

## **Michael R. Heithaus, Ph. D. – Florida International University**

Mike Heithaus is the dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Florida International University. A leading scholar in marine ecology specializing in the behavior and ecological roles of large predators - including sharks - Dr. Heithaus has spent 11 years at FIU. Dr. Heithaus oversees the largest college at FIU which annually enrolls 42,000 students and houses more than 85 academic degrees.

Starting at FIU in 2003 as an assistant professor in biological sciences, Dr. Heithaus and his lab were part of the fledgling Marine Sciences Program at the Biscayne Bay Campus. In 2008, he was named director of the Marine Sciences Program and in 2009 became the founding director of the School of Environment, Arts and Society (SEAS) – one of three mission-based, interdisciplinary schools in the College of Arts & Sciences. As executive director of SEAS, and an associate dean in the college, Dr. Heithaus helped oversee the creation of new degree programs, helped raise more than \$12 million in philanthropic gifts, and developed new partnerships. SEAS also brought the world’s only underwater laboratory – Aquarius Reef Base – to FIU.

Dr. Heithaus earned a B.A. in Biological Sciences at Oberlin College in 1995, where he was Phi Beta Kappa. He received his Ph.D. in Biological Sciences at Simon Fraser University in 2001. Dr. Heithaus completed his post-doctoral studies at the Center for Shark Research of Mote Marine Laboratory and was a research fellow at National Geographic Society’s Remote Imaging Lab where he conducted research around the world and hosted a television series.

A professor in the FIU Department of Biological Sciences and with an active lab conducting research around the world, Dr. Heithaus currently advises 5 Ph.D. students, 2 post-docs, and an undergraduate honors student. He has authored over 120 journal articles and book chapters and has co-edited three books on the biology of sharks and their relatives. He has been awarded over \$3.6 million for his own research over the past decade and is sought out as a scientific advisor on shark conservation. In addition to his research, Dr. Heithaus has been active in community engagement, authoring several K-12 textbooks, and developing video programs for national K-12 science and math program used by millions of students nationwide.