





MEMORANDUM

To: Edward T. Foote II, President

From:  Steven Green
Chair, Faculty Senate 

Date: 25 February 2000

Subject: Faculty Senate Legislation #99016(B) - Establishment of the University of Miami Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)

The Faculty Senate, at its meeting on 23 February 2000, voted to approve the establishment of the University of Miami Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) with the proviso that periodic reviews every five years will be conducted by the Senate. The proposal is attached for your information.

This legislation is now forwarded to you for your action.

SG/kl

cc: Luis Glaser, Provost
Kumble Subbaswamy, Dean
Robert Levine, Director designee

2/29
Stev,
Thanks,
[Signature]

CAPSULE: Faculty Senate Legislation # 99016(B)-Establishment of the University of Miami Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)

RESPONSE BY THE PRESIDENT: Approved DATE: 2-29-00

OFFICE OR INDIVIDUAL TO IMPLEMENT: Provost

APPROVED: [Signature]

EFFECTIVE DATE OF LEGISLATION: _____

NOT APPROVED AND REFERRED TO: _____

REMARKS (IF NOT APPROVED): _____

MEMORANDUM

To: Professor Steven Green, Chair
Faculty Senate

From: Kumble R. Subbaswamy, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Re: Establishment of a Center for Latin American Studies

Date: February 8, 2000

Please find enclosed a proposal for the establishment of a Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Miami, which is being submitted for Senate approval pursuant to paragraph B6.5 of the Faculty Manual. Some salient facts:

- The proposed Center is meant to facilitate interdisciplinary research and instructional activities pertaining to Latin America. It will offer no courses or degrees, and will not be home for any faculty appointments. Administratively it will be under the joint responsibility of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of International Studies.
- Establishment of the Center has the unanimous approval of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of International Studies.
- The Academic Dean's Policy Council has unanimously approved the proposal, which also has the support of the Provost and the President.
- In-kind support and/or funding is being provided to initiate activities. If it is determined after five years that the Center is not producing the expected benefits, the Center will be closed.

Since you have already conveyed to me the concerns of some members of the Senate regarding the relationship between the existing, related centers, viz., the North South Center and the Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies, I will comment on this issue.

- The North South Center, by its very nature as a federally funded policy research organization, has had a relatively narrow scope pertaining to political and economic issues. The study of history, culture and literature, for instance, has not been within its purview. Therefore, it is of little impact to the academic enterprise on the Coral Gables campus, except for SIS. The proposed Center for Latin American Studies will in no way

duplicate what the North South Center does, but complement its scope.

- Given the demographics of South Florida, a focus on Cuba and Cuban Americans at the University of Miami is both natural and, perhaps, unavoidable. Putting a visible face to these activities (by way of the Institute) is both appropriate, and necessary for attracting philanthropic support. Obviously, in geopolitical terms the rest of Latin and South America cannot be forgotten by the academic enterprise. The proposed Center fills the gap.
- While three separate facilitating units might seem excessive, the three interdisciplinary academic foci covered by these units will necessarily exist at UM no matter what the administrative structure. In the long run, it is conceivable that a more streamlined structure will emerge. However, at the present time any attempt to consolidate the activities will merely dampen the enthusiasm of all concerned parties, and be harmful to the academic enterprise.
- The proposed Center is a faculty-led initiative. Its primary purpose is academic enhancement.

I strongly urge the Senate to approve the proposed Center. If the new Center blossoms as expected, a synergy will develop between the three units which will ultimately benefit all three. Thank you for your consideration.

Proposal

for the Establishment of a Center for Latin American Studies

Background

In spring semester 1998, at the request of several faculty members from several schools and colleges, Deans Kumble R. Subbaswamy (Arts and Sciences) and Roger E. Kanet (International Studies) charged a representative group of faculty interested in Latin American Studies with responsibility for examining the desirability and feasibility of establishing at the University of Miami a university-wide Latin American Studies Center. Members of the committee included faculty from Architecture, Arts & Sciences, Business, Communication, Law, and International Studies. Not only did this committee deliberate over the course of two semesters, but three consultants--two former presidents of the Latin American Studies Association and an officer of the Ford Foundation's Social Science Research Council--visited campus to interview faculty and administration and to make recommendations. At the conclusion of the process, the Planning Committee issued a detailed report calling for the establishment of a strong, internationally competitive, university-wide LAS Center emphasizing scholarly research.

