

**The RUGS Connection**

**Message From Dr. Walker**



*George E. Walker*

George E. Walker, PhD  
Senior Vice President for Research Development and Graduate Education  
Dean, University Graduate School

Welcome to the first issue of *The RUGS Connection*, a newsletter prepared by the Office of Research and University Graduate School staff at Florida International University. Research and the University Graduate School (RUGS) play a fundamental role within the South Florida community in forming, mentoring, and creating the intellectual leaders of the academy and industry. The discoveries, judgment, and applications of knowledge of our doctoral students play an ongoing crucial role in the economy, security, and quality of life in our community and our nation.

Our doctoral students and faculty realize that scholarly research is increasingly taking a collaborative approach. Research collaboration at FIU encourages mutual and integrative approaches to important research questions that traverse disciplinary boundaries. The goal is to bring together groups of currently productive investigators and to provide additional resources for collaborative activities.

In this issue, we provide information on several initiatives RUGS has implemented in order to enhance interdisciplinary research as well as affect time to degree, attrition rates and the formation of scholars.

**University Graduate School**

**FIU/UM Doctoral Exchange Program:**

Beginning Fall 2008, FIU Ph.D. students have the opportunity to complete up to six credits at the University of Miami as members of a new exchange program between FIU and the University of Miami. The program gives doctoral students a larger selection of courses to choose from and allows students at UM and FIU to take advantage of the educational and research opportunities at both institutions. All students who are fully admitted into a Ph.D. program may participate in this program. Students can choose from any course at the University of Miami providing that the course is not offered at FIU and is not a limited access course. Interested students can find the [application form](#) on the UGS website under "Announcements". The deadline for the spring 2009 semester is December 13, 2008.

**Responsible Conduct of Research:**

In an effort to expand the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) program, we have implemented changes that promote values associated with RCR. These values include high standards of research ethics and investigator accountability in research planning, implementation, student training, and information dissemination. As of July 15, 2008,

FIU graduate students who file thesis or dissertation proposals must provide with the appropriate forms (i.e., the M-2 or D-3 form) a training certificate documenting completion of an appropriate, discipline-specific RCR training course and exam. Instructions regarding how to access the training course can be found on the FIU [Office of Research Integrity \(ORI\)](#) webpage or at the UGS website under the [Responsible Conduct of Research](#) tab.

**The Center for Excellence in Writing:**

During the 2007-2008 academic year, a partnership was formed among the University Graduate School, Academic Affairs, The Undergraduate Writing Program in the Department of English, and FIU's Learning Center to promote writing excellence among both undergraduate and graduate students at FIU. The result was the creation of the Center for Excellence in Writing (CEW). The CEW holds workshops and provides direct mentorship for graduate student writing efforts. Currently, the Center is headed by Cindy Chinelly, Interim Director, and is located in the Green Library on the University Park Campus. The [CEW website](#) provides information on workshops, graduate-level tutoring and registration for both.

**UGS Calendar**

11/22	Graduate Open House; 10a-1p; GC Ballrooms
11/24	GSA Meeting; 12p-1p; GC 140
11/27-11/28	Thanksgiving Holiday
12/3	Frost Art Museum Grand Opening
12/4	MS, D7 Forms Due
12/4	Last day to submit thesis/dissertation

**Did you know?**

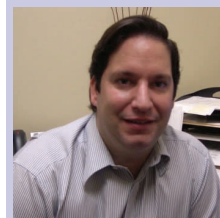
For events, workshops, important deadline dates and information, you can visit our online calendar at: [UGS Calendar](#).

**Professional Development**

If you were unable to make an earlier PantherSoft training, there are several other training options available:

- Query information for beginner and advanced users of PantherSoft is available on the [UTS website](#).
- [User Productivity Kits](#) (or, UPKs) are useful tools for users already familiar with the 8.0 environment and who would like to self-teach on their personal computer.
- Open Labs for Financials are scheduled for every Tuesday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am on the UP campus at W10C-103 and every Friday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am at W10C-119. Registration is not required.
- Additionally, [open labs](#) will also be available through December for general questions related to PantherSoft 9.0 navigation.

**Staff Spotlight**



**Rasiel Cardentey** is the Administrative Services Coordinator for the University Graduate School, working closely with all graduate departments in processing both Graduate Assistantships contracts and Fellowship Program awards. Rasiel is in charge of facilitating tuition waivers, stipends, other

scholarship awards and medical health insurance coverage for all who qualify. He also administers the day-to-day operations for all Graduate Assistants such as GA's, TA's and RA's as well as coordinating the Fellowship programs for PF, PEA, DYF and DEA. Rasiel holds a BA in Architectural Design and the MA in Architecture from FIU.

