

Middle Name Gets Boost at FIU

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Florida International University is living up to its middle name.

This fall, FIU became one of eleven federally funded Latin American Studies Centers in the country.

The distinction — and the funds it will bring — will allow the university to strengthen its Latin American curriculum and to develop Latin-oriented outreach programs in the community.

FIU shared a federal grant of \$120,000 with the University of Florida in Gainesville to develop the program. Of that money, \$40,000 goes to FIU.

Twenty-three universities competed for the grants this year. Each institution was judged on its course offerings, personnel qualifications, the strength of its library, the depth of its program, and the outreach activities provided by the center.

"The fact that we won means that, as far as Latin American studies are concerned at least, some people at the national level think we are very respectable," said Mark Rosenberg, director of the newly created Latin American and Caribbean Center.

THERE ARE reasons for the program's growing reputation, officials note. Library acquisitions in Latin American-related materials amounted to nearly \$40,000 last year.

In the past, the Caribbean and Latin American Council, which will now be known as the Latin American and Caribbean Center, has

sponsored a certificate program open to any students whether he is seeking a degree or not. The council has frequently brought internationally recognized lectures to the campus.

And, the university supports three publications dedicated to Latin America: the Interamerican Magazine of Psychology, the council newsletter and the highly regarded Caribbean Review.

Now, the funds from the grant — and the matching funds that FIU provides — will be used to strengthen Latin American programs that already exist within the university under the Caribbean and Latin American Council, said Rosenberg. They will also be used to develop projects that will allow FIU to take its resources out into the

South Florida community.

ONE OF THEM is an speakers program.

The university will invite and offer stipends to experts in Latin American politics, history, literature or related fields, to speak on the campus. But the university will only invite guests who are passing through Miami, on the way to engagements, conferences or business in other parts of the United States.

"For along time we have been missing out on people who come to Miami," Rosenberg said. "We want to get the people out of the airport and into the classrooms."

The center will also:

- Help to develop a Latin American studies program at Miami-Dade Community College.

- Develop programs to increase community knowledge about Latin America and the Caribbean. This will include a lecture series at the university's North Miami Campus and a summer institute for language and social studies teachers.

- Offer a series of seminars on economic conditions in Latin America, geared to local businessmen and primarily concerned with the practical aspects of investment in Latin America.

- Offer a series of films about Latin America.

The grant, issued under the National Defense Education Act, was awarded for one year, but federal officials indicated that it is very likely that it would be renewed for at least a year.