

Graduate School Newsletter

SPRING

FMU.EDU

2025

“IT’S OUR TIME”

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE!



Florida Memorial University has embraced a new institutional theme for the academic year: “It’s Our Time!” Under dynamic new leadership, the university has made significant progress by introducing innovative initiatives and expanding support services to enhance the academic and professional success of all students.

With the recent appointment of Dr. Tyffany White as the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, the university is poised to advance its mission through strategic partnerships and enhanced academic offerings. Notable developments include the launch of a graduate school newsletter, a comprehensive calendar of professional development workshops and events, and expanded opportunities for student engagement.

Graduate students will benefit from immersive research experiences, networking events, mentorship programs, business forums, job fairs, and academic conferences, all designed to ensure that graduates are equipped with the advanced skills necessary to meet the evolving demands of contemporary society.

Further demonstrating its commitment to accessible and high-quality graduate education, Florida Memorial University is pleased to announce a 25% tuition discount for all graduate programs for the Fall 2025 enrollment period. This initiative reflects the university’s dedication to fostering academic excellence, professional development, and career readiness for its graduate student community.



A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS!



Dr. Tyffany White
Associate Dean

A Vision for Innovation and Excellence in Graduate Education

Dear Esteemed Scholars, Faculty, and Partners,

It is with immense enthusiasm and profound optimism that I extend my warmest greetings as the newly appointed Associate Dean of Graduate Programs at Florida Memorial University. This moment marks not only the launch of our first-ever Graduate School Newsletter but also the dawn of a transformative era in graduate education—one defined by innovation, collaboration, and unwavering commitment to academic excellence.

At Florida Memorial University, we recognize that the strength of a graduate education is measured not only by the rigor of its curriculum but by the caliber of professionals it produces. We are proud to be at the forefront of advancing cutting-edge programs, fostering dynamic community partnerships, and launching new strategic initiatives that will enhance the holistic graduate student experience.

Our vision for graduate education is ambitious and forward-thinking. As we expand our program offerings, such as the newly approved Master of Science in Criminology, and bolster our student support services, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing an environment that empowers scholars to be thought leaders, change-makers, and global innovators. To ensure our graduates are well-equipped for the evolving demands of society, we are fostering immersive research opportunities, interdisciplinary collaborations, professional networking events, and mentorship programs that will bridge the gap between academia and real-world impact. Our partnerships with industry leaders, community organizations, and research institutions will further enrich our students' academic journeys and professional trajectories.

Excellence in graduate education extends beyond the classroom. Our investment in strong academic support systems, leadership development initiatives, and career-focused resources underscores our dedication to nurturing scholars who are resilient, highly skilled, and prepared to lead in their respective fields. Through specialized coaching, tailored workshops, and innovative incubators like the Genesis Lab, we are crafting a graduate experience that is both enriching and transformative.

As we embark on this exciting journey, I invite you—our students, faculty, alumni, and esteemed community partners—to be active participants in shaping the future of graduate education at Florida Memorial University. Your engagement, scholarship, and leadership are the driving forces that will propel us to new heights of academic distinction and global impact. Together, we will elevate the legacy of Florida Memorial University, inspire groundbreaking research, and cultivate the next generation of visionary leaders. I look forward to collaborating with each of you as we build an ecosystem of excellence, innovation, and boundless opportunity.

With great anticipation and academic fervor,

Dr. Tyffany White
Associate Dean of Graduate Programs
tyffany.white@fmuniv.edu | (305) 626-3694

EXCITING NEWS: ANNOUNCING A NEW PROGRAM!

Master of Science in Criminology Degree

Earn your Master’s in Criminology through a fully online, flexible program designed to accommodate working professionals and recent graduates.

This innovative program offers advanced knowledge in criminological theory, research methods, and community development, preparing students for in-demand careers such as detective, forensic science technician, special agent, or intelligence analyst, with competitive salaries and growing job opportunities nationwide.

