and persistence.

Yin is currently supervising five doctoral students, a master's student, and serves as co-advisor to another two master's students. It is the partner-like treatment of his graduate students that pleases Lou.

"Dr. Yin treats his students as co-workers and encourages students to think independently," Lou said. "He gives useful instructions and advice and actually sets up a good example himself in how to do research professionally, which I think is the most important skill one should develop during graduate study."

For students contemplating a career in transportation engineering, Yin advises that a holistic approach is essential for succeeding in the field.

"You may want to try to equip yourself with a wide range of skills in school, particularly those technical and quantitative skills from transportation engineering, economics, operations research and statistics," Yin said.

And as for the Transportation Research Center and the CMS, Yin is pleased.

"I feel fortunate to join the transportation program at the University of Florida, which takes pride in its distinguished faculties as well as its world reputation as an outstanding research institution," Yin said.

# Annual PICNIC

The CMS held its first annual picnic at Lake Wauberg on October 14, 2007, in conjunction with the UF Transportation Research Center. Over 30 faculty, students, staff and their families attended.

The weather was perfect for a mid-October picnic in Florida. Colleagues, students and families enjoyed a spread of barbecued chicken, hotdogs, vegetarian patties, baked beans, potato salad and coleslaw. The meal was followed by a huge cake sporting the TRC logo, the sponsor of the picnic.

With appetites satisfied, guests enjoyed the many activities available to them at Lake Wauberg such as paddle boating, playing touch football, walking along the lake or simply reading a book by the water's edge.

Dimitra Michalaka, 23, a first year graduate student, enjoyed the picnic and feels that such gatherings are vital for group camaraderie.

"This event is important because it makes everyone feel more united," Michalaka said. "I liked it very much that we had the chance to meet the families of our professors."



To the right, Lily Elefteriadou, Director of the TRC and CMS, serves cake to some eager hands at the pavilion in Lake Wauberg. Lakshmi Balasubramanian (in the center), stands ready with her camera.

Scott Washburn, an associate professor in the Department of Civil & Coastal Engineering, was pleased with the participation and echoed Michalaka's feeling on group dynamics.

"We had a great turnout this year, probably a 25 percent increase over last year—a reflection on the growth of our transportation education and research program," he said. "This kind of social activity helps students, staff, and faculty get to know each other better, which ultimately helps with communication and collaboration in the work environment."

Washburn says his family enjoyed the picnic. His son Davis, 8, and daughter Sydney, 5, had the best time playing with the other children at the picnic.

"We look forward to an even bigger turnout next year," he said.

Lake Wauberg is eight miles south of campus on U.S. 441. It is an outdoor recreational park owned and operated by UF.



Guests enjoy a relaxing time after satisfying their appetites. Students gather in the background in preparation for various activities.

# Affiliated CENTER

## UF GeoPlan Center Assists In Transportation Planning Decisions

For more than 20 years, the University of Florida Geo-Facilities Planning and Information Research Center, or GeoPlan, has provided a teaching and research environment for Geographic Information Systems and for advanced spatial analysis.

The center, which was established in the Department of Urban & Regional Planning in the College of Design, Construction and Planning, brings together researchers throughout campus to work on a diverse array of research projects and grants.

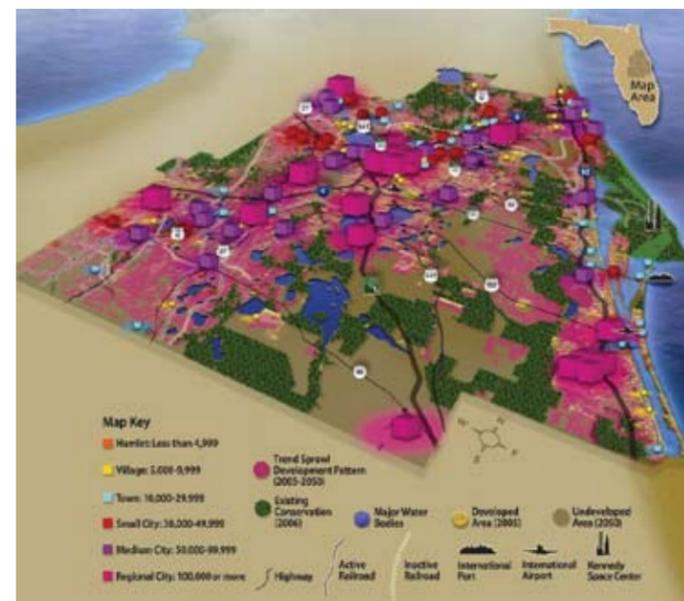
The research at the center provides powerful tools to community leaders and decision-makers in areas such as land use and transportation. Many of the research projects are supported by the Florida Geographic Data Library.

