



UM Awarded 2nd Latin American Research Ethics Grant

MIAMI – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Research Integrity has awarded the University of Miami the second in a series of grants to help foster academic research integrity in Latin America.

The award, announced on September 8, builds on the UM Institute for Bioethics and Health Policy’s initiatives over more than a quarter century to build partnerships and develop educational resources across Latin America.

“This grant is an acknowledgment of UM’s longstanding collaborations with Latin American universities and governmental organizations in fostering research ethics,” said Dr. Sergio Litewka, the Institute’s International Program Director and the grant’s principal investigator.

The project is intended to “promote increased awareness of the benefits of institutional policy and training in responsible conduct of research (RCR)” in Argentina. The grant, the “Second Inter-American Encounter on Scientific Integrity,” builds on the success of a [previous grant with similar goals in Mexico in 2016 and 2017](#). Dr. Litewka, Research Associate Professor of Surgery, was PI on that grant as well.

Activities in Buenos Aires will be hosted by the Facultad Latino Americana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) and include a survey of Argentinean scholars and government officials on perceived prevalence of academic research misconduct. Survey findings will be reviewed and analyzed in a series of workshops. Deliverables will include a draft framework for institutional policies and procedures for Argentinian universities to prevent and respond to research misconduct, particularly in international collaboration; and the expansion of a multi-disciplinary Latin American network of academic researchers, educators, and administrators actively engaged in promoting research integrity. The grant (1 ORIIR190053-01-00, for \$50,000), will help sustain efforts begun in the earlier ORI project.

In addition to Dr. Litewka, investigators include Dr. Elizabeth Heitman, of the University of Texas Southwestern’s Program in Ethics in Science and Medicine, and Dr. Florencia Luna, Director of FLACSO’s Bioethics Program.

“This award further recognizes UM’s hemispheric leadership in research ethics,” said Dr. Kenneth Goodman, Director of UM’s Bioethics Institute, who founded its [Pan American Bioethics Initiative](#) in 1993. “It is exciting that our contributions to Latin American research ethics are acknowledged again.”

UM’s Institute for Bioethics was designated a World Health Organization Collaborating Center in Ethics and Global Health Policy in 2008; it is now one of 10 in the world.