The curriculum, taught by expert Ph.D. faculty, includes cutting-edge courses such as Ethics in Criminal Justice, Cyber Crime, and Community Policing, equipping students to address modern criminal justice challenges. As the first fully online Master’s in Criminology program offered by an HBCU, this program emphasizes social justice, systemic change, and community empowerment, making it a groundbreaking opportunity for those seeking to make a meaningful impact in the field.



Dr. Erik Cruz,
Chair of
Social Sciences



Dr. Olga Vega
Assistant Professor
of Criminology

**School of Education
and Social Sciences**

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN:

CELEBRATING THE LAUNCH OF THE MS IN CRIMINOLOGY!

The School of Education and Social Sciences is proud to launch the *Master of Science in Criminology*, a program designed to address critical issues in criminal justice and public policy.

We salute Drs. Erik Cruz and Olga Vega, whose vision and dedication brought this program to life and earned Board of Trustees approval. Join us in celebrating this milestone as we shape the future of criminology and empower tomorrow’s leaders!

Dean Frederick L. Hunter, Jr.

EXCITING NEWS: ANNOUNCING A NEW INITIATIVE!



Kenasha Paul, J. D.
DIRECTOR

CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Center for Entrepreneurship (CE) is an academic support unit within the School of Business. The Center is committed to equipping students and business owners with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to thrive in today's dynamic business environment. Under the leadership of Kenasha Paul, J.D. (Director), the Center operates across two distinct physical locations, each providing tailored programs to foster professional growth and entrepreneurial success among students and business owners.

SERVICES PROVIDED!

CE Services

Business
Coaching

Executive
Coaching

Professional
Networking

Business Coaching

The FMU Center for Entrepreneurship offers one-on-one business coaching, guiding you on startup strategies, business plan development, and effective marketing campaigns. These sessions aim to equip entrepreneurs with practical insights and tailored support, empowering them to make informed decisions and accelerate their ventures' growth.

Virtual and in-person sessions where students and business owners can schedule time to review the following:

- Marketing Plans
- Pitch Decks
- Business Plan
- Startup Strategies

Executive Coaching

Virtual sessions with certified coaches where graduate students and business owners can schedule time to discuss the following:

- Building confidence and resilience as a leader.
- Navigating team dynamics and promoting a positive work culture.
- Effective decision-making and problem-solving strategies.
- Developing a roadmap for growth and scalability.
- Implementing goal-tracking methods to stay on course.

Professional Networking

Spring 2025
January - Student Access
April - Alumni Affairs

INTRODUCING... THE GENESIS LAB!

THE BIRTHPLACE OF IDEAS



(LEHMAN AVIATION BUILDING, ROOM 210)

Located on FMU's campus, the Genesis Lab is a student-centered space offering two professional development pathways.

Student to CEO - This track is designed for students who own or plan to launch businesses.

Key programs include:

- CEO Fireside Series
- Startup Workshops
- Pitch Competitions

Student to C-Suite - This track prepares students for corporate leadership roles.

Programs include:

- In-Class Workshops (integrated into business curriculum)
- Capstone Projects (reviewing existing businesses)
- Research Residency (focused on creating case studies around Black-owned businesses)

Additionally, the Genesis Lab provides 1:1 business coaching and executive coaching to foster personal and professional development.

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a Graduate Student Association!

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) at Florida Memorial University (FMU) is a student-led organization dedicated to supporting and empowering graduate students throughout their academic journey. Our mission is to create a dynamic, inclusive, and supportive community that fosters academic success, professional growth, and personal wellbeing.

Benefits of the GSA at FMU:

- **Advocacy and Representation:** The GSA ensures graduate students' voices are heard in university decision-making processes, advocating for their needs in areas such as funding, resources, and academic policies.
- **Professional Development:** We offer workshops, seminars, and networking opportunities designed to enhance academic and career skills, from research and writing to job preparation and networking.
- **Community Engagement:** The GSA organizes social events and activities that promote camaraderie among graduate students, helping to build valuable relationships across disciplines.
- **Resources and Support:** We provide access to vital resources, including mentorship programs, mental health support, and information on navigating graduate life.