"This data library, where professionals, researchers, students and community leaders throughout the state can 'check out' spatial

data, is valuable to Florida and allows for the data to be organized in a standardized format that fits the needs of the state agencies," center director and urban and regional planning professor Paul Zwick said. "The data provided in the library is compatible across platforms and systems, comes complete with documentation about its development and use, and is available for download on the FGDL Web site free of charge."

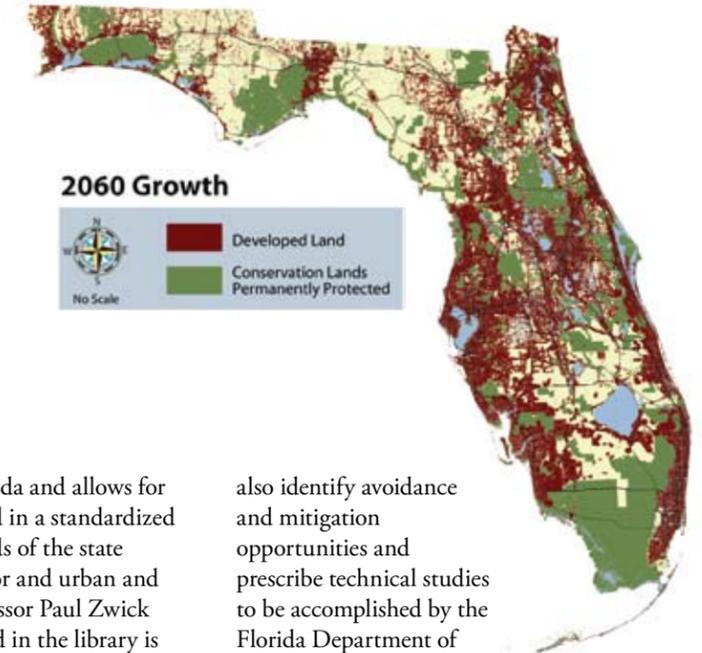
One of the research projects that relies on the FGDL's data is the Efficient Transportation Decision-Making project. ETDM resulted from "environmental streamlining" legislation passed by Congress as part of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

"The ETDM process redefines how Florida accomplishes transportation planning and project development," ETDM principal investigator Alexis Thomas said.



The overall intent of the process is to improve transportation decision-making in a way that protects both human and natural environments. The approach includes active participation of federal, state and local agencies and the public.

Early in the transportation planning process, resource agencies and the public interact with transportation planners to identify potential effects that the project may have on the community and natural resources. Agencies



also identify avoidance and mitigation opportunities and prescribe technical studies to be accomplished by the Florida Department of Transportation while the project is ongoing.

Another research project, Land Use Conflict Identification Strategy applies the FGDL data for land use visualization and analysis. LUCIS examines the conflict between the lands preferred for agriculture, conservation and urban development and helps to identify areas of greatest conflict.

From this conflict analysis, researchers create different land use scenarios based on clearly articulated sets of assumptions allowing for the comparison of alternatives.

Developed by Zwick and landscape architecture professor Peggy Carr, LUCIS serves as a tool for community decision-making. The modeling process also serves as a tool for other researchers.

"LUCIS can identify land use configurations that will lessen the impact of congestion and identify opportunities for multi-modal planning," Ruth Steiner, an urban and regional planning professor who is affiliated with the center, said.



# student SPOTLIGHT

## Alexandra Kondyli

**History and literature** were not her favorite subjects in high school. But math and physics fascinated her, and they made sense. And in her quest to find the perfect school, Alexandra Kondyli soon found herself immersed in everything engineering.

“At the top of my list were all engineering schools, and especially surveying and civil engineering, and that’s because I liked the idea of combining work outside and taking measurements in the field with work in the office,” Kondyli, 28, a doctoral student in the UF Department of Civil & Coastal Engineering, said. She is affiliated with the Center for Multimodal Solutions for Congestion Mitigation.

Kondyli, a native of Athens, Greece, became interested in transportation while majoring in surveying at the National Technical University of Athens. The curriculum included courses in transportation, and most of them were related to geometric design and traffic operations.

“So, in the beginning, when I first took those courses, I really liked them, and I focused on them and did my thesis in that area,” Kondyli said.

