

## Professor's Escape From Alcatraz

August 13, 2009 11:45 AM Fran Simon

fsimon@tulane.edu

By day, professor Dick Culbertson teaches organizational behavior in the Tulane Department of Health Systems Management. Every evening he swims a mile to train for the Alcatraz Invitational Swim.

Culbertson, 63, plans to join the 600-or-so diehard swimmers who will participate in the annual swim on Sept. 12 from Alcatraz Island to the Fort Mason area of San Francisco. Because he says he is "old school," Culbertson will be among those who swim in the 63-degree water in San Francisco Bay for 1.2 miles without a wetsuit.

**Professor Dick Culbertson talks about training at the Reily Student Recreation Center for the Alcatraz Invitational Swim in this video with photography by Paula Burch-Celentano and production by Ryan Rivet.**

Many films have exploited Alcatraz Island's reputation as being a prison from which it was almost impossible to escape, though several prisoners had attempted the feat. The swimming event is timed for low tide so the swimmers won't get swept out to sea under the Golden Gate Bridge.

By attempting the bracing swim in strong currents, Culbertson is commemorating his 30-year regimen of daily swimming that he says helps keep him healthy.

"Let me put it to you this way â?| I'm an HMO manager's dream," says Culbertson, whose goal is a respectable finish to the swim.