FIU CENTER FOR LABOR RESEARCH AND STUDIES
2000-2001 CENTER AND INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT

PART I: MISSION, GOALS, AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. MISSION AND AREAS OF FOCUS

The Center for Labor Research and Studies (CLRS) is Florida’s only comprehensive institution for labor research, education and training, and is the sole department within the SUS that develops and offers the credit Labor Studies (LBS) program. The Center strives to be acknowledged as an institution of national and international prominence in the areas of labor issues research and training. As is noted throughout the report, the Center has made significant strides through its state and national activities as well as in its international endeavors. In the years ahead, increased and more acutely focused training and research in each of these arenas will be central to the Center’s continuing growth and success. A strong commitment to facilitating communications between labor and management will continue to be directed toward the reduction of workplace conflict and the elevation of workplace standards through the Center’s collaborative problem solving initiatives. Workforces and working conditions in emerging nations will also provide areas of research as well as topics for international labor education training.

Within the University, the Center continues to provide essential linkages to faculty whose interests parallel the mission of the Center and the interests of Center faculty. Acting as both clearinghouse and agent for community coalition building, the Center serves as liaison between faculty interests and expertise and a broad representation of community leadership. In addition, the Center provides strong logistical support to external faculty research and encourages involvement in a wide range of Center activities. Students, especially research assistants who are involved in externally funded projects, enjoy Center support and receive introductions to contemporary domestic and international human rights and labor issues.

Educational programming, in addition to having its foundation in non-credit labor education, is represented by the Center’s credit program in Labor Studies. The baccalaureate level concentration is now joined by the graduate level Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building Certificate that began in summer 2001. On-line courses are being developed as well, in furtherance of the Center’s commitment to distance learning opportunities.

B. ORGANIZATION, EXTERNAL TRENDS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES
   (See attachment)

2. ADVISORY BOARD
3. EXTERNAL TRENDS

Proliferation of communication technology gives rise to delivery of CLRS Labor Studies Courses statewide. It is also determined that the Center must reach deeper into the faculty base at both FIU and cooperating institutions to encourage and facilitate grant writing initiatives. At the same time, expansion of statewide non-credit offerings will increase the soft funds that these programs generate. As USAID-DOL funded projects have ended for the foreseeable future, the Center must make use of our international contacts to provide services and attract funds through alternative sources including registration driven labor-management programming. As graduate certificates increase in popularity, especially in areas of conflict resolution, the Center will continue development of these offerings for both domestic and international audiences.

4. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Non-Credit Offerings: The Center will continue to expand and develop innovative programs for labor-management practitioners. We anticipate that these programs will continue to be fueled by the research interests of our faculty as well as by trends within the discipline.

The Center is also introducing innovative alternative dispute resolution techniques into labor-management conflict resolution. A commitment to facilitating strategic plans for labor organizations and joint labor-management committees throughout the state is ongoing. A central theme of training is one of “conflict avoidance” through collaborative problem solving. We will also increase the visibility and accessibility of our non-credit Certificate program by increasing weekend offerings and expanding course topics.

Credit course considerations include the Center’s commitment to expansion of its Certificate Program by working closely with University departments. We will increase cross-listed offerings as well as cooperate with departments in offering selected courses within the disciplinary expertise of our faculty. We will also continue the established practice of cross listing selected LBS courses. Similarly, we will continue to work with other academic units in offering graduate and undergraduate labor-management courses that are not LBS courses.

We will increase involvement of faculty members from other departments in our research activities as well as expand our in-house research. The success of our Immigration and Ethnicity Institute will be maintained. As in past years, research activities of the Center for policy makers have increased. We will also continue to produce the well-received Labor Report on the State of Florida as well as work with policy makers at all levels in addressing issues of concern. An example of this is our work with the Miami-Dade County Commission in providing research
on the Living Wage Ordinance. Center faculty will also continue to produce applied and scholarly manuscripts on labor and ethnicity as well as national and international development issues.