Rationale

- The University of Miami is unusual among major U.S. graduate/research universities in not hosting a number of interdisciplinary area centers and, thus, not being in a position to compete for substantial funding available to such centers from private foundations (e.g., Ford and Tinker) and the federal government (e.g., programs administered by the Departments of Education and State).
- Given the location of the University, the nature of Miami's population, the background of a large percentage of the students, the development of Latin American studies at the University of Miami is important and logical
- The University has in place considerable faculty expertise on Latin America, at both junior and senior faculty levels, and across various Schools. This faculty strength represents a significant comparative advantage for the University. The establishment of a Center is logical to help in facilitating and publicizing the research and teaching efforts of the faculty and in gaining access to external funding to support research and academic programs.
- Over the past two decades the University has built strong and internationally recognized graduate programs in Latin American History and the Latin American programs of the School of International Studies. The quality of these existing programs, together with the growth of quality graduate programs in other departments and schools, constitute an impressive cornerstone on which a Center will be able to build.
- In sum, here is a need for an organizational unit on campus that can facilitate the diverse activities taking place regarding Latin America, promote the study of the region, and highlight the academic strengths of the faculty and students of the University in the area of Latin American studies.

Objectives

- The primary role of the Center would be to bridge scholarly interests across campus among diverse fields and facilitate collegiality and interaction. It would also make the University as a whole a more dynamic and relevant intellectual place for its many faculty members specializing in Latin America. A Center would respond to the emergence of South Florida as the most important site for the cultural, social, and economic convergence among the peoples of the Americas.

Three core activities have been identified as elements of distinctiveness for the Center. They are:

- 1) *Multidisciplinary Niche Groups*, bringing together faculty to constitute a micro-community of scholars working together with a specific thematic focus;
- 2) *Visiting Faculty Scholars*, who would spend one semester per year teaching at the University over a period of three years;
- 3) *Institutional Partnerships* to place the University of Miami in close and sustained contact with premier academic and research institutions in the hemisphere.

- The Center's activities will be limited to research programs. It will offer no degrees or courses, and will not involve undergraduates programmatically. Its primary goal is to bring faculty together from across the University of Miami and to facilitate collegiality and academic engagement. It will also facilitate cultural programs to which members of the larger community will be invited. The Center's presence, however, will enhance campus-wide interest in Latin American Studies, and will have a positive impact on existing academic programs involving undergraduate and graduate students as well as on outreach and community awareness.
- The Center's programs will be designed to complement, not compete with, the activities of existing programs in the Latin American Studies area. These include the North-South Center, which had pledged its cooperation; the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies; the F.I.U. Latin American and Caribbean Center, and such regional and national groups as SECOLAS (the South Eastern Council on Latin American Studies) and LASA (the Latin American Studies Association).

Given its faculty strength, the success of its current department and school-based programs, and its geographical location, the proposers of the Center are confident that the University of Miami can make a major impact in the Latin American field. To do so, the university needs a center with a strong institutional presence based on academic research and visibility.

Organization and Budget

Committee members were acutely aware that one reason for the current absence of an active intellectual community of Latin Americanists at the University of Miami has been the lack of institutional venues to bring people together. To address this lack, and to encourage collaborative projects for which external funding may be sought, the LAS Center was recommended.

- The Center will be governed by a small Executive Board (appointed jointly by the Deans of Arts and Sciences and International Studies), comprised of 5-6 members from the core disciplines most relevant to Center activities. The Board would meet at regular intervals as a consultative body to a Director, who will be appointed jointly by the deans of Arts and Sciences and International Studies. In addition to helping set policies for the Center, Board members would also be requested to assume responsibilities in the implementation of specific programs and initiatives. Members would be appointed by the Deans of the sponsoring schools.
- In addition, there will be an Advisory Council of eight to ten prominent professionals from the South Florida community and from the larger academic world. Council members would be apprised regularly of Center activities, and meet periodically to provide prospective on Center plans. It would function to help assure visibility for the Center in the larger community.
- The staff of the Center will consist of a part-time director and an assistant director, along with as-yet unspecified staff support
- The Center will report directly and jointly to the Deans of Arts and Sciences and International Studies
- Budgetary support has been committed for a period of five years by the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of International Studies, and the office of the Provost, that will cover basic administrative costs and provide seed funding for a number of program initiatives.
- The Center will engage in a variety of efforts to generate external funding for its existing programs and new initiatives.
- The activities of the Center will be reviewed annually, with a major review coming in its fifth year. Future funding will be contingent on the outcome of this review.