Joining the GSA at FMU means becoming part of a vibrant, supportive network designed to help you thrive during your graduate studies. Connect, grow, and succeed with the GSA!

OPEN ENROLLMENT!

We have Master's Degree Programs with year-around enrollment!

Our Master's of Science Degree in Reading/ESOL along with the Master of Business Administration both maintain open enrollment year-around.

The Master's of Science Degree in Reading/ESOL is an accelerated state approved program by Florida's Department of Education which provides three pathways by which one can earn this degree.

The Master of Business Administration degree is an accelerated accredited year-around program housed in the School of Business. This degree program offers a one-or-two years optional pathways.

<https://apply.fmuniv.edu/>



Quick Tips for Education Majors!

The Education Department offers the following resources to assist with required State Exams:

- Discount Access to 240 Tutoring
- Professional Development Workshops
- Vouchers
- One-on-One Mentorship Sessions

UPCOMING PROGRAM!

Exciting News! MSW Program Under Review – Stay Tuned for Updates!

ONLINE MSW PROGRAM

Earn your Master of Social Work (MSW) with the flexibility you need. Our fully online, program allows you to learn from anywhere. With dedicated faculty support, you'll develop the skills and expertise to create meaningful change in individuals, families, and communities.

Why Choose Our MSW Program?

- 100% Online – Learn on Your Schedule
- Expert Faculty Committed to Your Success
- Designed for Aspiring and Advancing Social Work Professionals

Specializations

- MENTAL HEALTH AND TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE
- SPORTS PRACTICE
- ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG COUNSELING PRACTICE

APPLY NOW

•••

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Turn Passion into Purpose – Lead the Way in Social Work

FALL 2025 ENROLLMENT!

Big News for Future FMU Grad Students!

Florida Memorial University is thrilled to announce an exclusive 25% tuition discount for all students enrolling in Fall 2025! This is a prime opportunity to advance your education and elevate your career at an institution committed to academic excellence and community impact.

At FMU, our graduate programs are designed to empower leaders, innovators, and changemakers in education, business, and beyond. Whether you're looking to refine your expertise or embark on a new career path, there's never been a better time to invest in your future.

Apply today and take advantage of this incredible offer!

#FMUGrad #LionPride #Fall2025Discount #AdvanceWithFMU

<https://apply.fmuniv.edu/>

SPECIAL DISCOUNT

Unlock Your Future this Fall 2025 – Get 25% Off Graduate Program Enrollment!

25% OFF!

Fall 2025 Enrollees Only

ENROLL TODAY

MESSAGE FROM ALUMNI AFFAIRS!

Strengthening Our Legacy Together

Dear FMU Community,

Under the visionary leadership of Vice President Tammy Hamlet and Executive Director Davica Williams, the Office of Alumni Affairs is dedicated to fostering meaningful connections among alumni, students, and the broader university community. Our mission is to keep you informed about university news, upcoming events, and opportunities to engage with Florida Memorial University (FMU).



Ms. Davica Williams
Executive Director

Celebrating a Tradition of Giving

Recently, we commemorated FMU's 68th Annual Donation Day, a testament to our enduring culture of philanthropy and community support. This event highlighted the unwavering commitment of our alumni and friends, whose generosity continues to propel FMU toward greater heights.

Join the National Alumni Association

We invite you to become an active member of the National Alumni Association (NAA). The NAA plays a pivotal role in providing scholarships and encouraging students to attend and support our beloved university. Your involvement ensures that we can continue to offer quality education and resources to current and future Lions.

Ways to Give

Your contributions make a significant impact on the lives of our students and the advancement of FMU. Here are several ways you can give:

- **Annual Giving:** Support ongoing programs and initiatives that directly affect student success.
- **Endowment Funds:** Establish a lasting legacy by contributing to funds that provide perpetual support to the university.
- **Planned Gifts:** Consider including FMU in your estate planning to ensure future generations benefit from your generosity.
- **Scholarship Fund:** Directly impact students by contributing to scholarships that ease the financial burden of higher education.

