

**State University System
Education and General
2019-2020 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	Florida Atlantic University
Issue Title:	FAU100
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$16.3M
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	\$0
Total Funds Requested:	\$16.3M
Please check the issue type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Issue for Fiscal Year 2019-2020	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Issue for Fiscal Year 2019-2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- I. Description** – 1. Describe the service or program to be provided and how this issue aligns with the goals and objectives of the strategic priorities and the 2018 University Accountability Plan established by your institution (include whether this is a new or expanded service/program). If expanded, what has been accomplished with the current service/program? 2. Describe any projected impact on academic programs, student enrollments, and student services.

Florida Atlantic University seeks \$16.3M to accelerate its journey towards becoming a Top 100 ranked public university according to US News & World Report’s list of Best Colleges.

This request builds on Florida Atlantic University’s *Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025*, which outlines the ambitious effort to rocket the institution onto the national stage as the fastest-improving public research university in the country. Since embarking on this journey almost 4 years ago, FAU has seen rapid success by building on the strength of institutional pillars and platforms. The combination of FAU’s increasingly strong academic performance bolstered by an outstanding athletics program has thrust the university into the national spotlight.

As described in the university’s 2018 accountability plan that was submitted to the Board of Governors, the university plans to continue to leverage the inherent strengths of its diverse, vibrant student body and its unique geographic location to build a national brand for excellent academic offerings and research programming.

Already, the university has seen sustained progress in terms of student success and research expenditures, setting the stage for this request.

Specifically, in the past five years, the university has showcased a commitment to excellence and access by:

- increasing the four-year graduation rate by 7%
- increasing the six-year graduation rate by 10%
- increasing the retention of freshmen with a GPA above 2.0 by 10%
- nearly doubling research expenditures to an estimated \$65M (FY18)
- earning national recognition for undergraduate research programs
- winning Conference USA titles in baseball, softball, and football
- consistently ranking nationally as a top producer of minority degrees
- becoming federally-designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution

Throughout the nation, most universities struggle to maintain a commitment to access for diverse populations while improving many of these student success measures. FAU is unique because it has managed to monitor and support the enrollment growth of underrepresented ethnic and racial groups. Simply put – FAU serves all of the state of Florida. The demographics of the school’s student body closely mirror the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the state as a whole, arguably more so than any other institution in the system.

Furthermore, minority students thrive at the university. Historically at FAU, 6-year graduation rates for Black students (55.8%) and Hispanic students (51.9%) have been higher than the overall university graduation rates (50.7%). Many other large, public research universities in the country find it difficult to match FAU’s record of access to under-represented minorities while at the same time exponentially improving quality in a number of measures.

Importantly, FAU has accomplished so much without significant new investments from the state, aside from funds earned through its enhanced and continual improvement in the state’s performance-based funding model. After enacting many years of efficiencies, FAU has redesigned itself as a resilient and lean organization that achieves at high rates. A significant investment would catalyze more improvements, as outlined in this request.

FAU100 – The university seeks resources to accelerate its improvement and join the list of *US News and World Report’s* Top 100 Public Universities.

The overarching goals of FAU100 are reflected in the key initiatives and investments reported to the Board of Governors in June 2018. Two of the primary areas of focus for the university draw directly on FAU’s 2025 strategic plan, including the commitment to build a sense of *boldness* through student success and *synergy* through prominent teams of researchers. These goals form the bedrock for the 2025 strategic plan, the 2018 accountability plan, and the development of the FAU100 plan that is detailed below.

The costs of excellence

In essence, the plan for FAU100 organizes these ambitions around the clear, concise, and quantifiable target of becoming a Top 100 public university.

In order to ascend in the rankings, FAU will need to invest in the following:

Boldness - a uniquely competitive and globalized student body		Synergy - prominent teams of researchers and scholars.		Brand - a national reputation for excellence and accountability	
Undergraduate recruitment scholarships	\$3M	Instructional / research faculty	\$4M	Benchmarking platform	\$200K
Graduate student stipends and benefits	\$3M	Annual research seed grant funding	\$3M	Peer institution engagement campaign	\$100K
Expanded summer term and 3-year degrees	\$1M	Infrastructure and core facilities	\$2M		

Total Request: \$16.3 Million Recurring

The spending plan for this legislative budget request is rooted in national best practices, as well as proven institutional practices. The benefits of such allocations are intended to, broadly, enhance the experience of FAU’s students (both undergraduate and graduate), its research enterprise, and the factors related to institutional peer recognition throughout the country.

Expenditures will generally fall under the following categories:

Boldness – a uniquely competitive and globalized student body

Undergraduate recruitment scholarships will help the institution recruit the highest-achieving first-time-in-college students who have many options and need competitive financial aid packages in order to make their decisions. These students are already applying to the institution at high rates, and FAU believes that robust merit-based scholarship offers could help increase the number of students who choose to enroll. Furthermore, enhancing these recruitment packages will also positively impact a number of measures in the *US News* methodology. These indicators include test scores and high school class rank of the freshmen class, retention rate, and 6-year graduation rate. Institutions can also very quickly improve on the graduation rate performance metric, which calculates “overperformance” based on predicted graduation rates versus the actual rates. Students who have high records of achievement and who are most likely to need additional recruitment funding

are also the individuals who will respond well to the comprehensive student success networks that FAU has launched throughout the past five years.

Graduate student stipends and benefits will provide critical support to master's, specialist, and doctoral students at FAU. Graduate students play an integral role in the undergraduate experience through their teaching of courses and mentorship in research. By enhancing the recruitment packages for graduate students (such as higher stipends and the addition of health insurance coverage), FAU will indirectly enhance its undergraduate experience and the overall reputation of the institution.