The Center continues to provide leadership within the University on labor analysis, conflict resolution, diversity and other relevant labor and employment issues. Labor Center faculty lead training for staff, student, and faculty teams at the University while serving on planning committees at all levels of diversity training for local agencies and policy makers and develop campus and community dialogues around racism. Center faculty also serve as mediators within the University’s grievance conflict resolution system and serve on Miami-Dade County’s Ethics Commission and various other community panels and boards. Center faculty endeavor to formulate and carry out initiatives that further the mission and objectives of the University.

Center’s efforts in obtaining additional external funding are being expanded. Focusing on areas of work, immigration and labor force dynamics, we are seeking funds from diverse sources. Recent successes have established a foundation on which we hope to build a focused research agenda.

C. 2000-2001 ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal 1: Fully establish graduate certificate offerings. (Addresses University Goal I)
Accomplishment: The professional graduate certificate in Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building was approved through curriculum committee and finalized with the creation of core LBS courses and the inclusion of electives from a wide array of FIU academic units. An initial summer course was offered experimentally through University Outreach.

Goal 2: Increase formal linkages with other departments in graduate and undergraduate offerings and explore experimental offerings with other departments. (Addresses University Goal I)
Accomplishment: Courses were cross-listed at both graduate and undergraduate levels.

Goal 3: Increase comparative content in course offerings. (Addresses University Goal I)
Accomplishment: Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Latin American Labor Relations, LBS 4996, developed for the Certificate in International Professional Services; Labor Movements in Developing Countries LBS 4XX, developed with the assistance of the joint Asian Studies/LACC initiative.

Goal 4: Further emphasis on written communication skills. (Addresses University Goal I)
Accomplishment: Increased emphasis on student writing skills at the undergraduate level through class assignments, individual advisement, and referrals to the FIU Writing Lab.
Goal 5: Apprise students of advancements in communications technology and develop web-assisted and web-based courses when appropriate. (Addresses University Goal I)

Accomplishment: Development of four web assisted courses and exploration of additional distance learning possibilities.

Goal 6: Expansion of workshops and topics. (Addresses University Goal II)

Accomplishment: Significant numbers of non-credit programs (86) and participants (2,288) as well as new opportunities to utilize non-credit vehicle for dissemination of faculty research.

Goal 7: Expand linkages and research activities with other SUS institutions. (Addresses University Goal II)

Accomplishment: Continuation of project on ex-welfare recipients (SOC/ANT) with five students from a variety of departments; USIA proposal (not funded) to establish exchange with Romanian university included several faculty members from European Studies program. Funded project on an expanded Cuba Poll includes cooperation with the CRI, IPOR and the Dante Fascell North South Center. IEI component continues to expand its work with faculty from other departments besides Sociology/Anthropology and is currently working with members of the Religion, International Relations, and Social Work departments on a major grant.

Goal 8: Involve additional faculty and community groups in a comprehensive labor issues agenda. (Addresses University Goal II)

Accomplishment: Continued CLRS community profile through work with community groups including: AFL-CIO of South Florida, Anti-Defamation League, Catholic Charity Services, Church world Service, Columbian American Service Association, MDC Community Relations Board, MDC Department of Human Services, Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Government Supervisor’s Association, Greater Miami Region of the National Conference of Community and Justice, Haitian Connection, Miami Herald, Hispanic Affairs Unidad Hondurena, Hispanic Coalition, Metro-Miami Acton Plan, Miami-Dade Asian Affairs Advisory Board, Miami-Dade NAACP, Miami-Dade Commission for Women, Miami-Dade Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board, Office of Epidemiology and Center for Disease Control, People United to Lead the Struggle for Equality, Save DADE, Spanish Americana League Against Discrimination, Women Alliance of Miami-Dade and Broward.

Goal 9: Sponsorship of community issues conferences. (Addresses University Goal II)

Accomplishment: Continuation of community issues projects has included numerous activities such as Summit of the Americas projects, Mayor’s Mosaic initiative as well as aforementioned (Goal 8) activities.
Goal 10: Seek funding for immigrant worker research. (Addresses University Goal III)
   Accomplishment: Two Sage Foundation proposals were submitted.

