



Listening. Learning. Leading.®



News Release

For immediate release: December 12, 2013

Contacts:

Julia Kent, CGS

(202) 461-3874

jkent@cgs.nche.edu

Tom Ewing, ETS

(609) 683-2058

tewing@ets.org

Florida International University Receives ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – The fifth annual “ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission through Completion” was presented to Florida International University (FIU) during the 53rd Annual Meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS). The award is sponsored by CGS and Educational Testing Service (ETS). Dr. Lakshmi Reddi, Dean of the University Graduate School, accepted the award on behalf of FIU.

The award recognizes promising, innovative proposals to enhance student success and degree completion at the master’s or doctoral level, while promoting inclusiveness. The winning institution is selected on the strength of its proposal to meet the award’s goals and to serve as a model for other schools and receives a two-year, \$20,000 matching grant.

FIU’s winning proposal establishes a new community of doctoral scholars to support the professional development and timely completion of underrepresented minority (URM) PhD students. Under the title *Academy of Graduates for Integrative Learning Experiences* (AGILE), the new program brings together the expertise of centers and offices throughout campus, which provide professional training modules, academic planning, and other forms of student support. AGILE emphasizes peer-mentoring, leadership, community service and engagement, and interdisciplinary communication.

The selection committee noted that, as an institution with high URM graduate enrollment, FIU has an opportunity through AGILE to discern problems contributing to minority PhD attrition and evaluate strategies for improving student success.

“Students from URM backgrounds are vital to our community at FIU,” said Lakshmi Reddi, Dean, University Graduate School at Florida International University. “We are excited to support them with a new model for PhD student development that engages a broad group of campus organizations and graduate leaders. Most of all, we are eager to give students themselves greater opportunities to mentor and learn from one another as they explore their leadership potential.”

Following the two-year funding period, AGILE will be sustained as a permanent program thanks to the commitment of FIU administration, the University Graduate School, and participating centers and offices.

(more)

“Today’s doctoral students represent the best and brightest minds in their fields,” said David G. Payne, Vice President and COO of ETS’s Higher Education Division. “Ensuring the success of minority students throughout the PhD pipeline is essential to achieving an inclusive faculty and graduate community. ETS is pleased to support FIU in this innovative approach to improving degree completion rates for minority doctoral students.”

“CGS recognizes the potential of the AGILE program and we are delighted that FIU will be sharing new promising practices with the graduate community,” said CGS President Debra W. Stewart. “This program will move us closer to the goal of closing the achievement gap for the benefit of all PhD students.”

###

About ETS

At ETS, we advance quality and equity in education for people worldwide by creating assessments based on rigorous research. ETS serves individuals, educational institutions and government agencies by providing customized solutions for teacher certification, English language learning, and elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, as well as conducting education research, analysis and policy studies. Founded as a nonprofit in 1947, ETS develops, administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually — including the *TOEFL*® and *TOEIC*® tests, the *GRE*® tests and *The Praxis Series*™ assessments — in more than 180 countries, at over 9,000 locations worldwide. www.ets.org

About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 92% of the doctoral degrees and 78% of the master’s degrees.* The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

* Based on data from the 2012 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees