

The NIH awarded a \$2.2 million grant, last week, to a team of UF researchers to develop and disseminate improved sample size selection methods for multilevel and longitudinal studies.

Principal Investigator Keith E. Muller, Ph.D. and professor of Health Outcomes and Policy, in the College of Medicine, will be working with Deborah H. Glueck, Ph.D. of the University of Colorado in Denver, as well as UF researchers Henrietta Logan, Ph.D., and Mildred Maldonado-Molina, Ph.D.

The four-year grant is the first R01 grant awarded to a member of the NIH-funded Southeast Center for Research to Reduce Disparities in Oral Health where Logan is the Center director and Muller is the Associate Director and Head of Statistics & Data Core. The funding reflects a trend in shifting priorities by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research.

The research team outlined in their abstract how the grant will help to improve "... interventions to promote healthy behavior in diverse populations." Scientists across the NIH spectrum conduct studies that would profit from the new methods, while short courses and publications will help move the new methods into practice. The impact will occur on a broad scale because plans to develop study planning tools include creating user-friendly software for designing multilevel and longitudinal designs. The projected value to scientific practice will stem from the ability to select sample sizes large enough to give good sensitivity to important differences, while avoiding the risks and costs of a sample size too large.

"We are extremely happy to have the opportunity to develop and share new tools for selecting sample size," Muller said. "Better science will create better health."