How to Donate

To make a contribution or learn more about giving opportunities, please contact the Office of University Advancement at (305) 626-3609 or visit the website [here](#).

Our team is ready to assist you in finding the giving option that aligns with your interests and goals. Together, we can continue to build upon FMU's rich legacy and ensure a bright future for all who pass through our halls.

Warm regards,
Office of Alumni Affairs

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION NEWS!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE APPLY NOW: [APPLY.FMUNIV.EDU/APPLY](https://apply.fmuniv.edu/apply)

Master of Science in ESE

The fully online MS in ESE program equips working educators with evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with disabilities, emphasizing urban, culturally responsive interventions. This 30-credit, cohort-based program runs five semesters with two courses per term. Full tuition funding through Project RISE-UP is available for select scholars starting August 2025.

EdS in ESE

The EdS in ESE program supports working educators in advancing their expertise through evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with disabilities, with a focus on urban, culturally responsive interventions. This 36-credit, cohort-based program spans six semesters with two courses per term. Full tuition funding through Project PRECISE is available for select scholars starting August 2025.

Contact information:

Denise Callwood-Brathwaite, dbrathwa@fmuniv.edu (305-766-3863)

Annamaria Jerome-Raja annamaria.jeromeraja@fmuniv.edu, (305-331-9852)

Tyffany White, tyffany.white@fmuniv.edu, (305-626-3694)

SOUTH FLORIDA AWARDS!

\$175,000

Scholarship Funds awarded to Miami-Dade County Public School Teachers during the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

\$250,000

Scholarship Funds awarded to Broward County Public School Teachers during the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

ALUMNI!

Florida Memorial University takes great pride in celebrating the achievements of its graduates. Through their dedication to academic excellence and their engagement in innovative, state-of-the-art training, our students have distinguished themselves as leaders within their fields. Their impactful contributions to the community serve as a testament to their commitment and success, and we are honored to recognize their remarkable accomplishments.

Jonte Myers, Ph.D.



Jonte Myers, Ph.D., ESE BA undergraduate and MS graduate scholar from Florida Memorial University is currently a faculty member at Georgia State University. He earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Florida. **AJOR:** special education focusing on math instruction for

students with math difficulties as well as teacher quality and effectiveness in mathematics. Has also conducted research on special education policy as it relates to teacher certification and preparation. Minor: Quantitative Research and Evaluation Methodology (REM). He is skilled in Statistical Data Analysis, Classroom Management, Program Evaluation, Educational Technology, and Instructional Design. Dr. Myers has been elected secretary of the Council for Exceptional Student Education, Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) for the 2025 & 2026 calendar years.

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Ashley Disambois, Ph.D.



Ashley Diambois, Ph.D. is a Haitian American, bilingual educator and researcher with extensive experience in special education and literacy Instruction. She has been a special education teacher since 2011 and holds a Master of Science in Special Education from Florida Memorial University

and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with a major in Early Childhood Special Education. Her research focuses on reading difficulties in children with autism, emphasizing the science of reading and the effectiveness of explicit, systematic phonics instruction. Dr. Diambois's graduate studies were supported by OSEP-funded grants, including Project SIAIMESE at Florida Memorial University and the Communication for Young Children to Enhance Learning grant at Florida State University. She is currently an assistant professor of reading at Alabama A&M University, bringing expertise in reading development and instructional strategies for diverse learners.

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Janae Duclos, Ph.D.



Janae Duclos, Ph.D., attained her Masters in Exceptional Student Education with a focus on Learning Disabilities from Florida Memorial University supported by OSEP-funded grant, Project SIAIMESE. She later received her doctorate in Educational Leadership from Florida A&M University.

