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## Search results

USF To Study Export Of Jobs And Its Effect On Bay Area

May 4, 2004  
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By MICHAEL SASSO

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TAMPA — The University of South Florida's Globalization Research Center is planning to study the effect of the offshore **outsourcing** trend on the Tampa Bay area's economy.

**Outsourcing** work to companies overseas has become a hotly debated topic among politicians and labor unions nationwide. It's unclear, though, whether **outsourcing** is a real threat to the U.S. economy or a convenient scapegoat.

USF's Globalization Research Center hopes to answer that and other questions in its study this summer. The center's director, Mark Amen, said he hopes the study will help shape the debate during this fall's state and national election campaigns.

"I haven't seen any of the candidates at the local or national levels referencing studies for the positions they take on this issue," Amen said.

The center plans to spend about \$30,000 to hire USF faculty and research organizations to assist with the study, Amen said.

The deadline for proposals is June 1, and Amen hopes to have the research finished by Sept. 15. The center plans to disclose its findings at a public forum in the fall.

Researchers face a challenge, chiefly because there is little data available on **outsourcing**. State and federal agencies don't keep tabs on work shifting to Asia, Latin America and other places where labor is less expensive. Furthermore, Amen noted, many of the **outsourcing** studies thus far have been based on statistical models that attempt to predict how many jobs are leaving the country rather than surveys that gather data from U.S. companies.

USF's researchers won't have to go far for insight on the subject. Several local companies, such as Sykes Enterprises Inc. in Tampa and Jabil Circuit Inc. in St. Petersburg, have stated their intention to move work overseas.

Amen said the center hopes to broaden the study to get a handle on foreign-based companies moving work to the United States. This less-publicized form of globalization is known in corporate America as "inshoring."

One local researcher already has been looking into how the shift of jobs overseas could affect the Bay area.

Guy Hagen, president of Innovation Insight, a Tampa-based consultant, is conducting

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a study for several local economic development groups to determine how the region can develop into a major hub for the financial services industry.

Hagen said his early research has found that some financial service jobs in the Bay area, such as customer service, sales and technical support, are at risk for **outsourcing**. Such jobs, he said, are "pretty easy to script, pretty easy to package," and thus some companies have been moving them overseas.

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