

George A. Smathers Libraries
Office of the Dean of University Libraries

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April 28, 2009

Ms. Lourdes R. Guerrero
Communication & Programs Manager
Excelencia in Education
1752 N St NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Guerrero,

The staff at the University of Florida appreciates this opportunity to submit a SEMILLAS Program proposal in the category of Integrating Services. The attached proposal requests \$50,000 to support the University of Florida Opportunities for Research Assistance Students (uFLORAS) program. The uFLORAS peer-to-peer program will train 10 Hispanic students to provide academic outreach to other Hispanic students by working with four campus programs that target first generation, Hispanic, minority, and disadvantaged students. uFLORAS proposes to serve 2,490 students; 500 of whom are expected to be of Hispanic heritage.

uFLORAS' guiding principal can be summarized in this statement:

“Nobody ever graduated from a library—but nobody ever graduated without one!”

Anonymous

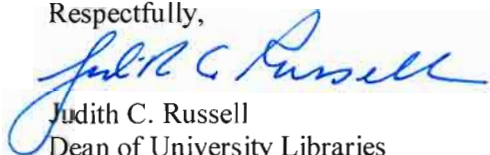
The University of Florida (UF) is the oldest university in Florida and one of the five largest by student body in the nation. Last year, UF's George A. Smathers Libraries served over two million visitors in its nine campus libraries and thousands more through its online digital collections. The Libraries house more than four million volumes and curate 15 specialized collections, including the Latin America Collection, one of the largest collections of its kind in the world.

The Libraries have a longstanding tradition of partnering with campus student support groups to ensure student understanding of the Libraries' assets and roles in achieving academic success. Year-round outreach sessions assist student members of the African Student Association; Asian Student Organization; Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Student Association; Hispanic Student Association, and many minority opportunity programs managed by the Dean of Students Office.

The Libraries programming history demonstrates its commitment to sustaining uFLORAS. Support of uFLORAS by Excelencia in Education and Walmart will expand successful campus programs to focus on the academic needs of Hispanic students in the 2009/10 academic school year.

It would be my pleasure to provide any additional information at your request.

Respectfully,



Judith C. Russell
Dean of University Libraries

Part I. Institutional profile of current enrollment

With more than 50,000 students, the University of Florida (UF) was ranked 2nd largest University in the nation in 2007.¹ Among its peer group of American Academic Universities, UF also ranks 2nd in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded to students of Hispanic decent. Furthermore, the UF remains in the top 10 for number of masters, doctoral, and professional degrees awarded to Hispanic students.²

Fall 2008 Enrollment	All Students	Hispanic Students
	52,335	6,309

Source: Total Enrollment: *University of Florida Drop/Add (as of 8/29/2008) Enrollment By College and Level Fall Terms.*
<http://www.ir.ufl.edu/fall.htm>

Retention 2006 -07 to 2007-08 academic years	All Students	Hispanic Students
1 year retention rate	89.56%	93.23%
4 year retention rate	82.15%	85.01%

Note: Retention rates by ethnicity for 2006-07 to 2007-08 are currently unavailable at University of Florida. The most recent years available are from the 2004-05 school year.

Source: *Retention and Graduation Rates for All First Time in College (FTIC) and Community College AA Transfer Students (1988-2007)* <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/factbook/degree.htm> & UF Graduation/Retention for Hispanic First-Time-In-College Students Entering 1992-2005 <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/minority/gradret.htm>

Graduation Rates	All Students	Hispanic Students
Degrees awarded in 2007-08:	8,737	1,074
4 year graduation rate	77.27%	53.16%
6 year graduation rate	83.40%	76.65%

Note: Graduation rates by ethnicity for 2006-07 to 2007-08 are currently unavailable at the University of Florida, however data on the number of degrees awarded to Hispanic students is available. The most recent data on 4 year graduation rates by ethnicity is from 2002-05 and the most recent data on 6 year graduation rates is from 2000-05.

