

# U.S. Department of Education Awards FAU \$4.4 Million Grant



Nancy Romance, Ed.D., Professor of Science/Literacy Education, has brought in almost \$20 million in external funding prior to her role as co-PI on the College of Engineering's recent \$4.4 Million grant.

**FAU**  
COLLEGE OF  
EDUCATION  
Florida Atlantic University

Despite their growing numbers, Hispanics as well as low-income workers are underrepresented in the bachelor's degree level computer-related workforce and are among the most underrepresented groups in these career fields.

To address the projected gap between computer science, computer engineering and electrical engineering occupations and workers with enough skills to fill these positions in South Florida, Florida Atlantic University has received a \$4.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to increase the number of degrees awarded to Hispanic and low-income students in these fields, and to facilitate the rate of successful student post-degree computer science, computer engineering and electrical engineering /STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) employment or graduate school enrollment.

Ali Zilouchian, Ph.D., project director and principal investigator, and a professor and associate dean for academic affairs in FAU's College of Engineering and Computer Science, along with Nancy Romance, Ed.D., co-principal investigator and a professor of teaching and learning in FAU's College of Education, will work with the FAU Department of Computer and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science's chair and faculty, and collaborators from PBSC and BC to implement curricular analysis and refinement of five key gateway courses (algebra, calculus, Introduction to Programming in C, Foundations of Computer Science, and Introduction to Logic Design), whose high failure rates serve as barriers to students remaining in the computer science, computer engineering, and electrical engineering programs. They will work toward a careful, iterative course revision process to increase the student success rate for this key group of courses. The program also will provide student academic support consisting of specific, mentor-led peer learning teams as well as motivational support consisting of an ongoing computer learning community.

"This exceptional program developed at Florida Atlantic University, in collaboration with our partners, is designed to expand representation of Hispanics in the STEM workforce, and will provide them with a wide range of employment opportunities in a variety of settings including general business, industry, health care, science, education and energy," said Daniel C. Flynn, Ph.D., vice president for research at FAU.

— Excerpts from U.S. Department of Education Awards FAU \$4.4 Million Grant by Gisele Galoustian. Full story at <http://www.fau.edu/newsdesk/>