

Florida Educational Equity Act Report
George A. Smathers Libraries
July 2015 – June 2016

The George A. Smathers Libraries is strongly committed to a comprehensive approach to diversity and continuously seeks to improve its outreach to diverse users, to conserve historical records from underrepresented cultures and groups, and to increase the diversity of its staff.

I. Equal Opportunity Compliance

Describe internal and external policies that are followed to encourage non-discrimination practices. What were the results of any assessment, self-assessment, and monitoring of your program services?

This year the Library Human Resources Office personnel produced a brochure for all Search Committee members and hiring managers on interviewing bias: [*Identifying and Avoiding Interview Biases*](#).

The following are part of the Libraries standing procedures:

Ensure that all Search Committees and hiring authorities are aware of, and conform to, the applicable UF policies and procedures with regards to inclusivity and seeking a broad and diverse pool of applicants. All position vacancy announcements for faculty positions include the following language in the job summary: *“To support all students and faculty and foster excellence in a diverse and global society, the <<title>> will be expected to include individuals of diverse backgrounds, experiences, races, ethnicities, genders, and perspectives in work activities.”* In addition, the following describes a standard preferred qualification for all professional positions: *“Record of including individuals of diverse backgrounds, experiences, races, ethnicities, genders, and perspectives in research, teaching, service and other work activities.”* This is one of the evaluation criteria used by search committees in making a recommendation for hire.

For each search, employees are specifically encouraged to nominate and circulate position vacancies to maximize exposure and diversity. *“The Search Committee and the Department Chair identify at least five professional peers from institutions comparable to UF who have knowledge of minority candidates qualified for the vacant position. The Library HR Office contacts the individuals, inviting them to nominate candidates for the position. The Search Committee and Department Chair identify five potential minority candidates who are qualified for the position. They promptly forward the names and contact information to the LHRO, who invites the individuals to apply.”*

II. Equity Accountabilities

List or describe specific programs, visits, outreach activities and statements used to support diversity.

Organizational Climate and Diversity Assessment

To assess the climate of our workplace, the Libraries (and the Legal Information Center) participated in the Association of Research Libraries' **'ClimateQUAL®: Organizational Climate and Diversity Assessment'**, in 2014. ClimateQUAL® is an assessment of library staff perceptions concerning:

- their library's commitment to the principles of diversity,
- organizational policies and procedures, and
- staff attitudes.

In conjunction with Climate QUAL this year the Libraries conducted 9 town-hall meetings to ascertain the Libraries areas of strengths and those areas that need attention. The sessions covered the following topics:

- Climate for Age, Gender, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation.
- Climate for Type of Position, Rank, Salary, Type of Supervisor.

Committees Dedicated to Diversity

The Libraries have two formal committees established to address and support diversity initiatives in the Libraries and beyond.

- 1. The Committee on Diversity** brings leadership to the Libraries' internal and external diversity and inclusion initiatives. The internal initiatives focus on developing concrete steps for staff to increase their understanding of diversity issues and facilitating opportunities for broadening awareness of diversity as an essential way of creating a fair and open-minded work environment. The external diversity initiatives seek to inform library user oriented practices, assessment endeavors, collection development, provision of services and of course, customer service.

This year the Committee:

- Co-sponsored the "Exploring Systemic Racism and Its Implications for Our Libraries," workshop that took place at the Levin College of Law, Legal Information Center
 - In partnership with the President's Council on Diversity, acquired and distributed in different branches ten copies of the book [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People](#). At the moment, the Chair of the President's Council on Diversity, Ron Anderson, is negotiating with the Office of Undergraduate Affairs to incorporate the book initiative in the course "What is the Good Life?"
 - Co-Sponsored the student association Hispanic Heritage Month's Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day at the Latin American & Caribbean Collection
- 2. UF Libraries Accessibility Advisory Committee** - founded in August 2014 and replacing the prior Services for Students with Disabilities Task Force. This committee is charged to ensure the Libraries is responsive to patrons needing disability accommodation and our policies, services, and resources are up to date, best meet the needs of our patrons as well as the standards set in the Americans with Disabilities Act. The committee works to implement as many recommendations as possible and continually assess the Libraries' ADA-related policies, services, and resources for our patrons and strive to ensure consistency and excellence throughout the branches. Each of the Library branches has a designated Accessibility Liaison to assist any patron with accommodation needs.

