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## Featured Scholar: Meagan Smith

2001 - 2002 University Scholar

Mentor: Jean Davis

College of Nursing



Meagan Smith has always dreamed of having a career in the medical profession. "I like learning about the human body and all that happens to it," says the 20-year-old nursing student from Miami. The USP has given Meagan the opportunity to conduct research for the first time. "I applied to the USP because I was interested in learning about the research process and thought it was an opportunity I could not pass up," she says. "I learned about research in nursing and what it is like to conduct a study first-hand."

With the guidance of her mentor, Nursing Professor Jean Davis, Meagan compared the properties of a 14-item sleep quality scale. She recruited 30 human subjects, who were randomly assigned to Group A or Group B. Each subject completed sleep quality scale questionnaires for three consecutive mornings. They also wore a mini-motionlogger actigraph for two consecutive nights, which objectively measured how well they slept.

Meagan was in charge of submitting the paperwork to get Institutional Review Board approval, recruiting subjects, organizing subject files, testing the actigraph software, enrolling subjects, collecting data, developing a coding dictionary and entering data into a computer database. She and her mentor recently presented their research at the Southern Nursing Research Society conference in San Antonio, Texas.

In May 2003, Meagan will graduate from UF with her degree in nursing and, in turn, become a registered nurse. She does not want to become a researcher after college because she prefers the clinical setting. Even so, she said the USP was a great learning opportunity and she would recommend it to other nursing students. "I gained interviewing and research skills," she says. "As an RN, it is important to research articles and stay abreast of the latest information. The USP gave me the tools to do that." Meagan plans to attend graduate school and become a midwife or a nurse practitioner in the women's healthcare field.

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