

Director, Tropical Conservation and Development Program
UF's Center for Latin American Studies

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT - 2026

The Center for Latin American Studies of the University of Florida (UF) welcomes applications for the position of Director for its [Tropical Conservation and Development \(TCD\) Program](#). We seek a dynamic and innovative leader in the field of conservation and development to build on the strengths of this internationally recognized program of training, research, and practice.

The mission of the TCD Program is to bridge theory and practice to advance biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use, and human well-being. The program:

- offers a cross-campus graduate certificate which complements the knowledge and skills that students develop in their home units, adding significant value to their graduate education;
- promotes cross-national, interdisciplinary, integrative, and comparative problem-centered research at UF; and
- embraces collaborative learning and action with partners involved in day-to-day conservation and development realities around the world.

The TCD Director will:

- lead and advocate for this cutting-edge, internationally recognized interdisciplinary research and training program with over 120 faculty affiliates and over 80 enrolled graduate students;
- direct budget allocations of investment returns on ~\$6 million in endowments (most of which directly supports students);
- secure extramural funding to support research and training activities;
- oversee the innovative TCD graduate certificate program, maintaining academic rigor and relevance to conservation and development practice;
- support the vibrant TCD community of students, faculty, alumni, and partners through multiple and varied events;
- fortify existing and build new relationships with units and constituencies across the UF campus;
- strengthen and expand collaborations with organizations and partners across the globe, particularly with the more than 550 TCD alumni;
- spearhead shared program governance and a long-range TCD vision for the future; and
- commensurate with candidate background and interest, maintain a teaching/mentoring and/or research portfolio.

The incoming TCD Director will have an appointment and be housed in the UF Center for Latin American Studies. We anticipate an appointment at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor. The Director may also be appointed jointly with another campus unit, depending on candidate's profile, preferences, and university considerations.

Required qualifications:

- an earned doctorate or equivalent terminal degree in a relevant field;

- demonstrated record of relevant research and professional experience in tropical conservation and development, including significant field experience in the Global South;
- experience with program management, administration, and fundraising;
- experience with leading facilitative decision-making processes and shared governance; and
- the ability to build collaborative relationships across disciplines and communicate effectively with diverse constituencies.

Preferred qualifications:

- fluency in Spanish and/or Portuguese or another language of the tropics.

Expected salary: Commensurate with education and experience.

In addition to a competitive salary, the university offers a comprehensive benefits package. Explore more here <https://benefits.hr.ufl.edu/>.

Application Instructions: Interested applicants must apply online at jobs.ufl.edu, Job Number: 541305

For full consideration applicants must include:

- (1) Complete curriculum vitae;
- (2) A letter of application describing experience, qualifications, and vision related to this position; and
- (3) The names and contact information of three professional references.

Review of applications will begin on November 2, 2026, and will continue until the position is filled.

For inquiries concerning this position, contact search committee chair, Dr. Karen Kainer at kainer@ufl.edu.

All candidates for employment are subject to a pre-employment screening which includes a review of criminal records, reference checks, and verification of education.

The successful candidate will be required to provide official transcript(s) upon hire. A transcript will not be considered "official" if a designation of "Issued to Student" is visible. Degrees earned from an educational institution outside of the United States are required to be evaluated by a professional credentialing service provider approved by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), which can be found at <http://naces.org/>.

The University of Florida is an Equal Opportunity Employer. If accommodation, due to disability, is needed to apply for this position, please call (352) 392-2477 or the Florida Relay System at (800) 955-8771 (TDD). Hiring is contingent upon eligibility to work in the U.S. Searches are conducted in accordance with Florida's Sunshine Law.

About the Center: The UF [Center for Latin American Studies](#) (LAS) is the oldest and one of the largest programs of research and education about the region in the United States, established as the Institute of Interamerican Affairs in 1930s and renamed the Center for Latin American Studies in 1963. Today, the Center is one of the top-ranked centers in the world. In addition to the TCD certificate, the Center offers a Masters in Latin American Studies (MALAS) degree, an undergraduate minor, and graduate and undergraduate certificates. Jointly with the UF Center for African Studies, LAS offers the Master of Sustainable Development Practice (MDP) degree. The Center for African Studies and other campus units also collaborate in the TCD program.

About the University: Founded in 1853, the University of Florida (UF) is the state's flagship public research university and a Land-Grant, Sea-Grant, and Space-Grant institution. One of the nation's most academically diverse universities, UF offers virtually every academic and professional discipline and is a member of the Association of American Universities. With more than 56,000 students across 16 colleges, a major academic health center, and championship-winning athletics, UF provides an exceptional environment for learning, discovery, and innovation. Consistently ranked among the nation's top public universities, UF was ranked the nation's No. 1 public university by The Wall Street Journal in 2024 and among the top public universities by U.S. News & World Report, Forbes, and TIME. UF faculty conducted a record \$1.33 billion in research in fiscal year 2025, including a record \$817 million in federal research funding, underscoring the University's growing national impact and commitment to advancing knowledge and addressing complex challenges.

About the Area: As home to Florida's largest and oldest university, Gainesville is one of the state's centers of education, medicine, cultural events, and athletics. Gainesville and the surrounding area are home to about 250,000 people, a robust arts community, several museums, and a world-class health care system anchored at UF. The area offers a low cost of living, strong public schools, and year-round outdoor recreation with easy access to Florida's coasts and major metropolitan areas, such as Jacksonville, Orlando, and Tampa, making it an attractive location for candidates and their families. <https://www.visitgainesville.com/>