Trainings offered by the Committee to Smathers Libraries employees:

- **Service Animal Training** - This training session covered recent changes in Florida's service animal requirements, as well as, procedures for service animal access. It is important for library employees, especially those who work in public service areas, to become familiar with this significant change in the Florida statute: while ADA is a civil action (which can only result in fines), the Florida statute provides criminal prosecution for either refusal to accommodate a service animal or falsely claiming that one has a service animal.
- **Stories of Inclusion: Inclusive Practices at Cultural Institutions Responding to Visitors with Cognitive, Developmental and Emotional Disabilities** – Accessibility experts and advocates explored the issues, challenges and successes of addressing the needs and expectations of visitors and families of visitors with cognitive, developmental and emotional disabilities.

- **Mission Accessibility - Improved Services to Patrons with Disabilities** – This webinar guided library professionals on how to create an inclusive library environment inviting to people with all abilities. Participants learned about evaluating current services, implementing inclusive programming for all ages, providing volunteer opportunities, and breaking down attitudinal barriers that may exist among staff.

Current projects of this Committee include:

- UF Libraries received a UF Technology Fee Grant to purchase six KIC Bookeye Scanners. These scanners have universal accessibility features that allow users to quickly scan materials and create PDF files compatible with screen reader technology, give users the option to convert text documents to read-aloud MP3 files, and has foot pedal feature to assist users the option to trigger the scanner with their foot.
- Participated in the UF Student Government Spring Accessibility Fair to promote UF Libraries' accessibility-related resources and services.
- Improving access to Hathi Trust Collection for patrons needing accommodation
- Partnering with the UF Disability Resource Center to identify accessible entrances to all library branches for inclusion in the new ADA Accessibility section of the UF Campus Map (<http://campusmap.ufl.edu/#>)
- Assisting UF Accessibility Committee with testing of soon to be released, redesigned Campus Accessibility website (beta site: <http://test.accessibility.ufl.edu/>)
- Creating marketing materials to promote the accessibility liaison at each branch.

❖ **Sought financial support for a number of diversity initiatives through the following grant proposals:**

New Grants:

- **Educating UF Research Participants: Consumer Health Information Services at HealthStreet.** Project team will partner with HealthStreet, a UF initiative that connects underserved members of the community to health services and health research, so that, for the first time, consumer health information services will be offered to the staff and users of HealthStreet.
- **MassMine: collecting and archiving big data for social media humanities researchers.** MassMine enables researchers to collect their own social media data archives and supports data mining, thus providing free access to “big data” for academic inquiry.
- **Enhancing the Collaborative Learning Space in Marston Science Library.** The team proposes to redesign the Marston Science Library classroom L308 and the Thomson 1st floor computer lab, into flexible, agile learning spaces that provide increased instructional capability and new study space for students who may not otherwise have access to the technology to do collaborative academic
- **Fostering Student Connections with Experts and Unique Library Materials.** The Libraries in partnership with UF Enterprise Systems 25 iPads to enable any UF student who attends exhibits and presentations. The availability of iPads with customized database/software will provide an equitable service to allow all students to register attendance by swiping their Gator 1 cards, thus automating a secure process to receive course credit for attendance, with potential applications beyond the Libraries.
- **Sahel Newspapers Digitization.** This project preserves 128 donated newspaper titles, most published in the 1990s. The collection represents Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Chad, with two issues from

France on Senegalese subjects. French, Wolof, Arabic, and other West African languages are represented. The collection serves researchers interested in civil society, religion (Islam), politics, and democratization in the Sahel region. Many titles represent minority perspectives.