Source: *Degrees Awarded by Type and Ethnicity*, <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/factbook/degree.htm>, *Retention and Graduation Rates for All First Time in College (FTIC) and Community College AA Transfer Students (1988-2007)* <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/factbook/degree.htm> & UF Graduation/Retention for Hispanic First-Time-In-College Students Entering 1992-2005 <http://www.ir.ufl.edu/minority/gradret.htm>

As the largest public academic library in the state, UF's George A. Smathers Libraries served over two million visitors in its nine libraries across campus and thousands more through its online Digital Collections last year. Through its instructional outreach programs, 15,615 students learned about the UF Libraries' information resources during the 2007-2008 academic year. The students, staff, and faculty at our service desks assisted with 177,467 questions and checked out 113,374 books in 2007-2008.

¹ UF National Rankings by enrollment. http://www.ir.ufl.edu/nat_rankings/students.htm

² UF National Rankings by degrees awarded to Hispanics http://www.ir.ufl.edu/nat_rankings/students.htm

Part II. Budget and narrative that includes in kind/matching fund support.

Cost Category	Expenditure from this Grant	In-kind or Matching Expenditure	Brief Budget Line Narrative
Personnel	\$27,686		10 Student Hispanic Peer Leaders: (\$7.21/hr X 12 hrs/week X 16 weeks/ semester X 2 semesters X 10 students)
	\$21,314	\$12,999	uFLORAS Project Leader
		\$18,405	Library student leader supervisors
		\$5,323	uFLORAS Project Co-Leader
Equipment	N/A	N/A	
Materials & Supplies	\$1,000		Marketing: 3,000 handouts, 12 posters, 500 information postcards
Other	N/A	N/A	
Total Direct Cost	\$50,000	\$36,727	
Total Project Cost	\$86,727		

Part III. Proposal narrative based on practice: B. Integrating Services

UF's proposed program, University of Florida Libraries' Opportunity for Research Assistance Students (uFLORAS), will expand current services for undergraduate Hispanic students participating in UF's Florida Opportunity Scholars program (FOS), First-Year Florida courses (FYF), University Minority Mentoring Program (UMMP), and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Culture's (IHLC) Peer-to-Peer mentoring program (P2P). Approximately 2,500 students are served through these programs each year.

uFLORAS will serve to support the retention and academic success of Hispanic students by:

- 1) facilitating greater access to and knowledge of library resources for improving academic performance.
- 2) building library research and information literacy skills that are essential for academic success at the college level
- 3) increasing peer-to-peer mentoring by and for Hispanic students with 10 trained Hispanic Peer Leaders (HPL).

The ongoing efforts of the existing campus programs focused on disadvantaged, minority, and Hispanic students have proven remarkably successful; however, no formal approach to teaching research skills has been implemented. The purpose of this project is to leverage existing campus strategies and to integrate the research skills that predicate academic success. This project is designed to establish a sustainable framework for transferring research skills among peers. Evidence supports early intervention as an effective means of allaying "library anxiety" for improving academic confidence. For minority students, the role of peer-to-peer relationships has proven to be critical in a student's adjustment to large, impersonal academic environments. The goal of this project is to combine these two factors: early intervention and peer-to-peer support to promote retention and degree completion.

uFLORAS' two products will be: 1) an Hispanic Peer Leadership (HPL) Training Program, and 2) an established framework for ongoing peer-to-peer academic support.

IIIA. Objectives (use quantifiable goals to the extent possible)

I. Introduce 10 student Hispanic Peer Leaders (HPLs) to UF's nine campus libraries

II. Train the HPLs to find library resources through a multitude of access points, including the online catalog, databases, and electronic collections. The HPLs will use their new found knowledge to teach research skills to their undergraduate peers in FOS, FYF, UMMP, and P2P programs.

III. Deliver 117 peer sessions during the school year to 2,490 peers. This communication serves to introduce the Libraries in a comfortable, unintimidating setting; thereby, proving the Libraries to be helpful, welcoming places full of invaluable resources to help students succeed at UF. As a result, Peers will then be armed with indispensable library knowledge in preparation for meeting course and assignment requirements.

