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The 'Swift Effect' Hits Florida

By

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Taylor Swift's new album, ***The Tortured Poets Department***—which turned out to be a secret double album—dropped overnight, and with it came a bombshell for the Sunshine State: the song “Florida!!!,” a dramatic duet with British powerhouse Florence Welch of Florence and the Machine.

Rhyming “guest in” with “Destin” and accented by Welch’s signature bashing drums and Taylor’s lilting phrases, the song acknowledges the state’s “come as you are” nature, a place where you can get lost in the crowd. On purpose, in this case, but a quality appreciated by residents like Ernest Hemingway, Stephen King and over the centuries, countless fortune seekers, new hopefuls starting over and those escaping...well, everything, from harsh conditions at home—be it the cold or political climate—as well as a reckoning of some kind (as the song implies).

The ‘Swift Effect’ Has Really Affected Florida

And when the Swifties make their pilgrimage to Northwest Florida—and they’re probably already packing—what will they find? Something that visitors across the years have already discovered. A dreamy landscape of beaches and sun-washed architecture, deep forests spilling into the Gulf of Mexico and antebellum towns seemingly frozen in time.

But this is hardly Florida’s first foray into the World of Swift. **The University of South Florida** in Tampa just added three Swift-themed fall sections of LIT 3301: Cultural Studies and the Popular Arts, exploring the singer’s impact as an “economic game changer.”

As reported in the *Tampa Bay Times*, USF isn’t even the first Florida university to include Swift and her music in the curriculum. The **University of Miami** in Coral Gables has been offering a number of Swift-related courses, including the undergraduate communications class “Mastermind Taylor Swift Brand” as well as the 7-week “Intellectual Property Law Through the Lens of Taylor Swift” at its law school.

Meanwhile, this spring at the **University of Florida** in Gainesville, the one-credit class “Musical Storytelling with [Taylor Swift](#) and Other Iconic Female Artists” filled up within 10 seconds. What the waiting list looks like, one can only guess.

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