- **Partnering to Provide HIV/AIDS Information Outreach.** This project is a collaborative outreach initiative between numerous units at the University of Florida, led by its Health Science Center Libraries in Gainesville and Jacksonville, in partnership with local public libraries and with the support of the Alachua County Disease Control Unit. The goal is to increase and enhance access to HIV/AIDS information resources to vulnerable populations in these geographic areas, which have both a high and quickly growing population of HIV infected individuals. Florida has the highest number of newly diagnosed HIV infection cases in the US, and the third highest HIV infected population overall.
- **The Legacy of Stetson Kennedy: A digital Archive for Social Justice** - This project will create a pilot digital archive for the Stetson Kennedy Papers, the Libraries' most significant collection related to activism and social justice. The archive will host a photo gallery, selected print works, and audiovisual interviews in which Kennedy speaks out on civil rights, environmentalism, fair labor practices, and other topics.
- **Developing a Digital Afro-Panamanian Collection** - The purpose of this project is to digitize the 1,200 positives and negatives, provided by Peter Szok, author of *Wolf Tracks: Popular Art and Re-Africanization in Twentieth Century Panama*. The focus of this collection is the popular art that is displayed on the "red devil" buses in Panama. The art is typically painted by self-taught but highly accomplished artists. Digitization will assist in maintaining these images as Panama's transportation division has decommissioned the "red devils" for being unsafe, loud and unsightly.

Continuing Grants:

- **Florida and Puerto Rico Digital Newspaper Project – Phase II** – UF in partnership with the University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras. Select, digitize and make available to the Library of Congress 110,000 newspaper pages through the National Digital Newspaper Project (NDNP).
- **Women Authored Science Books for Children 1790-1890: An Annotated Bibliography** - Funding to research and design a digital annotated bibliography of 200 primarily non-fiction science books written by women for children between 1790 and 1890.
- **Title VI National Resource Center – Center for Latin American Studies** - Funding to the Libraries for the next four years to digitize Latin American collection materials. [US Department of Education, Title VI](#)
- **Title VI National Resource Center – Center for African Studies** - Funding to digitize African material collections, work on the African language archive, and support acquisition of materials for faculty, graduate research and teaching/training. [US Department of Education, Title VI](#)
- **Repositioning Florida's Judaica Library: Increasing Access to Humanities Resources from Florida, Latin America, and the Caribbean Communities** - The project team plans to raise \$1.5 million in the next four years to endow acquisitions, public and scholarly outreach activities, and collaborative digitization projects related to the Jewish experience in Florida, Latin America, and the Caribbean. [National Endowment for the Humanities – Challenge Grant Program](#)

- **The Panama Canal –Preserving a Legacy, Celebrating a Centennial, Leveraging an Extraordinary Human Achievement** – A three year project to, among other things, lead a multi-institutional centennial celebration of the opening Panama Canal in 2014-2015 to promote public understanding of the achievement and the heritage resources available for scholarly, educational, and civic purposes. [Institute of Museum and Libraries Services \(IMLS\)](#).
- **The Vodou Archive: Curating and sharing the sources of Vodou religion and culture** – Collaborative Research and Scholarship on Haiti and the Haitian Diaspora. This project led by UF and Duke University will improve the understanding of a central Haitian and Haitian-American spiritual tradition by gathering the audiovisual and textual sources of Vodou communities, by interpreting what we collect, by expanding the holdings through a self-submission tool, and by diffusing the knowledge via an open access digital library hosted within the existing Digital Library of the Caribbean. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#)
- **LAMP Digitization Project: Diario de Pernambuco Phase II** – The University of Florida’s holdings of the Diario de Pernambuco newspaper collection include 276 reels of microfilm dating from 1825 through 1923. These reels are the only holdings outside of Rio’s Biblioteca Nacional, which was UF’s original source. The grant provides funding to scan and digitize the Diario de Pernambuco collection.
- **University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) and University of Florida collaboration: digitization for preservation.** In partnership with UVI Libraries, the project team will 1) digitize and make available print materials published between 1962 to 1988 pertinent to contemporary and historical agriculture and essential to the study of Caribbean History and Economics of Agriculture; and, 2) create a comprehensive bibliography of materials available for future digitization. [US Agricultural Information Network, Project Ceres](#)
- **dLOC Annual Support for Technical Leadership** – The Smathers Libraries serves as the Technical Host for the Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC), including maintaining website functionality, facilitating electronic submission of metadata and images, reviewing/enhancing metadata, supporting online exhibits, collaborating on research projects, developing documentation, and broadly promoting dLOC and dLOC technologies.
- **The Legacy of Stetson Kennedy: A digital Archive for Social Justice.** This library-funded project will created a pilot digital archive for the Stetson Kennedy Papers, the Libraries’ most significant collection related to activism and social justice.
- **Management Training and Community Building for Library Middle Managers.** The project designed and presented a series of workshops in a blended learning environment for middle managers (e.g., non-librarians) at Smathers Libraries. The primary goal of the project is to provide much needed management training for staff members representing a variety of demographic backgrounds, specialized for library needs, to an underserved population in the Libraries.
- ❖ **Organized, hosted and/or participated in a number of exhibits, events and projects including:**
 - **Celebrating UF work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in honor of the 125th anniversary of their establishment in 1890** – in partnership with the University of Virgin Islands and the Florida A&M University, the UF Libraries highlighted the history of Florida and Caribbean HBCU history.

