We want to hear from you! Send your update to: Maribel Lisk, PO Box 117200, Gainesville, FL 32611-7200. Please include your degree (BS, MS, PhD, etc.), graduation date, and e-mail address if you have one. Photos are welcome, too! You can read more about the Center in the Departmental News section of our homepage, www.chem.ufl.edu.

The goal of the center is to develop new materials and create prototypes with direct technological relevance. You can find more information about the Center on the Departmental News section of our homepage, www.chem.ufl.edu.

The photo from the Center kick-off meeting on October 9, 2010. From left to right: Joe Lyding (Univ. IL), Greg Girolami (Univ. IL), Lisa McElwee-White (UF), David Wei (UF), Marcus Lay (Univ. GA).

We want to keep in touch with Chemistry.

The Chemical Innovation Center for Nanostructured Electronic Materials is located in the Department of Chemistry. The Center was awarded a new lease on life in the Department of Chemistry.

Photo Credit: UF Photo

FALL 2010
University of Florida
Department of Chemistry
“Internationalization” is a major theme at the University of Florida these days, as it is at many universities across the country. A two-week trip to China this fall provided me the chance to reflect on what “internationalization” means to our department.

Chemistry has a long history as an international science and may already be the most internationalized discipline at the university. There are famous photographs such as the one of Marie Curie, seated with Neils Bohr, Albert Einstein, Max Planck and a score of other famous chemists and physicists, together at the Solvay conference in 1927. It has long been realized that science progresses faster when you bring together the best minds from around the world.

Today is no different. Many of us rely on international collaborations in our research. Our faculty and students attend international conferences, we regularly have international scientists visit our department to lecture, and nearly half of the graduate students in our program are from Asia, South America, and Europe. For more than a decade we have had international exchange programs in place for both undergraduates and graduate student researchers. Countries with which we have formal exchanges include France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Japan, Columbia, Brazil, and Argentina. This list does not include the informal agreements setup via individual faculty collaborations.

But I now wonder if we shouldn’t do even more. I was reminded again, as I travelled through China for the first time, how much there is to learn about a culture by visiting the people where they live and work. You realize how little you really know, and how many misconceptions you hold. You also begin to learn how people view us, and in turn, what misconceptions they hold about us and our way of life. The long reach of Desperate Housewives would amaze you!

Although international collaborations are about doing the best science, there is much more to be gained. Science is a vehicle for fostering international understanding and broadening how our students think. In the long run, these tools may be more valuable to our students as they progress in their careers than the technical skills they gain with us.

I found that UF and the Department of Chemistry are renowned at the places I visited, and, refreshingly, not for football! Rather, I was pleased to find that UF and specifically our department are recognized as top-flight among US academic institutions. A couple of the universities I visited proposed establishing formal exchanges, giving our undergraduates and graduate students a chance to experience China. It seems like a good idea.

—Daniel R. Talham