Goal 11: Expand research and training into other industries and trades.: (Addresses University Goal III)
   Accomplishment: Exploration with federal sector (non postal) has not produced significant results thus far.

Goal 12: Focus research topics and proposals. (Addresses University Goal III)
   Accomplishment: Research focuses on international immigration, women’s employment rights, and conflict resolution.

Goal 13: Seek research funding based on international issues. (Addresses University Goal IV)
   Accomplishment: Three international labor topic proposals submitted.

Goal 14: Implementation phase of WRAP project. (Addresses University Goal IV)
   Accomplishment: WRAP project terminated.

Goal 15: Replication of “Living Wage” research in other jurisdictions; continuation of Labor Report; research in workplace diversity. (Addresses University Goal IV)
   Accomplishment: Labor Report continues to be produced. Expansion of “Living Wage” research and project support is ongoing as is workplace diversity research.

Goal 16: Continue to seek funding for long-term training and research projects. (Addresses University Goal IV)
   Accomplishment: External funding continues to be sought from multiple sources.

Goal 17: Continue publishing and service. (Addresses University Goal V)
   Accomplishment: Continuation on editorial board of Labor Studied Journal as well as executive board service and conference paper presentations.

Goal 18 Continued utilization of faculty expertise.: (Addresses University Goal V)
   Accomplishment: Faculty continue to represent the University in numerous forums including advisory boards, trusteeships and councils ranging from an ethics commission seat, health trust governance, and human rights council membership.

Goal 19: Obtain sponsorship from Orlando CLC for CLRS/UCF courses. Insert your goal. (Addresses University Goal V)
   Accomplishment: Inadequate course enrollment levels at present.

Goal 20: Explore joint CLRS/MDCC offerings. (Addresses University Goal V)
   Accomplishment: Presented proposal to MDCC. Not deemed feasible at present.

Goal 21: Development of the IEI as a broad based research institute. (Addresses University Goal V)
Accomplishment: Three long-term research projects involving four graduate assistants and two post-doctorate assistants continue. Three new proposals are in preparation.

Goal 22: Pursue labor rights issues within other projects. (Addresses University Goal V)
Accomplishment: Immigration research continues to focus on immigrant worker labor rights issues.

Goal 23: Seek funding from international agencies in conflict resolution and labor-management relations. (Addresses University Goal V)
Accomplishment: Exploration of joint efforts with FMCS continue.

Goal 24: Continued collaboration with other SUS institutions. (Addresses University Goal V)
Accomplishment: Project in joint with FGCU and New College faculty.

D. 2001 – 2002 ANNUAL GOALS

Annual Goal I: Expand Non-Credit Program.

Measurable Outcome: The Center will endeavor to increase the number of students served through its labor education programs. The expansion will include increases to the weekend Workplace Issues Certificate Program as well as to the Center’s traditional full day and multi-day seminars. In addition, course content will continue to evolve in response to changing economies, technologies and workplace trends. (Goal addresses University Goal III, Applied Problem Solving)

Annual Goal II: Enhance Undergraduate Credit Program.

Measurable Outcome: The Center expects to increase the number of undergraduate classes and enrollments through expansion of the Union Scholars Program, increases in cross-listings, and greater emphasis on student recruitment. (Goal addresses University Goal I, Well Educated Students)

Annual Goal III: Continue Scholarly Publication.

Measurable Outcome: Faculty publishing will continue to focus on domestic as well as international labor issues on topics concerning worker rights, immigration and employment, work and society, state and community issues, and comparative labor movements. (Goal addresses University Goal IV, Strategic Themes, and Goal V, Ranking/Research I)

Annual Goal IV: Explore Academic Partnerships.
Measurable Outcome: Formalization of the Center’s linkage with the National Labor College of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies is planned as is a Southern Labor Studies Conference sponsorship in cooperation with the FIU History Department. Endeavors also include exploration of a partnership agreement with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service’s FMCS Institute. (Goal addresses University Goal I, Well Educated Students and Goal III, Applied Problem Solving)

Annual Goal V: Expand Graduate Credit Program Offerings.

