

# Students, teachers get entrepreneurial at FIU's Chaplin School

Andrea G. Rollin

Initiatives are in place at [Florida International University's](#) Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management in Miami to spark students' entrepreneurial spirit with the goal of producing industry leaders who impact the world of business, and raising revenue for the school.

"Students [here] get the essential skills in management, marketing, HR, operations, financial management and accounting – exposures to the critical thinking and the

fundamentals that can lead to success," said [Mike Hampton, Ed.D.](#), the school's dean. "We're a business degree with focus."

## Collaborating with local brewers

The school's Brewing Science Lab, for example, is addressing the issue of inconsistencies in well water sources in the production of craft beer, which is affecting the emerging industry of craft



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brewing businesses in Miami. [Barry Gump](#), Ph.D., designer and head of the lab, is working with students and local breweries on the water demineralization processes in order to enhance and stabilize craft brewery products.

“We’ve got three different brewing systems and three different fermenters,” he said.

“In our small fermenter, we can brew 7.5 gallons; in our intermediate size, 15 gallons; and, in our large fermenter, 27 gallons, which is almost a full barrel of beer.

“We’re hoping to collaborate with local brewers to make some test batches of beer that they will then want to make commercially,” Gump said.

The lab recently brewed its first new beer, and plans are underway to potentially supply the new FIU restaurant, as well as to feature one of the lab’s beers at Chili’s on the main campus.

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“Throughout the year, we’ve poured beer at a number of charity functions [and at FIU luncheons], which, of course, gives the university and our brewing program great exposure,” Gump said.

He has also invited Wynwood Brewing Co. in Miami to visit the facility and brew with him and his students.

In addition, the lab is planning to research sanitation methods, Gump said.

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
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“We have a new, exotic sanitation system and we’re going to compare that with chemical-based sanitation methods,” he said. “In collaboration with Dr. [Aaron Welch](#), [a recently hired molecular and cellular biologist], we’re going to be looking at the potential of finding indigenous yeast on campus and, perhaps, in our classrooms that might make some interesting beers.”

There are a number of craft brewing businesses in Miami – and a great many everywhere, Hampton said. “We’ve had a wine program since the 1970s, and now we’re moving that to an even higher level to integrate not only sensory education, but to look at the science aspect of winemaking – and beer, as well.”

Now, he said, the school has two heavyweights – Gump and Welch – who help students understand the most fundamental elements of the brewing and winemaking processes.

“We have several alumni that are in key positions with winemaking and beermaking organizations, including [Duffy Keys](#), who owns a company in California called B Cellars,” he said. “The company has skyrocketed in the past five years to become one of the most prominent winemakers in the Napa/Sonoma areas. Duffy won five double-gold medals for his wines in the American Fine Wine competition” in January.

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Another alumnus, [Kevin Rusk](#), owns the successful Titanic Brewing Co. in Coral Gables, Hampton said. “They’ve moved on to become significant businesspeople in those two areas.”



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
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## Government-funded solutions

In light of the current economic times, the school has to be more adept at finding funds and getting support from industry partners, Hampton said.

“There are lots of foundations, institutes and organizations that are interested in developing solutions to challenges that we are facing,” he said. “We want to do what we do best: identify our niche and fill a gap left by other institutions.”

Out of a \$5 million grant from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#), the school has been allocated \$250,000 to study the effects of global warming and how it affects the wine industry, Hampton said.

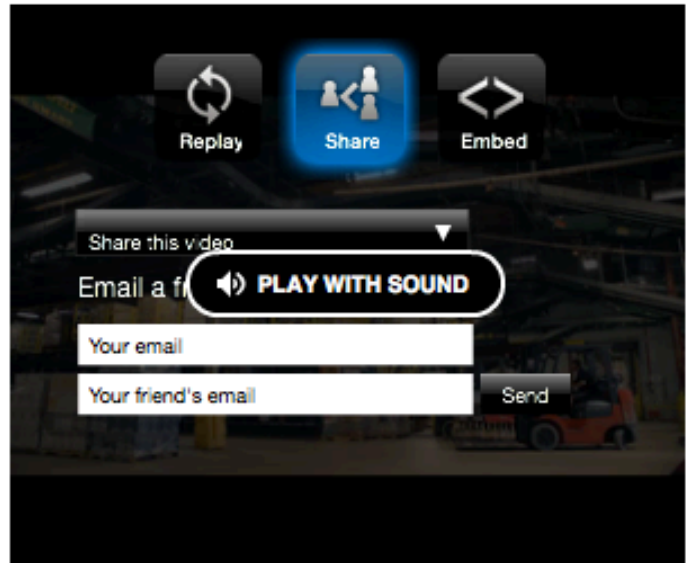
“We’re trying to develop a yeast strain that will mitigate any incidence of ochratoxins that could appear in wine,” he said. “Dr. Welch is looking at the possible effect that comes from the moisture from a warm climate creating a mold that grows inside the clusters of wine grapes.”

## Moving forward

Large breweries in the U.S. – like [Anheuser-Busch](#) – do a magnificent job of manufacturing a consistent product. Craft breweries’ goal is to brew as consistently as the large breweries, Gump said.

“In the future, we’ll probably either have a course (on craft brewing) or at least a weekend workshop on the Cicerone program” – the history or brewing, knowledge of various styles of beer, appropriate glassware to serve beer and the physical etiquette involved in serving beer, he said. “The industry is just growing in leaps and bounds. Supposedly, there are going to be 1,500 new craft brew industries started this year throughout the United States.”

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