IV. Build and utilize online information and library guides (LibGuides) that are tailored to peers' unique needs. HPLs and peers will write and maintain a blog as a forum for discussion, and sharing ideas and experiences in the library and with research.

IIIB. Proposed activities and timeline

The uFLORAS program consists of two key activities: developing Hispanic peer leaders and providing peer-to-peer academic support by teaching college level research skills. Another essential activity is evaluating the program's effectiveness in terms of numbers of students served and in terms of impact on participating students' research skills, comfort level with the academic library, and willingness to continue working with peer leaders.

1. Developing Hispanic Peer Leaders

The students selected to be employed as Hispanic Peer Leaders (HPLs) will serve as bridges between the libraries and other campus peer-to-peer student groups. Their role will be to teach undergraduate level library research skills in both formal and informal course sessions. All the HPLs will develop:

- **Leadership skills:** HPLs will be adept in discussion facilitation, knowledgeable about teaching methods and learning styles, and proficient at public speaking and presentations.
- **Critical thinking skills:** HPLs will learn how to evaluate information with reason and without bias, ask questions, brainstorm ideas, solve problems, and learn from their experiences.
- **Library and research skills:** HPLs will be trained to search for, use, and manipulate information resources. They will demonstrate an understanding of the library and the resources available at the libraries and through the libraries' subscriptions to online services such as article databases.

2. Peer-to-Peer Academic Support

The most essential part of the uFLORAS program will be the delivery of library research skills taught by HPLs to Hispanic students as they begin their academic pursuits. This instruction will be delivered peer-to-peer using four methods:

- **Formal Class Sessions:** HPLs will lead library research skill sessions for First Year Florida (FYF) classes. As a result, FYF students will have basic library research skills, will feel more comfortable using library resources, and will be willing to return to the library throughout their academic career.
- **Program Orientation Sessions:** HPLs will lead orientation sessions for students involved in the Dean of Student's Office programs. These sessions will teach ways to solve real-life information problems, academic research and organization skills, and include pre/post-session assessments while showing that the library is a friendly, helpful environment.
- **Informal "Library Lab" Sessions:** HPLs will host informal sessions during which the library classroom computer labs will be open to all students. During these sessions, the HPLs will lead discussions and assist peers with research or library questions in a welcoming environment.
- **Daily Service Activities:** During their shifts on library service desks, HPLs will be visible to their peers and will be available to assist with library research. This provides a method for practicing and learning new research skills.

3. uFLORAS Assessment

The uFLORAS program will be assessed through a series of five surveys.

- **Hispanic Peer Leader Pre-Training Survey:** Assessment upon hire to establish baseline library skills. From the results of these surveys we will develop training rubrics to establish incremental training goals for the HPLs.

- **Hispanic Peer Leader Post-Training Survey:** Annual assessment of HPLs to determine their proficiency with leadership skills, critical thinking skills and library research skills.
- **Pre Library Session Survey:** Pre-session survey for the peers to establish baseline library skills, comfort level, and student demographics
- **Post Library Session Survey:** Post-test for the peers to establish increase in library research skills, increased comfort level, and willingness to return to the library
- **Annual Program Survey:** Survey of all students in FYF, FOS, UMMP, and P2P to determine comfort level among the group with library research skills and lasting impacts of the peer-to-peer sessions on their academic success.

These surveys will measure:

- The number of students served (both in classes and online)
- The percentage of Hispanic students served
- The average increase in library skills levels among students who attended library sessions
- The average increase in comfort level among students who attended library sessions.
- The willingness of students to return to the campus libraries
- The progress and skills developed by the HPLs
- The overall effectiveness of the program in reaching the target student population.
- Participating students' perception of program's impact on their academic success.