- **Government House and the Stories of St. Augustine**
An exhibition in honor of the 450th Anniversary of the city of St. Augustine, featuring items related to Government House.
- **Subverting the Natural Order**
Modern science and scientific knowledge flourished in the 19th century, but what did people actually know about sciences and how did they know it? The answers to these question are complex, but one thing is certain, the so-called rising generation of the 19th century gleaned most of its knowledge about animals, plants, geology, physics, and natural philosophy from books written by female authors.
- **Literature of Rural Florida**
This exhibit highlights the harsh realities of rural Florida, as described by leading authors of the 20th century, including Zora Neale Hurston, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and Stetson Kennedy.
- **Agriculture in the Sunshine State**
Agriculture in the Sunshine State presented the varied crops and laborers that comprise Florida’s dwindling industries.
- **African American agricultural extension agents in Florida**
This exhibit celebrated the important contributions of African American extension agents, not just to their immediate communities but to the state as a whole.
- **Literature of Prescription: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the Yellow Wall-Paper**
Hosted the National Library of Medicine’s traveling exhibit “The Literature of Prescription: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and “The Yellow Wall-Paper”. The exhibit and related programming explored male and female roles in society; female physiology (particularly the nervous system and its supposed capabilities and limitations); the social and biological issues associated with 19th century culture, including ideas on medical treatment; physician authority, and the role of writing in promoting healing.
- **Surviving and Thriving: AIDS, Politics and Culture**
Hosted the National Library of Medicine’s traveling exhibit “Surviving and Thriving: AIDS, Politics and Culture”. The exhibit and related programming explores the history of struggles and successes of those battling with HIV/AIDS and the changes in how they are viewed by society from the 1980’s to today.
- ***Unconscious Bias Training*** - Most of us consider ourselves to be objective, fair-minded individuals. But the truth is: we are all influenced by our unconscious biases. Because of this learning activity, participants are able to recognize how unconscious bias impacts their decisions; demonstrate awareness of their own background and how it impacts your perceptions; and apply strategies for conscious awareness in advocating inclusion.
- ❖ **Library Staff contributed to the literature and gave presentations/taught classes on diversity in the field of library and information science:**
- **HIV/AIDS and awareness in the 21st century**, contributed poster, Emerging Pathogens Institute Research Day, Gainesville, FL

- **HIV/AIDS and awareness in the 21st century**, contributed poster, Florida Health Science Libraries Association Annual Conference, Tampa, FL
- **Community collaborations to establish consumer health information services for underserved populations**, contributed poster, Medical Library Association Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada
- **Increasing access, reducing stigma: Improving HIV/AIDS information communication in North Florida**, contributed Lightning Round presentation, Medical Library Association Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada
- **Collaborating to improve access to HIV/AIDS information**, contributed poster, Special Libraries Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- **Teaching ReTool** students about searching the literature for research. ReTool is the Florida Prostate Cancer Research Training Opportunities for Outstanding Leaders. It is a partnership between the UF, FAMU, and Bethune-Cookman University that concentrates on the lack of diversity in researchers working on prostate cancer. It gives minority students the opportunity to perform basic biomedical, psychosocial or clinical research on prostate cancer with UF researchers.
- **Thank You, Madagascar**, 1 credit undergraduate (Un)Common Read course, spring 2016. This course concentrated on the relationships among conservation, sustainability, and culture in Madagascar, one of the most biodiverse but poorest countries in the world. The importance of understanding diverse cultures and bringing in the perspective of local communities to solve local problems was highlighted throughout the course.
- **Diversity Inquiry – Bridging the divide between survey results and actionable understanding**, accepted panel discussion, National Diversity in Libraries Conference, Los Angeles, CA. This presentation covers climate assessments from start to finish. Panelists from five institutions (**including the Smathers Libraries**) discuss lessons learned for each step: motivations for a climate assessment; instrument selection; building trust and encouraging participation; interpreting results and communicating results; prioritizing attention areas; interventions; and outcome assessment. Presenters address a variety of climate assessment tools including ClimateQUAL® and home-grown surveys, and an array of data visualizations, communication methods, results assessments, and diversity action plans.

