

Alexander Grass Scholars Program

Graduate Mentor FAQs

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

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. Each graduate mentor is assigned to a summer project group and attends site meetings during Summer A (Thursdays and Fridays, 11-12:15). Mentors support students as they learn about research fundamentals and complete their summer 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. Graduate mentors follow the 5 students they worked with in the summer, to guide each student in completing their individual research project, answering questions and providing feedback when needed.

What support does the Grass Scholars Program provide Graduate mentors?

The AGS program provides **\$1000** total (summer A \$500 and fall \$500) for supervision of five Grass Scholars students assigned to a specific project site. This may be taken as a scholarship if the graduate student is enrolled (taxes will be deducted), or as professional development funds regardless of enrollment status (held in a department account, taxes not deducted).

What are my responsibilities as a Grass Scholars Graduate Mentor?

Your primary responsibility is to manage a public-facing humanities project and support undergraduate research. This might involve, but is not limited to, the following activities:

During the Summer A semester, attend and participate in site meetings; check-in weekly with students to monitor their project progress and assess their work; support project leaders in tracking and managing students' projects; document final summer project presentation; assist students in finding their prospective fall faculty; connect students with and report any relevant information to the Grass Scholars Coordinator, Alison Walsh (alison.walsh@ufl.edu).

During the Fall semester, schedule at least two meetings with the students at the beginning of the Fall semester and before the Grass Scholars Research Symposium; facilitate faculty-student's interaction; provide at least one individual consultation to each student. Attend the Grass Scholars Research Symposium in November.

Please note that this is not a TA appointment; no grading is required.

What kind of research project am I expected to support?

We expect most research outcomes to be non-traditional and along the lines of a poster, digital exhibit, blog posts, podcast, social media campaign, etc.

Regardless of the (other) research produced, Grass Scholars students must create and present a poster for the AGS Research Symposium in November.

Grass Scholars Projects must be distinct from other funded undergraduate research projects—such as University Scholars, CLAS Scholars, and Reubin Askew Scholars.

About how much time should I expect to devote to supervising my student?

We estimate 14-16 hours of work expected for the summer; please make sure to get in touch with your project leader to establish a schedule. Also, 8-10 hours of work expected the fall, which includes: 2 check-in meetings with the student at the

beginning of the Fall semester and before the Grass Scholars Research Symposium, plus mentors must attend a Grass Scholars Research Symposium in November.

What other supports do Grass Scholars have to complete their independent research projects?

Funds: each Grass Scholar is awarded \$1500 to support their research upon completion of the Summer Research Fundamentals course. (They are awarded an additional \$500 upon successful completion in the Research Symposium.)

Faculty mentorship: each Scholar is assigned to a Faculty mentor, who is responsible for supervising the research project by ensuring the research integrity, rigor, and legitimacy of independent student research in the fall.

Informal peer mentorship: each Scholar is a one member of a cohort of 5 students from over the summer, with whom they worked closely to produce a public-facing research project.

Grass Scholars Coordinator: Alison Walsh will serve as Coordinator of the Grass Scholars Program in 2025-2026 and will be available to consult with students about their projects in the fall of 2025.

Who can I contact for more information?

Alison Walsh, Grass Scholars Coordinator, alison.walsh@ufl.edu