Her undergraduate research project was on the study of traffic operations in Greek freeways using photogrammetric techniques. In Greece, as in many other European countries, undergraduate students work on a thesis as part of their graduation requirements. In

engineering schools the Greek bachelor’s degree is called a diploma, and it is a 5-year program.

### Living in America

Coming to the United States, however, had never been a viable option for Konlyli. She knew she wanted to pursue graduate studies but wanted to stay closer to home. Never did she imagine that her academic goals would take her an ocean away to a different continent with a new culture and a new language.

Kondyli applied to civil engineering programs in the United States only after meeting with Lily Elefteriadou, associate professor at UF and the CMS director.

“Dr. Elefteriadou had come to Greece to give a seminar and meet with students from our department, so I requested to meet with her.” Kondyli said. “She explained to me a lot of things such as how the process works in U.S. universities and what the graduate program is like, how long it takes, how is life in U.S., and things like that, so she encouraged me to apply.”

Thus began her experience as a graduate student in this country, which has been overwhelmingly positive, but not without challenges.

Cultural differences and having few acquaintances made it difficult for her in the beginning, but soon enough, friendships blossomed and she became more comfortable with Gainesville.

As for her graduate studies, the challenges there were different. Kondyli had to strike a balance between a nine-credit course load and her research.

“Courses take lot of your time, so you have to start by doing some management of your time,” she said. “I’ve come to understand that the key to becoming successful is time management and adhering to your schedule. I’m trying to move toward this direction, to have a balance between my personal life and school and research.”

### The Work Begins

Kondyli arrived at UF in fall 2004 and started to work on her master’s degree under the guidance of Elefteriadou. Her project was on the development of an arterial link travel-time model with the consideration of mid-block delays.

The scope of the project was to explain the delays that occur in an arterial link by looking at factors that contribute to traffic backups such as vehicle turning maneuvers and interactions, as well as the presence of buses and parking activity. Her research has led to a series of calculations used for estimating this arterial mid-block delay. She received her master’s degree in December 2005.

Kondyli continues to work under Elefteriadou. For her doctoral dissertation, she is developing a model that will consider how a driver’s behavior will affect freeway operations on ramps. Kondyli will be measuring the effects of merging maneuvers on freeway traffic, which can eventually contribute to a breakdown on the freeway.

“You have lots of turbulence there with people slowing down trying to avoid ramp vehicles or even changing lanes, or because the ramp vehicles may force their way and cause others to decelerate,” Kondyli said.

For her study, Kondyli will recruit research volunteers to drive on ramps and onto the freeway. To understand freeway merging decisions, she will interview volunteers after they complete various assigned tasks.

“It really depends on driver behavior such as the degree of aggressiveness that each one has and also the perception of other peoples’ speeds,” Kondyli said. “The smoothness of traffic flow relies also on driver population. It’s the small interactions between vehicles that make traffic breakdown.”

She is hoping to complete her dissertation by spring 2009.

### A Model Student

Kondyli is in her third year at UF, and she is a real cheerleader for the transportation program. As a student, she has attended conferences and networked with people in academia, government agencies and industry. The transportation program has funded all of her trips.

“Students will be very fortunate to come here because this is a very strong program and faculty are extremely knowledgeable in their areas,” Kondyli said. “This program has started to build very quickly, and we are one of the important groups within civil engineering in this school, which at a national level is gaining recognition.”

Much of the success also stems from the strong ties and collaboration that exists among the Transportation Research Center, the CMS and the Florida Department of Transportation, including national institutes such as the Transportation Research Board, she said.

In her spare time, Kondyli will go to the gym or exercise at home, watch movies with her friends or read. She is hoping to brush up on her piano skills and plans to buy a synthesizer soon.

But her favorite pastime is visiting family and friends in Greece, where she can eat her favorite foods such as Moussaka and Spanakopita and hang out with friends in downtown Athens.

Her life in Gainesville hasn’t been too bad, either.

“It has a lot of options, the climate is good, there are different things to see, the beaches are close, and there is a lot of excitement during football,” Kondyli said. “I like the whole mentality of the game, it’s like a fiesta.”



Alexandra Kondyli (forefront) discusses her doctoral project with first year master’s student Dimitra Michalaka (center) and doctoral student Cuie Lu (left).

# CMS

## Holds First Recruitment Event



UF ISE junior Joanna Sanford and Associate Professor Ruth Steiner of urban and regional planning enjoy a sandwich from Roly Poly while discussing graduate school opportunities.