Timeline:

Time period	Activities
August 2009	-Coordinate with First Year Florida (FYF), Florida Opportunity Scholars (FOS), University Minority Mentoring Program (UMMP), and Peer to Peer program (P2P) to recruit Hispanic Peer Leaders (HPLs) for uFLORAS -Conduct baseline library knowledge test of HPLs. -Apply for IRB approval for pre- & post-session assessment surveys and overall program survey
Sept 2009	-Attend SEMILLAS Program Grantee Workshop
Sept 2009 – May 2010	-Conduct HPL Training: Develop peer leadership and teaching skills, critical thinking and information evaluation skills, and library research skills
Oct – Dec 2009	-Teach Research Skills Sessions including 60 FYF sessions for 1,200 students -Evaluate each session using pre- and post-session surveys
Dec 2009– Jan 2010	-Develop Web 2.0 online outreach, social support network for uFLORAS program
Feb 2010	-Attend online conference of SEMILLAS Program participating institutions -Submit uFLORAS interim progress report
Jan – May 2010	-Teach Research Skills Sessions including:7 First-Year Florida classes for 140 students -Teach 50 sessions for FOS, UMMP, and P2P (estimated 850 students) -Evaluate each session using pre- and post-session surveys
April 2010	-Perform post-program library knowledge test of HPLs. -Perform program-wide survey to establish impact of uFLORAS on the students who participated.
June – July 2010	-Complete SEMILLAS/uFLORAS program assessment -Submit uFLORAS summary of activities and schedule assessment phone conference
July – Aug 2010	-Coordinate with FOS, FYF, UMMP, and P2P to hire our next cycle of uFLORAS students
Sept – Oct 2010	-Complete uFLORAS campus assessment and schedule phone conference with president

IIIC EVALUATION PLAN

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Evaluation Methods
<p>UF Libraries & Staff:</p> <p>uFLORAS coordinators Melissa Shoop and Margeaux Johnson</p> <p>Student supervisors Vanessa Jewett Chris McHale Michael Dietz</p> <p>Public Information & Marketing Officer Barbara Hood</p> <p>9 Library facilities and millions of print and online resources</p> <p>Partner programs:</p> <p>First-Year Florida (FYF)</p> <p>Florida Opportunity Scholars (FOS)</p> <p>The Institute of Hispanic and Latino Culture's (IHLC) Peer-to-Peer (P2P) mentoring program</p> <p>University Minority Mentoring Program (UMMP)</p>	<p>Recruit and train student Hispanic Peer Leaders (HPL)</p> <p>Design and distribute marketing posters, handouts and postcards</p> <p>Teach FYF class sessions in-library</p> <p>Hold FOS, UMMP and P2P sessions in-library</p> <p>Provide peer-to-peer academic support</p>	<p>10 student HPLs trained in Library services and resources</p> <p>Student HPLs teach library research and information evaluation skills</p> <p>850 FOS/P2P students taught in 50 peer-to-peer sessions held for groups</p> <p>300 UMMP students taught in-person and online</p> <p>1,340 students taught in 67 FYF sections</p> <p>Informal peer leadership opportunities TBD</p> <p>12 posters delivered to program offices</p> <p>3,000 peer session handouts and 500 information postcards printed and distributed</p>	<p>Student HPLs own and share library knowledge</p> <p>Student HPLs are fully comfortable in the library setting</p> <p>UF student body sees Hispanic students as library leaders</p> <p>80% of students gain library knowledge and skills</p> <p>80% of students experience a reduction in "library anxiety"</p> <p>80% of students willing to return to the library</p> <p>80% of students willing to work with a peer</p> <p>Libraries and library resources are used more, understood better, and are no longer an intimidating mystery ("library anxiety" is reduced)</p> <p>25% of students contact peer leaders for help</p>	<p>Student HPLs:</p> <p>Pre-program baseline measures of information literacy skills</p> <p>Post-program library knowledge tests</p> <p>By 9/30/09 HPLs have acquired library resource knowledge</p> <p>By 10/15/09 HPLs understand and can perform high-level research</p> <p>By 12/10/09 HPLs have peer-taught 1,500 students</p> <p>By May 2010 HPLs have peer-taught 3,000 students</p> <p>Class/group members:</p> <p>Pre-session and post-session surveys to determine library skills knowledge</p> <p>Annual post-program survey to students in FOS, FYF, UMMP and P2P</p> <p>Marketing:</p> <p>Quantitative success measured by number of session attendees</p> <p>Qualitative success measured by a pre-session survey</p>
<p>Software:</p> <p>LibGuide: online library and information guide</p> <p>Blog: online means of communicating</p>	<p>Create web-based research support sites using LibGuide software</p> <p>Establish ongoing blog to give research support</p>	<p>LibGuide designed with resources specific to needs of FOS/ FYF/ UMMP/ P2P students</p> <p>Blog utilized as online forum</p>	<p>1,000 students use online guide and blog</p>	<p>Success measured by # of visits and posts recorded on the LibGuide and blog.</p> <p>By May 2010, 1,000 visits recorded on guide and blog</p>

