

FLORIDA CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX
April 26, 2005
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA**

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Consumer Confidence

Consumer confidence among Floridians fell in April by two points to 90, the lowest level since August, 2003. The source of the decline was primarily in expectations of US economic conditions in both the short term and the long term. Expectations about the US economy over the next year fell seven points to 76, while expectations over the next five years fell five points to 79. Perceptions as to whether it is a good time to buy big-ticket items fell three points to 111. The declines were balanced by modest increases in the two components that measure perceptions of personal finances. Perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago increased two points to 90 while expectations of personal finances a year from now increased four points to 97.

“There are some signs that the economy may be cooling off a bit,” said Chris McCarty, the Survey Director. “While job growth had been fairly positive recently, particularly in Florida, there are signs that this may be slowing. Of course energy prices and interest rates are much higher than they were last year and there is little reason to believe either of these will come down in the near future. For the most part the stock market has been a disappointment, for much of the month threatening to go below 10,000. Despite positive reports about personal finances, Florida’s consumers are increasingly pessimistic about the economy in both the short and long term.”

The decline in perceptions of the economy was more pronounced among respondents age 60 and older, perhaps reflecting concerns over Social Security reform, although that is no longer front page news. Despite overall increases in perceptions of personal finances there was a slight decline in those components among households making more than \$30,000 a year. This was also the case for perceptions of buying conditions.

“Going forward we expect consumer confidence to remain in the low 90s or upper 80s,” said McCarty. “Gas prices typically rise during the summer months when demand increases as people take vacations. Recent polling data suggest that households nationwide are making adjustments to spending and traveling to accommodate high gas prices. This may eventually impact Florida as Americans put off vacations to the Sunshine State. On the other hand, with the weak dollar it is cheap for foreign travelers from Europe, Japan and elsewhere to travel here. This may balance some of the lost tourist revenue from interstate travel.”

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY
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Apr-04 May-04 Jun-04 Jul-04 Aug-04 Sep-04 Oct-04 Nov-04 Dec-04 Jan-05 Feb-05 Mar-05* Apr-05†

Consumer Confidence Index												
FLORIDA	96	93	95	94	95	93	93	91	93	97	92	90
Men	102	97	100	98	105	102	100	103	97	102	96	94
Women	90	89	91	92	89	87	88	87	86	89	89	87
Under age 60	98	94	99	97	102	97	96	96	96	99	95	95
Aged 60 and over	91	91	86	87	81	84	85	90	82	90	88	82
Income under \$30,000	84	84	79	80	85	81	83	78	75	82	81	79
Income \$30,000 and over	102	100	102	102	103	100	100	102	99	101	102	96

Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	86	82	86	83	88	85	81	85	87	85	91	88	90
Men	93	89	89	83	98	92	83	97	90	90	98	94	91
Women	80	77	83	83	82	80	78	76	84	80	85	82	88
Under age 60	94	90	91	90	100	90	87	94	93	90	98	96	99
Aged 60 and over	71	65	72	67	60	71	67	69	75	75	77	71	74
Income under \$30,000	62	67	58	61	69	67	62	52	64	65	68	67	72
Income \$30,000 and over	98	94	98	96	100	97	91	103	98	97	100	101	100

Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	102	99	104	95	103	100	101	100	94	98	99	93	97
Men	108	98	109	99	113	109	109	108	99	102	102	95	101
Women	96	100	99	93	97	94	95	94	91	94	96	92	93
Under age 60	111	106	111	101	115	110	111	107	107	104	106	103	107
Aged 60 and over	82	85	85	81	77	77	79	86	69	86	83	76	78
Income under \$30,000	96	95	87	85	99	92	95	92	84	91	87	83	85
Income \$30,000 and over	106	106	109	102	107	108	107	106	101	104	105	102	101

Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	90	85	88	91	89	87	87	88	82	87	93	83	76
Men	96	93	93	95	99	98	95	97	90	95	100	85	81
Women	84	79	85	89	83	79	80	82	76	81	86	81	72
Under age 60	91	81	91	93	91	91	86	86	86	87	93	82	77
Aged 60 and over	88	95	83	88	85	78	87	92	76	88	96	84	74
Income under \$30,000	74	78	71	82	84	77	79	74	67	77	75	73	68
Income \$30,000 and over	98	88	97	98	94	91	91	96	89	95	100	87	81

Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years													
FLORIDA	87	90	88	94	89	90	92	85	87	88	88	84	79
Men	94	100	95	99	102	98	104	99	95	93	93	89	82
Women	80	83	81	91	81	85	82	74	81	84	83	79	77
Under age 60	84	89	89	93	92	91	95	80	88	87	87	80	78
Aged 60 and over	93	94	84	97	82	91	85	94	87	90	90	91	81
Income under \$30,000	83	80	78	84	74	82	86	74	65	76	72	73	61
Income \$30,000 and over	89	97	91	98	99	93	98	91	96	94	93	86	87

Is this a good time to buy major household items?													
FLORIDA	115	107	109	107	108	102	105	109	104	110	113	114	111
Men	119	107	112	112	115	112	107	112	112	114	115	116	116
Women	111	107	107	105	104	96	102	107	97	106	112	113	107
Under age 60	112	103	110	109	112	102	103	110	106	110	113	112	115
Aged 60 and over	121	114	107	103	101	103	108	108	102	109	117	117	104
Income under \$30,000	106	99	102	89	97	86	93	99	96	99	106	108	108
Income \$30,000 and over	119	113	113	116	118	111	110	114	108	116	115	117	113

*Revised. †Preliminary.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH

Sample Size	405	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	13	% Male	47
Average age	52	% White	87	% Female	53
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	18	% Yes	11	% North	23
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	12	% No	89	% Central	16
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	24			% Southeast	25
% over \$50,000	46			% Southwest	36