III. Diversity in Services

Provide data, population statistics, cost, awards, participants and staffing that reflects diversity in services.

George A. Smathers Libraries currently employs 263 faculty and staff with a general composition of 22% from underrepresented groups (American Indian/Alaskan; Asian; Black/African American; Hispanic/Latino) and 58% women. The composition of the faculty at the George A. Smathers Libraries is 68% women and 14% from underrepresented ethnic groups (Asian; Black/African American; Hispanic/Latino).

IV. New Initiatives

What are your plans for 2016-2017 to support equity and increased diversity?

Assessment

Assessment is the mechanism by which diversity initiatives are identified, implemented, measures and acknowledged within an organization (Love, 2001). As a result, the George A. Smathers Libraries' Strategic Directions intend to both capture and measure diversity initiatives. For the 2016-2017 academic year, three assessments are planned that include: 1) Understanding graduate students' needs within library spaces; 2) Identifying and capturing library instruction impact on student learning; and, 3) Examining patron-driven acquisitions (PDA) – also called demand driven acquisitions (DDA). All three of these studies will include both diversity and international components. In addition, the Assessment Librarian is participating in a collaborative study with ITHAKA S+R, an outside research consulting firm, to assess the needs of researchers and scholars in the area of agriculture research. All studies will build in a diversity component that is relative to the discipline as identified by the literature and the UF demographic context.

Love, J. B. (2001). The assessment of diversity initiatives in academic libraries. *Journal of Library Administration*, 33(1-2), 73-103. doi: 10.1300/J111v33n01_07

Organizational Climate and Diversity Assessment

The Libraries (and the Legal Information Center) participated in the Association of Research Libraries' 'ClimateQUAL[®]: Organizational Climate and Diversity Assessment' at the end of 2014. In 2015-2016 we completed the interpretation of the ClimateQUAL[®] results included library-wide, unit level and other meetings and conversations. A group of library staff and administrators developed innovative data visualization methods to maximize the usability of the results. This innovative work was selected for a presentation at the National Diversity in Libraries Conference in Los Angeles, CA to take place in August 2016. In 2016-2017 we will continue to use the data as an opportunity to inform conversations about, amongst other things, the workplace elements which support or hinder diversity. This will be coordinated with the results of UF Faculty and Staff Climate Survey.

- Assess services and respond to needs of patrons and employees with disabilities.
- Diversity Committee will review recruitment strategies with the goal of increasing diversity of applicants and ensuring equitable experiences of all staff.

V. Accolades

What events afforded you the best results in equity and diversity in this reporting year?

The George A. Smathers Libraries is consistently focused on recruiting, servicing, highlighting and reaching traditionally underrepresented groups, cultures and ethnicities. It is the combination of programs, events, and trainings for both internal and external audiences that make the diversity efforts of the George A. Smathers Libraries outstanding. These programs, events, visits, outreach activities and collaborations sponsored, organized and implemented by the George A. Smathers Libraries reached thousands of people this past year and will have a lasting impact.

The Libraries engaged in a long and broadly participative process to develop documentation of the Mission, Vision, and Strategic Directions for the Smathers Libraries and importantly, these “an internal environment with equal partnership among all employees, based on the principles and practices of courtesy, professionalism and mutual respect”. As described above, the Libraries (and the Legal Information Center) participated in the Association of Research Libraries’ ‘ClimateQUAL®: Organizational Climate and Diversity Assessment’ and this is proving to be an opportunity to inform conversations about the workplace elements which support or hinder diversity. The response rate to the inquiry by library staff was 92 percent. The interpretation of the ClimateQUAL® results are underway and include library-wide, unit level and other meetings and conversations. The attention and focus on diversity afforded by process has been very productive.