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Office of Research

New F&A Rates for Sponsored Research Proposals

After completing negotiations with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the University has the following F&A (facilities and administrative) rates that will apply to new awards or competing applications and proposals. The rates below will be applied on a modified total direct cost (MTDC) basis. The new F&A rates will not affect existing awards or non-competing continuations.

Activity	7/1/08—6/30/09	7/1/09—6/30/10	7/1/10—6/30/11
On-Campus Research	42.0%	44.0%	45.0%
Off-Campus Research	26.0%	26.0%	26.0%

For budgeting purposes, the estimated fringe benefit rate to utilize is 29.52%. The estimated amount includes a hybrid rate of 2.20% approved by DHHS. The actual cost of benefits will be directly charged to projects along with the hybrid rate.

Description	Faculty/Staff	OPS
Rate to use in proposals	29.72%	7.65%
Rate charged to project	Actual fringe benefit costs plus 2.20% hybrid rate	7.65%

Sponsored Research, Pre-Award

The Office of Sponsored Research Administration (OSRA) has a five to ten working day deadline policy with regard to proposal submissions. The policy states, "Complete proposals together with their signed internal clearance forms must be submitted to OSRA at least five business days prior to the sponsor's deadline. However, if the Principal Investigator (PI) believes that charges normally allocated to F&A costs may be charged as direct charges, then the PI must provide the complete proposal, together with the Direct Charge Exemption Form, to OSRA at least ten business days prior to the sponsor deadline. Collaborative proposals which include sub-contracts/sub-awards to other entities also require at least ten business days for OSRA review." The complete policy is available at <http://policies.fiu.edu/files/267.pdf>

Please note that a complete proposal package should include all of the necessary elements required by the sponsor for submission. A detailed listing of what constitutes a complete proposal package can be found at <http://osra.fiu.edu/faq.htm>.

In addition, electronic applications submitted via grants.gov, NSF Fastlane, or other electronic systems must have all items uploaded into the appropriate mechanism, and access provided to your Pre-Award representative 5 to 10 business days before the sponsor's deadline. Our experience has proven that adherence to this deadline has become increasingly critical as a result of the transition of most federal agencies to the grants.gov submission mechanism, and the lead time that is needed to address any submission issues that may arise. If you need assistance in compiling your proposal in order to adhere to the five working day deadline, answers to questions about sponsor requirements, or find funding opportunities, please contact the Pre-Award Section of the Office of Sponsored Research Administration at 7-2494. **Weekly funding opportunities are available at <http://osra.fiu.edu/funding.htm>**

Intellectual Property News

The FIU Office of Intellectual Property Management (OIPM) recently received a \$50,000 State University Research Commercialization Assistance Grant (SURCAG) from the Florida Technology, Research, and Scholarship Board (FTRSB). SURCAG is designed to promote specific promising technologies for commercialization through integrated customer-oriented services. Furthermore, FIU is one of ten semifinalists in the highly competitive **Southeast BIO (SEBIO)/Plan Competition**. The plan helps foster the creation of new, venture-attractive life science companies based in the U.S. Southeast region. "Novel Catheter-Deliverable Artificial Heart Valve" was the FIU invention selected by the SEBIO to be part of the competition. Dr. Richard Schoephoerster, former Chair of FIU Biomedical Engineering Department (BME), and Thomas "Ted" Claiborne, a recent BME master's program graduate, are two of the inventors, and are also part of the business plan team.

Staff Spotlight



**Chris Grayson** joined the Office of Research Integrity in April 2004. He coordinates the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). Prior to this, he coordinated the Institutional Review Board and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee at the University of Central Florida. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems (MIS) from the University of Central Florida. He later earned his Certification in IRB Management (CIM) from the National Association of IRB Managers.

Editors

Allison McComb, Associate Director, University Graduate School  
Allison.mccomb@fiu.edu, PC 230

Mercedes Rodriguez, Executive Assistant to Dr. George E. Walker  
Mercedes.rodriguez@fiu.edu, MARC 430

Design

Miguel A. Sahagun, Admissions Officer, Graduate Admissions Office  
Miguel.sahagun@fiu.edu, CH 209