She is Assistant in Research and Professor of Special Education at Florida State University. As the CEO and Founder of C3forMe™, she spearheads a company dedicated to assisting youth and young adults with disabilities in planning for their futures. Additionally, she co-founded PhD Peers®, an education consulting firm collaborating with parents, practitioners, and community members to enhance professional development and training for improved student outcomes. She currently serves on the Teacher Advisory Council at Florida A&M University.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Shekeyla Roberts



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY,
EDUCATION SPECIALIST
DEGREE EARNED

Shekeyla Roberts was promoted to Special Education Program Specialist to support schools, teachers, and families in implementing and managing programs and services for students with disabilities. Their primary focus is to ensure that students with special needs receive appropriate educational support and services in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Promotion Achieved After Earning an Exceptional Student Education Graduate Degree from Florida Memorial University

MORE ALUMNI!

FMU is thrilled to see our MBA graduates making a meaningful impact in the community through innovative leadership, entrepreneurial ventures, and strategic initiatives that drive economic growth and social change. Their success reflects the strength of our program and our commitment to developing business leaders who inspire and serve.

Yolanda Christophe, Ph.D.



Dr. Yolanda Christophe earned a Bachelor of Science in Finance (2016) and an MBA (2019) from Florida Memorial University, where she demonstrated leadership as Homecoming Queen and Miss FMU, highlighting her commitment to student engagement and community service. Mentored by distinguished faculty Dr. Cheulho Lee and Dr. Abbass Entessari, she was inspired to pursue advanced scholarship.

In 2024, Dr. Christophe earned a Ph.D. in Management from Morgan State University, focusing her research on entrepreneurship, economic mobility, and institutional barriers in marginalized communities. Currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Lender Center for Social Justice at Syracuse University, her work explores systemic challenges to entrepreneurial success, emphasizing economic empowerment through innovative business practices and policy interventions.

Dr. Christophe's research is published in esteemed peer-reviewed journals, contributing to entrepreneurship, social justice, and economic development. Committed to mentorship and academic service, she actively supports students and emerging scholars, drawing from her FMU experiences to inspire future business leaders and changemakers. Her work reflects a broader mission to promote academic excellence, leadership, and social impact within business and beyond.

Randy Rodriguez, MBA



Mr. Randy Rodriguez's academic journey is a testament to perseverance and dedication. His collegiate career commenced at Florida Memorial University (FMU) as a walk-on member of the baseball team. After two years as a student-athlete at FMU, Mr. Rodriguez transferred to Tallahassee Community College, where he earned an Associate Degree in General Education. He then continued his education at Florida State University, obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in International Affairs.

Returning to his roots at FMU, Mr. Rodriguez enrolled in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) graduate program. Upon completing his MBA, he directed his career towards the healthcare sector, with a particular emphasis on developing his expertise in data analytics. This professional focus inspired him to pursue further academic excellence, leading to his enrollment in the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program with a specialization in Data Analytics and Quantitative Research at Grand Canyon University.

Mr. Rodriguez aspires to continue his professional growth within the healthcare industry and ultimately aims to transition into academia as a college professor. He attributes much of his inspiration to the professors he encountered during his educational journey—particularly those with real-world corporate experience who provided invaluable industry insights. Mr. Rodriguez embodies the spirit of lifelong learning and professional development, making him an exemplary figure for current and future FMU graduate students.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

SPRING 2025 EVENTS

24
FEBRUARY
2025

GRAND OPENING CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Sistrunk Marketplace
616 NW 2nd Ave, Suite 210,
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

12
MARCH
2025

CAREER READINESS IN CRIMINOLOGY SEMINAR

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

FMU CAMPUS
FMU/FIU Bldg - Room 125

13
MARCH
2025

LEVEL UP 25% DISCOUNT IN 2025 GRADUATE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

FMU CAMPUS
Nathan W. Collier Library

5
APRIL
2025

BUSINESS BRUNCH CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Sistrunk Marketplace
616 NW 2nd Ave, Suite 210,
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

1
MAY
2025

GRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

FMU CAMPUS
Smith Conference Center

For More Information Contact
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Associate Dean of Graduate Programs
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