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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **University of Maryland Introduces iPads as Part of Mobility Initiative**

**COLLEGE PARK, MD** (April 26, 2010) – As further demonstration of the university’s strong commitment to new educational technologies and innovation across diverse media, all 75 students enrolled in the University of Maryland’s newly-launched Digital Cultures and Creativity (DCC) living and learning program within the Honors College will be given an Apple iPad in fall 2010.

This device will be fully integrated into the program’s curriculum, where it will serve as the basis for content delivery and instruction. Students will also have the opportunity to learn to develop their own applications for the iPad. The devices will be handed out in late August when students move onto campus.

This latest action is part of the university’s Mobility Initiative, a pilot program studying whether mobile technology enhances the student education experience.

“DCC is thrilled to be joining the university’s innovative Mobility Initiative,” said Dr. Matthew Kirschenbaum, Associate Professor of English and Director of Digital Cultures and Creativity. Kirschenbaum continued: “Many of DCC’s students are digital natives who will come to campus already having programmed their own applications, made their own electronic music and art, or designed their own interactive media. They will use their iPads in the context of a curriculum that immerses them in the surprisingly long and complex history of thought behind today’s new media devices. They will learn to develop new content for the platform, as well as use it to consume rich media integral to their education.”

DCC’s faculty includes Associate Professor of Computer Science and former director of the University of Maryland’s Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory Ben Bederson, who has already developed applications for the iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad (<http://www.newsdesk.umd.edu/scitech/release.cfm?ArticleID=2112>).

For nearly two years, the University of Maryland has been studying whether incorporating mobile technology enhances the student educational experience. Sponsored by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, and the Office of Information Technology, the Mobility Initiative began in fall 2008. During its two years of existence, 280 freshmen in the Banneker/Key Scholarship and Maryland Incentive Awards programs have been given either an iPhone or iPod touch to test inside and outside of class.

In addition to the 75 DCC students who will be receiving an Apple iPad in the fall, approximately 160 new freshmen in the Banneker/Key Scholarship and Maryland Incentive Awards programs will be given either an iPhone or iPod touch in fall 2010 – bringing the number of student pilot participants to approximately 515.

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During the initiative's first year, more than 130 student participants used the mobile devices to substitute for student response devices (also known as clickers) in class, to access the mobile versions of the university's portal and learning management system, and to participate in varied special activities, such as research scavenger hunts.

For its second year, the pilot study expanded to include additional students, professors, and learning opportunities. New efforts were undertaken to support faculty in their efforts to incorporate mobile learning into their courses, including offering a set of iPod touch devices that can be loaned out to students in a course to support specific learning activities.

Additionally, an Office of Information Technology (OIT) and Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) partnership gives participants in the CTE's Summer Institute for New(er) Technologies the opportunity to explore integrating mobile learning activities into their courses with support from OIT.

"Four fall courses and five spring courses have been part of these efforts," said Ellen Yu Borkowski, Director of Academic Support in the Office of Information Technology. "Some of the mobile learning activities in these courses include recording assessments of high school PE teachers, recording use of media as part of an international research study, collecting and distributing interpretations of poetry, and using the devices' recording and playback features in support of learning foreign languages. OIT and the CTE plan to continue this partnership into the Mobility Initiative's third year," Borkowski said.

Additionally, for the spring 2010 semester, a new upper-level computer science offering was introduced to the university's curriculum. The new course, "CMSC498I: Selected Topics in Computer Science: Programming the iPhone," covers topics such as iPhone development tools and fundamentals; user interface design; media considerations related to gaming, audio, and video; and usability and quality assessment. As part of the course, students are developing new mobile applications for the iPhone, specifically focusing on ones that can be deployed and used across the university as part of Maryland's overall efforts to support mobile devices on campus.

Digital Cultures and Creativity is sponsored by the College of Arts and Humanities, with co-sponsorship from the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, the Department of Computer Science, and the College of Information Studies. Learn more about DCC at [www.dcc.umd.edu](http://www.dcc.umd.edu).

An initiative of the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean for Undergraduate Studies, the Center for Teaching Excellence is the campus' central partner for improving undergraduate education. Learn more about CTE at [www.cte.umd.edu](http://www.cte.umd.edu).

The Office of Information Technology plans, develops, supports, and maintains computing, networking, and telecommunications services for the University of Maryland. Learn more about OIT at [www.oit.umd.edu](http://www.oit.umd.edu).

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## **About the University of Maryland**

The University of Maryland is the state's flagship university and one of the nation's preeminent public research universities. Ranked No. 18 among public universities by U.S. News & World Report, it has 28 academic programs in the U.S News Top 10 and 78 in the Top 25. The Institute of Higher Education (Jiao Tong University, Shanghai), which ranks the world's top universities based on research, puts Maryland at No. 37 in the world and No. 12 among U.S. public universities. The university has produced six Nobel laureates, seven Pulitzer Prize winners, more than 40 members of the national academies and scores of Fulbright scholars. The university is recognized for its diversity, with underrepresented students comprising one-third of the student population. For more information about the University of Maryland, visit [www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu).

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