

Alexander Grass Scholars Program Community Partner FAQs

What is the Alexander Grass Scholars Program (AGS), and how does it involve community partners?

Each Spring term, 20 undergraduates are selected through a competitive process to participate in a project-based learning experience about research in the humanities. Students are introduced to the nuts-and-bolts of humanistic methods like careful reading, historical analysis, contextualization, conceptual analysis, and critical evaluation. They learn to develop research questions, interact with archives, locate, and assess sources, choose research methods, navigate ethical considerations, and practice strategies for communicating about findings.

In UF's Summer A (6 weeks, May 12-June 20), students are enrolled in a UF course on humanities research fundamentals. As a part of this course, they are divided into four groups, each of which explores a publicly engaged topic and produces a research project.

In the Fall term, each student completes an independent research project and participates in a Grass Scholar Research Symposium to publicly present their work.

Community partners, such as local organizations and cultural institutions, are intellectual and physical spaces for exploring the public humanities. CHPS seeks community partners interested in hosting projects for our Grass Scholars. Hosting a project usually involves the use of facilities for on-site student work, and use of collections, materials, or other resources associated with student learning and project completion.

What are examples of Grass Scholars projects accomplished with community organizations and cultural institutions?

Grass Scholars Summer 2024 included collaborations with two Gainesville community museums:

[A. Quinn Jones Museum and Cultural Center](#)

This project traced the transformation of the A. Quinn Jones house from a private home to a cultural center and museum, exploring its significance in the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street neighborhood. Through archival research and oral history interviews, students developed a 15-panel exhibit at the museum with infographics and A/V supplements, showcasing the building's historical importance and community ties.

Matheson History Museum

This project documented AIDS Memorial Quilts from the Gainesville Area AIDS Project archive. Participants delved into the local response to the AIDS epidemic through archival research, exploring group documents, flyers, and newspaper articles. The result was an accessible online exhibit using Wix, incorporating various media forms to bring awareness to this significant chapter in Gainesville's queer history.

What support does the Grass Scholar Program offer to community partners?

Community partners that host a Grass Scholars Project are eligible for **\$500 in funding**. This is meant to compensate for the use of facilities in the case of on-site work on Thursdays and Fridays, and for use of the partner's collections, materials, or other resources associated with student learning and project completion.

CHPS also seeks to support summer **projects that raise awareness about the work of our community partners**: by involving undergraduates in their organizations, enhancing their spaces (as in the case of a physical exhibit), on-line presence (as in the case of a website), or other form of public engagement.

Who can I contact for more information?

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