Join Us in Celebrating 25 Years!

The Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) is celebrating its 25th Anniversary (1987-2012). We have had several names and several locations, but one thing has remained constant from the beginning—a commitment to providing a holistic, relational perspective to the challenges facing individuals, families, organizations, communities, and nations.

A Strong Beginning

In 1987, the School of Social Sciences was created to develop two graduate academic programs: a master’s program in gerontology and a Ph.D. program in family therapy. Dr. John Flynn served as the first dean. Dr. Brad Keeney, professor of family therapy, launched the family therapy program, along with the Institute for Social Services to Families. In those early days, the school was located on Pine Island Road in Plantation, Florida. The first cohort of doctoral students started at the school in the fall of 1988 and included several current faculty members in the Department of Family Therapy: Ron Chenail, Douglas Flemons, and Anne Rambo. (See the first catalog for the 1988-1989 school year!)

Dr. John Flynn, first dean of SHSS

An Expanding Focus
The year 1991 brought a new name—the School of Social and Systemic Studies. Dr. Ronald J. Chenail was appointed as the second dean. The following year, as the school celebrated its 5th Anniversary, a new graduate program was launched—the Master of Science in Dispute Resolution. The Ph.D. in Dispute Resolution program began in 1994, the same year that the school relocated to the East Campus in Fort Lauderdale.

Beyond Campus

In 1999, Dr. Honggang Yang was appointed as the third dean of SHSS, and he has overseen the school’s growth and progress since that time. Under Dean Yang’s leadership, the school began offering the first Ph.D. program in conflict resolution available via distance learning. The online master’s program in conflict resolution followed the next year. Both online programs included Residential Institutes, which brought distance students to campus so that DCAR faculty, students and conflict resolution practitioners would have a face-to-face platform to discuss critical issues of the day, network and grow both academically and professionally.

New Names

The school changed its name in 2001 to the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). That same year, the Department of Dispute Resolution was renamed the Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (DCAR). Likewise, the marriage and family therapy clinic, which had seen several names (Institute for Social Services for Families, Family Therapy Associates, and Center for Collaborative Change), was renamed the Brief Therapy Institute (BTI).

Student-Centered Developments

The year 2001 saw a strong focus on students. The first Graduate Assistantships for SHSS students were established. The SHSS Student Association (which later became the Student Government Association) was founded. (Please see the interview with Michelle Manley, former SHSS SGA President.) In addition, DCAR launched the Graduate Certificate Program in College Student Personnel Administration with the Division of Student Affairs. In 2006, the M.S. in College Student Affairs (CSA) program was started.

Celebrating 15 years in 2002
In its 15th anniversary year, SHSS launched a new program, the Doctorate in Marriage and Family Therapy (DMFT), a clinical doctoral degree. (Please see the photos from the 15th anniversary celebration.) This anniversary year also saw the inaugural Common Ground Film Festival, an annual event which presents award-winning films and TV programs that demonstrate, in informative and entertaining ways, that contentious problems have workable solutions and stressing commonalities among peoples without ignoring the differences that distinguish them. Another landmark event in this year was the arrival of the peer-reviewed academic journal, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, transferred from George Mason University to NSU.

**Building on our Interdisciplinary Strengths**

The programs and services of SHSS have always taken an interdisciplinary approach, and this strength of the school took a new form in 2003 with the addition of a Master of Arts in Cross-disciplinary Studies (MACS), followed a few years later with the establishment of the Department of Multidisciplinary Studies (DMS) in 2007. This new department also houses the M.S. in College Student Affairs (CSA), which was launched in 2006; the Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research, started in 2009; and the M.S. in National Security Affairs (NSA) founded in 2011. This focus on interdisciplinary collaboration was also reflected in 2009, when SHSS joined the Center for Psychological Studies, the Mailman Segal Center for Human Development, and the Institute for the Study of Human Service, Health, and Justice to form the Division of Applied Interdisciplinary Studies. By partnering we have more collaborative and creative opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning, research and practice.

**Local and Regional Impact**

Throughout its history, SHSS has been committed to community engagement and service, on the local, national, and international levels. From the very beginning, the school included service to families as a central focus with the formation of the Institute for Social Services to Families. This commitment has been manifested over the past 25 years in many projects and programs, just a few of which are: The Violence Outreach & Intervention through Community Education & Services (VOICES) project, started in 1997; the Civility Project, created in 2000; Students United with Parents & Educators to Resolve Bullying (SUPERB) created by Jeremy and Sharon Ring in collaboration with SHSS; and Diversity Dialogs, initiated in 2006. In addition, in 2011 the Family Therapy Program was acknowledged when USA Today recognized NSU as one of the top 20 colleges most committed to community service.

**Global Engagement**
In addition to local and regional impacts, SHSS has increasingly demonstrated a commitment to global issues and engagement. In 2010, the school sponsored a conference of the Institute for Genocide Awareness & Applied Research (IGAAR) and provided students with an advanced practicum course on environmental conflict resolution in Ecuador, building on an earlier pilot global course to Israel. In 2011, offered global courses in Suriname and China; and in 2012, our 25th anniversary, such courses were offered in Ecuador, China, and Morocco.

*SHSS Faculty and Students at Conference in Beijing, China, Summer 2012*

**Staying True to Who We Are**

In spite of all the changes we have seen over the past 25 years, one thing has remained consistent throughout our history. With an interdisciplinary sensibility and a commitment to individual and social integrity, we seek collaborative, creative, and equitable means for resolving human problems. Our unique and talented students learn to become reflective scholars and ethical practitioners—professionals with a critical understanding of theory and method, as well as an appreciation of the diversity, responsibility, and privilege inherent in co-creating peaceful change. We bring this perspective to our ongoing commitment to partner with the NSU community in achieving the goals of Vision 2020.