

# UF Center for Latin American Studies

## Strategic Plan 2021-2026

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### Mission Statement

The Center's mission is to advance knowledge about Latin America and the Caribbean and its peoples throughout the Hemisphere, and to enhance the scope and quality of research, teaching, and outreach in Latin American, Caribbean and Latinx Studies at the University of Florida.

### Our Aspiration

To advance the Center's nationally and internationally recognized preeminence in Latin American Studies.

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### Goals

**Goal 1:** An exceptionally diverse academic community of students, faculty, and staff that represent a rich array of cultures, ethnicities, experiences, and backgrounds of the Americas.

**Goal 2:** Outstanding interdisciplinary academic programs that prepare graduate and undergraduate students for success as professionals and engaged citizens.

**Goal 3:** Faculty preeminence in research, teaching and service that advances interdisciplinary knowledge together with human and environmental well-being.

**Goal 4:** Productive coordination among the three interrelated and semiautonomous programs (MALAS, MDP and TCD) and with the undergraduate and graduate minors and certificates offered through the Center for Latin American Studies.

**Goal 5:** Strengthen funding base of Center via private donors, foundations, and corporations.

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### Goal 1

*An exceptionally diverse academic community of students, faculty, and staff that represent a rich array of cultures, ethnicities, experiences, and backgrounds of the Americas.*

**Objective 1:** Recruit faculty to strengthen diversity

**Objective 2:** Enhance recruitment of Black and Indigenous students from Latin America and the Caribbean

- Increase institutional links with universities and foundations to bring more non-traditional and first-generation students

## Goal 2

*Outstanding interdisciplinary academic programs that prepare graduate and undergraduate students for success as professionals and engaged citizens.*

**Objective 1:** Increase linkages among graduate specializations and undergraduate certificates and minors

**Objective 2:** Enhance curriculum diversity

- Create undergraduate certificate in Latinx Studies
- Create undergraduate certificate in Indigenous Studies
- Create undergraduate certificate in the Afro-Diaspora

**Objective 3:** Enhance undergraduate student recruitment

- Recruit outside of CLAS, specifically in Sustainability Studies, Sustainability of the Built Environment, under-represented majors in Arts, Engineering, and IFAS
- Develop/strengthen partnership with INS – Latin American Studies students to encourage minor as part of major
- Expand and improve outreach and recruitment of undergrad minors among students majoring in synergistic units in CLAS (e.g., Anthropology, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology, Spanish & Portuguese).

**Objective 4:** Modify undergraduate certificate in LAS

- Reduce by six credits to match minor
- Develop a plan for online certificate
- Create framework for future certificates: Latinx Studies, Afro-Diaspora, Indigenous Studies

**Objective 5:** Strengthen and clarify the 4+1 LAS program

- Define purpose(s) of the program
- Expand enrollment
- Clarify faculty expectations
- Investigate internship options

**Objective 6:** Maintain and strengthen personalized undergraduate experiences

- Expand undergraduate research experiences
- Strengthen study abroad (faculty led, faculty partners, or external collaboration)

### Goal 3

*Faculty preeminence in research, teaching and service that advances interdisciplinary knowledge together with human and environmental well-being.*

**Objective 1:** Recruit and retain high-caliber faculty

- Focus future hires in key thematic areas (Afro-Latin America)
- Target fundraising efforts on endowed chairs/professorships in strategic areas
- Provide greater research support for Center-based faculty (seed grants, research assistants)
- Develop clear expectations for faculty with joint appointments

**Objective 2:** Increase the professional and public visibility of our faculty

- Enhance efforts to highlight the exciting work that Center faculty (and affiliates) are accomplishing, involving student mentoring, research, and training
- Provide training for faculty in media relations and social media to communicate their research and scholarship more effectively to the broader public
- Develop faculty expert database that is easily accessible to media outlets

### Goal 4

*Better coordinate among the three interrelated and semiautonomous programs (MALAS, MDP and TCD) and the graduate certificate and minor in Latin American Studies.*

**Objective 1:** Better coordinate curriculum, course scheduling, and advance planning

- Identify courses that match students demands and interests as well as meeting requirements set by programs
- Improve course promotion
- Ask joint faculty to increase section caps for their LAS courses
- Clarify with joint faculty which courses are taught primarily for LAS, or primarily for their other unit

**Objective 2:** Strengthen specializations

- Have regular meetings among Specialization Coordinators
- Attract graduate and undergraduate students through outreach and activities
- Improve participation of faculty and students from beyond MALAS and LAS
- Update specializations to highlight expanded selection of LAS courses

**Objective 3:** Coordinate awards and fellowships

- Continue progress in coordinating award procedures and committees
- Host a ceremony for students who win thesis awards
- Provide letters of appreciation for those who serve on our committees
- Involve more affiliate faculty on award committees

**Objective 4:** Build and enhance synergistic engagements and collaborations among MALAS, TCD and MDP

- Support specializations in building intellectual communities for research and teaching across LAS programs and across campus
- Continue and increase joint social and academic events to foster integration and interaction among MALAS, TCD and MDP students

## Goal 5

*Strengthen funding base of Center via private donors, foundations, and corporations.*

**Objective 1:** Define funding goals and prioritize needs

- Solicit faculty input
- Prioritize research, study abroad, tuition scholarships, etc.

**Objective 2:** Identify and reach out to private foundations, including corporations, with funding programs aimed at Center priorities

- Maintain close contact with UF Foundation to identify potential targets
- Provide continuous information flow to faculty and affiliates about possibilities
- Facilitate the formation of proposal-writing teams to pursue funding
- Engage staff to facilitate proposal submissions
- Provide travel funds to visit foundations for proposal pitches
- Search out “backchannels” to foundations via alumni and UF faculty

**Objective 3:** Augment donations from individuals

- Allocate resources within the Center to approach potential donors
- Revisit collaboration with Hispanic Alumni Association
- Find more effective ways to engage UF and Center alumni
- Implement a Center “lecture series” aimed at donor concentrations (e.g., South Florida)

**Objective 4:** Augment proposal submissions to government agencies such as the National Science Foundation

- Provide information about opportunities to Center faculty and affiliates
- Scope out cross-college collaborations to enhance proposal submission opportunities
- Reduce barriers to proposal submissions
- Provide guidance on proposal writing to support faculty salary, staff time, outreach initiatives, and graduate assistants