A group of students attended an information session held on campus by the CMS on November 6, 2007. This was the center's first event geared toward recruiting qualified graduate students.

The information session provided an overview of the center's various research areas and affiliated departments, including funding opportunities and the UF graduate school application process.

"I think events like this benefit students because they're a great way to learn a little more about something we might be interested in," Joanna Sandford, 21, a junior in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, said. "It's also more efficient than constantly asking my advisor questions or trekking all across campus to different advisors to ask questions that I might not even know what to ask to get the information I want."

Sandford is interested in urban and regional planning. She had a chance to speak with Ruth Steiner, an associate professor from that department.

"I am excited that there may be opportunities in other areas besides CCE. This event helped answer the questions I had and put me in contact with some people I could contact to learn more," Sandford said.



CMS Director Lily Elefteriadou addresses a crowd of students at the information session.

Representatives from other CMS affiliated departments such as civil engineering and industrial and systems engineering were also present to answer questions and to speak to students.

Mike Funk, the academic services coordinator for industrial and systems engineering, and also a recruiter for the College of Engineering, is often invited to attend recruitment sessions at UF. He commented on the effectiveness of the CMS's information session.

"I think the info session for the Congestion Mitigation Center was a great success," Funk said. "It brought students together from many different engineering disciplines to look at how they can use an interdisciplinary skill set to bring progress to the area of traffic congestion."



## The CMS Hires Center Coordinator

The CMS welcomed Ines Aviles-Spadoni as the new center's coordinator/manager this August.

Aviles-Spadoni has worked at UF for the past eight years and has managed various programs on campus. She is enthusiastic about being part of the CMS.

"Starting a new center certainly has its challenges, but that is the exciting part," Aviles-Spadoni said. "And having the opportunity to strategize, create, and implement is what makes this position so great."

Since August, she has worked relentlessly with CMS Director Lily Elefteriadou on launching various activities described in the center's Strategic Plan and, so far, the effort has paid off.

"Already, a call for proposals has been issued, and we have recruitment activities planned for the remainder of this year," Aviles-Spadoni said. "Also, we had a very productive visit with the folks at the FDOT in early October, and we have many, many other projects that are moving along nicely."

Aviles-Spadoni says she enjoys working with Elefteriadou and feels it is a true team effort.

"A consequence of that synergy has been some extremely good progress in such a short amount of time," she said.

Aviles-Spadoni says she likes interacting with the CMS faculty, students, and staff. Her goal is to assist Elefteriadou in making the CMS one of the nation's top Tier 1 Grant Funded Transportation centers in the United States.

## Student CHAPTER NEWS

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Student Chapter won an award for best student poster at the ITE District Meeting in Orlando in November. The poster, presented by Yingyan Lou, was entitled "Dynamic Tolling Strategies for Managed Lanes."

### Message from the Director — Continued from page 1

our summer internship program, which is geared specifically toward undergraduate students.

The internship program is open to students from colleges and universities across the U.S. The objective of the program is to provide undergraduate students the opportunity to conduct independent research in transportation under the guidance of a faculty member and in collaboration with other graduate and undergraduate students.

The Distinguished Lecture in Transportation Series started last spring, and our first presenter was Samer Madanat from the University of California at Berkeley. Madanat's presentation was entitled "Optimization of Maintenance and Replacement Policies for a System of Heterogeneous Infrastructure Facilities." Fred Mannering of Purdue University on December 6.

We have a very active seminar program with several seminars held approximately once or twice a month with speakers from the public and private sector, academia and students.

On October 9, we visited the Florida Department of Transportation, and it was a great success. During this meeting, several

UF researchers visited with the various FDOT offices to discuss UF's research capabilities in transportation and to hear more about their research priorities. A total of approximately 30 UF researchers and FDOT personnel participated at the meeting, which generated several new ideas and potential research topics.

We are now in the process of planning our activities during the Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, which will take place January 13-17, 2008, in Washington, D.C. and will be attended by several of our faculty, staff and students. UF's reception will take place on Monday, January 14, 2008 from 5:30 to 7:30p.m. at the Mezzanine at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. We are also planning for our first External Advisory Board meeting and annual conference, which will take place in spring 2008. Finally, we are working on the CMS Web site, which is expected to be completed in January.

I invite you to review the articles inside this inaugural newsletter, which highlight our recent activities, and if you have any questions or suggestions please do not hesitate to contact us.



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