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Vaccine Production Workers at Merial Select Learn the Science of Biology and Manufacturing

*ICAPP tests new pilot program for non-credit courses at
Gainesville State College*

The first class of Merial Select employees began a new certificate program custom-tailored to meet their workplace needs in January at Gainesville State College. Merial Select produces vaccines for the poultry industry at its plant in Gainesville. The company told Gainesville State that its employees need a basic foundation in the science behind the processes that they work with daily to produce vaccines.

With funding from ICAPP, Merial Select and Gainesville State worked together to develop the curriculum for a non-credit certificate. The program is designed to improve productivity and product quality, which will lower costs. Students learn a wide variety of subjects, including basic cell culture, the math of dilutions and measurements, and air sampling.

The poultry and egg industry is the most valuable sector of Georgia's agriculture industry, and employs more than 100,000 Georgians (University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development).

All poultry industry employees could benefit from the majority of this program, so it can easily be adapted for other employers. In addition, components of the program, such as sterile manufacturing and environmental health and safety can apply to employees of pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Graduates earn:

- *Certificate in Basic Poultry Biologics and Manufacturing*
- *Six Sigma White Belt Certificate*
- *OSHA 10-hour Completion Card*



Dr. Mike Lacy, Chair of UGA's Poultry Science Department, along with other UGA faculty members, shares industry expertise that builds on the basic biology and math classes taught by Gainesville State faculty. Faculty from Southern Polytechnic State University bring in Six Sigma instruction.

The first class began in January 2009 with 23 employees of Merial Select, and ends June 24.



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