Measurable Outcome: The Center intends to begin regular course offerings in the newly created graduate level Professional Certificate in Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building. The Certificate will be marketed to a wide variety of degree seeking as well as non-degree seeking students. Development of a Masters Degree program will also be explored. (Goal addresses University Goal I, Well Educated Students)

Annual Goal VI: Increase Funded Research.

Measurable Outcome: The filling of a vacant faculty line with a candidate experienced in funded research will enhance the Center’s ability to generate funding from a broader variety of sources. In addition, the Center will continue to seek funding from current, former, and new sources through both joint and internal proposal submissions. (Goal addresses University Goal II, Research and Creative Activities and Goal V, Ranking/Research I)

E. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. ACTIVITIES - PRIOR YEAR

During the 2000-2001 reporting period, the Center focused on the establishment of a sustainable strategy for growth in its credit component. In addition to the Center’s scholarship initiative and other enhancements to the undergraduate program, the Center’s newly developed Professional Certificate in Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building has established a new educational component that also serves as a linkage with other academic components.

The Union Scholars Program recently begun by the Center has encouraged working men and women to further their education through a program of student recruitment and funding of university scholarships. The Program has thus far provided for thirty-two such scholarship opportunities. Of the 109 enrollments during the period, approximately 25% have been generated through the Union Scholars Program.

Non-Credit Center programs for practitioners have ranged from the standard labor-management “tools” courses (e.g. collective bargaining and contract administration) to advanced arbitration advocacy and comprehensive organizational strategic planning. Other programs more broadly targeted to public audiences have focused on minority worker rights, immigration and work,
and workplace and community diversity. These latter offerings are often jointly sponsored with other academic units and with a variety of community groups.

Faculty services to University and community encompass a wide range of interests and expertise. A sampling of these includes participation on University Access and Equity Committees, the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics, Summit of the Americas Center, a employee health benefit provider organization, community dispute resolution services, the Community Coalition for a Living Wage, and the South Florida Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice.

Research proposal submissions totaled $508,272 with funded awards of $251,142. Other research links have included the addition of three IEI post-doctorate researchers.

2. ACTIVITIES – COMING YEAR

The Center intends to build on its highly regarded Labor Education Program through expansion of the Saturday Workplace Issues Certificate Program as well as through continuing increases in the Center’s multi-day practitioner certificate course offerings. The reputation of the Program will also continue to be nurtured through an ongoing “refocusing” of class content to meet continually changing dynamics of the workplace.

Desire for growth in the numbers of students enrolled in the undergraduate Labor Studies Program will be addressed through greater student utilization of the Union Scholars Program as well as through University and community marketing efforts and expansion of course cross-listings. Similarly, the newly emerging graduate program will be offered to a broader audience of traditional students as well as working professionals who desire skill and credential enhancement. Academic partnering initiatives also hold the promise of bolstering both programs.

Having established a solid record of scholarly publications, Center faculty will continue to address labor issues on both domestic and international scenes through books, articles, papers and media interviews. Faculty will continue to be regarded as experts within the community, the University, and in national and international forums. These accomplishments will continue to bring recognition to the University, beneficial service to the community and added richness to the content of the Center’s credit and non-credit course offerings.

The Center will look both within the University as well as externally in forging linkages with other educational providers. Already in its formative stages, it is anticipated that the Center will soon establish a formal partnership agreement with the National Labor College of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies. This linkage will be of significant benefit to working adults whose schedules demand a non-traditional approach to completion of their college degrees.
Another partnering approach is being discussed with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The Center and the FMCS Institute are exploring the possibility of a jointly administered dispute resolution educational program that would be housed within the Center for the purpose of providing credentialing and educational services to current and potential neutrals as well as to labor-management practitioners.