Part IV. Describe the infrastructure and staff necessary to implement the project.

Melissa Shoop (Co-PI) Instruction & Outreach Coordinator, Humanities & Social Sciences Library West (23.5%): Coordinates outreach efforts of UF Libraries across campus. Specializes in teaching library skills to undergraduates.

uFLORAS role: Program coordinator. Oversees HPL library education. Assigns daily tasks. Helps organize peer-to-peer sessions with various partner groups. Organizes surveys and maintains program statistics.

Margeaux Johnson (Co-PI) Science & Technology Librarian, Marston Science Library (10%): Coordinates instruction efforts for science and engineering programs on campus. Specializes in use of new technology to access and deliver information to library users.

uFLORAS role: Program coordinator. Oversees HPL library education. Assigns daily tasks. Helps organize peer-to-peer sessions with various partner groups. Organizes surveys and maintains program statistics.

Vanessa Jewett Marston Science Library Student Supervisor (15%)

uFLORAS role: Supervises HPLs during library public service desk shifts at Marston Science Library.

Christopher McHale Library West Circulation Student Supervisor (15%)

uFLORAS role: Supervises HPLs during library public service desk shifts at Library West.

Michael Dietz Library West Research Services Student Supervisor (10%)

uFLORAS role: Supervises HPLs during library public service desk shifts at Library West.

Barbara Hood UF Libraries' Public Information & Marketing Officer

uFLORAS role: Designs and orders marketing posters, handouts and informational postcards. Promote uFLORAS program across campus in various newsletters, websites and bulletins.

Brian Keith UF Libraries' Financial and Human Resources Officer

uFLORAS role: Manages uFLORAS program budget and human resources.

UF Libraries

uFLORAS role: Provide resources, meeting places, classrooms and public service opportunities. uFLORAS program home.

Leslie Hahn Assistant Director, New Student Programs

uFLORAS role: Dean of Students Office Liaison to uFLORAS program. Coordinates and oversees FOS and FYF programs. Provides contact information for FOS and FYF participants. Provides support to uFLORAS.

Katherine Alva Coordinator, Institute of Hispanic-Latino Culture's P2P Program

uFLORAS role: Provides contact information of P2P participants.

Tamara Cohen Coordinator, UMMP

uFLORAS role: Provides contact information to UMMP participants.

Part V. Describe prior institutional effectiveness in serving Latino students in the context of serving all students. Describe the institutional commitment to sustain the proposed project.

The University of Florida has had remarkable success in retaining Hispanic students. This is evidenced by an astounding 93% one-year retention rate, which is much higher than the retention rate for the general student population. Compared to other schools in the Association of American Universities, University of Florida ranks 2nd in the total number of degrees awarded to Hispanic students.³

The success of University of Florida in serving Hispanic students can be attributed in part to the extensive peer mentoring programs available on campus. For such a large University, there is an outstanding effort to build smaller communities by offering peer-to-peer support programs. Currently successful programs target freshmen, students who are the first in their families to attend college, and specific minority groups. The following are examples of these programs on our campus:

- **First-Year Florida (FYF)** (1,300 students enrolled yearly): FYF is a one-credit class for freshmen. It is specifically designed to help students as they transition to college life. Each class is co-taught by a faculty member and an undergraduate peer leader.
- **Florida Opportunity Scholars (FOS)** (770 students enrolled yearly): The FOS program is an “initiative to ensure first-generation students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have the resources they need to be academically successful at the University of Florida.”⁴ It includes a peer-mentoring program where a successful undergraduate FOS student works with a group of new students to provide support.
- **University of Florida Minority Mentor Program (UMMP)** (300 students served yearly): UMMP is designed “to support students in their transition to the University of Florida and to offer guidance as students begin to define their goals and strive for academic success.”⁵
- **Institute of Hispanic-Latino Culture’s P2P Program (IHLC)(P2P)** (40 students served yearly): The P2P program matches freshman Hispanic students with UF undergraduates who have been active in Hispanic-Latino organizations on campus. ⁶ Beyond that, the IHLC hosts 15 Hispanic and Latino student organizations and serves hundreds of students each semester.

The University of Florida is clearly committed to providing peer support to all students and specifically to Hispanic students. The Hispanic Peer Leaders working with the uFLORAS program will reach thousands of students each semester through both formal and informal library user education classes. They will serve as liaisons to extant peer-to-peer programs and will help their fellow students develop critical research skills while easing the feelings of library anxiety that are often associated with undergraduates.

UF and the Libraries are dedicated to sustaining uFLORAS. The Libraries are committed to hiring a minimum of five HPLs in subsequent semesters. Various sources of funding are available to sustain the program including donor-sponsored positions and a scholarship for library student employees.

³AAU Degrees Awarded to Hispanic Students by Degree Level and University, 1995-1996 through 2006-2007 Table IX-9(<http://www.ir.ufl.edu/minority/degrees.htm>)

⁴ <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/multicultural/ummp/about.php>

⁵ <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/multicultural/ummp/about.php>

⁶ <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/multicultural/lacasita/peer-to-peer/index.php>

J. Bernard Machen
President

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April 17, 2009

Ms. Lourdes Guerrero
Communication & Programs Manager
Excelencia in Education - Walmart Semillas Grants
1752 N. Street NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

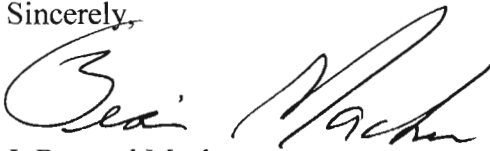
Dear Ms. Guerrero,

As the oldest university in Florida and one of the five largest by student body in the nation, the University of Florida is applying for the Walmart Semillas Grants program, and it is my pleasure to endorse the University of Florida's application. Administered by Libraries' staff, Semillas funds will support uFLORAS. This new program will leverage and expand current campus activities which successfully retain first generation undergraduates, while focusing on Hispanic students.

If awarded, the University of Florida agrees to participate in the Semillas' assessment program to determine the impact of Walmart Semillas funding on serving and retaining Hispanic students, which represent 12% of UF's more than 52,000 students. Based on past performance, I am confident in the Libraries' staff and resources to deliver the outcomes outlined in the proposal.

This proposal has my full support.

Sincerely,



J. Bernard Machen



George A. Smathers Libraries
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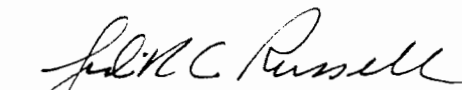
April 23, 2009

Mr. Brian Prindle
Associate Director of Research
University of Florida
PO Box 115500
213 Grinter Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611

Dear Mr. Prindle,

The George A. Smathers Libraries voluntary cost share for the Excelencia in Education/Walmart Semillas Program application, titled *University of Florida Opportunities for Research Assistance Students*, is \$36,727. The grant period is August 1, 2009 through August 30, 2010. Cost share will be allocated to staff time for managing the program design and implementation, and supervising student employees. I agree to the cost share as outlined in the attached budget.

Sincerely,



Judith C. Russell
Dean of University Libraries