Expanded summer term and 3-year degree programs will enable the university to reduce its time-to-degree and accelerate graduation rates. Having adequate offerings in the summer is essential to ensuring students can progress and complete their degrees in a timely fashion. FAU's strategic plan calls for a comprehensive third semester in the summer, mostly so that students will not fall behind if they need to retake courses or spread their full-time studies throughout three semesters instead of just the traditional fall and spring.

Synergy - prominent teams of researchers and scholars

Instructional/research faculty hiring is perhaps the most crucial portion of this proposal. Lowering the student-faculty ratio and paying competitive salaries are two significant strategies for any institution attempting to enter into the Top 100 public universities. Hiring will follow the explicit priorities of the state and the university as outlined in FAU's strategic plan, in order to ensure that areas of strategic emphasis are grown and enhanced. Currently, the university is exploring many new degree programs that will completely rely on new faculty members, particularly in the areas of health, neurotechnology, and biomedical engineering. By focusing future hiring efforts on institutional pillars and platforms, FAU will be in line with critical workforce needs and cutting-edge interdisciplinary issues that require the attention of researchers.

Annual research seed grant funding will contribute directly to the university's growing research expenditures, while simultaneously catalyzing further external funding rates. Research expenditures, along with many other kinds of institutional spending, make up 10% of the overall ranking methodology for the *US News* list. In addition to positively influencing the amount of financial resources that FAU dedicates per student, this allocation can also serve as much-needed start-up funding for the recruitment of new faculty members (both new personnel lines and replacement personnel lines).

Infrastructure and core facilities will require upgrade and, in many cases, replacement in order to achieve Top 100 status. Recruiting the most talented and accomplished faculty members often requires significant capital investments, which the university will make in strategic ways such as future improvements to its academic library facilities and planned STEM/Life

Science facility development at FAU's campus Jupiter. In order to best leverage the state's existing investments in private research institutes Scripps Florida and Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience that are co-located on the Jupiter campus, the university must serve as a strong partner with its own excellent facilities. The strategic plan outlines a need for institution-wide shared equipment through core facilities, which can be used by FAU faculty as well as external entities. In addition to helping with faculty recruitment (again, reducing the student-faculty ratio), such important strides in research will greatly impact FAU's national reputation.

Brand – a national reputation for excellence and accountability

A benchmarking platform will be necessary in order to obtain the proprietary data and ranking information that can expedite the improvement of FAU's standing on the *US News* Top 100 list. The university has a strong culture of making data-based decisions, and these types of tools can serve as the fuel for rapid acceleration in the assessment and planning processes.

A peer institution engagement campaign will empower FAU to share how the state of Florida invested in performance funding and inspired an institution to transform itself over the course of the past five years. FAU is an excellent example of installing best practices and using common sense solutions to maximize the efficiency of its operations. Most importantly, the university has been able to accomplish so much in terms of academics and research – all while maintaining a laser focus on its role of serving minority students. The university should share its success story of how underrepresented minorities outperform the overall graduation rates at the institution. That, in light of the incredible mix of backgrounds and ethnicities that make up the student body, makes FAU a very special institution that could teach very valuable lessons on a national stage. Spreading the good work of the university will have positive ramifications for the institution as well as the state as a whole.

FAU100 leverages the state's prior investments in performance-based funding and accountability.

Already, FAU is recognized by *US News* for many of its degree programs, such as the following:

- #24 Graduate Rehabilitation Counseling
- #32 (tie) Masters of Science in Nursing
- #39 (tie) Online Graduate Nursing
- #42 (tie) Online MBA
- #43 (tie) Online Non-MBA Graduate Business
- #54 Doctor of Nursing Practice
- #83 (tie) Online Graduate Education

- #87 Graduate Public Affairs, and
- Highest-scoring public university in Florida on the *US News Campus Ethnic Diversity Index* (.69 out of 1.0, which ties for #26 in the nation)

II. Return on Investment - Describe the outcome(s) anticipated, dashboard indicator(s) to be improved, or return on investment. Be specific. For example, if this issue focuses on improving retention rates, indicate the current retention rate and the expected increase in the retention rate. Similarly, if the issue focuses on expanding access to academic programs or student services, indicate the current and expected outcomes.

The return on investment (ROI) for this initiative will largely fall under the categories represented in the methodology for *US News and World Report's* list of Best Colleges (graduation and retention rates, undergraduate academic reputation, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, alumni giving, and graduation rate performance).

To operationalize this proposal, the university will use its existing institutional performance indicators from the 2025 strategic plan to monitor progress. In this plan, the institution has adopted a number of key performance indicators that provide insights regarding the direction of the university's scoring in these aforementioned areas. Together with Florida Board of Governors' metrics from the preeminence and performance-based funding models, and with standard Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data points, these measurements will form benchmarks for achieving success with this legislative budget request.

In regards to specific goals for these measurements, FAU has set 2025 performance targets by averaging the outcomes of universities ranked in the fourth quartile of the *US News and World Report* list of Best Colleges. Upon meeting these goals, the university will perform at rates consistent with the Top 100 public universities in the nation.

Below are sample measures, including baseline data from 2014, the most recently-available validated data from 2017, and targets for 2025. While there is more than ample room for improvement in the below indicators, already there has been marked success in most cases. These particular indicators, while not necessary the lagging measures that *US News* will use in its ranking methodology, are often instead leading indicators of future success (e.g. the Board of Governors' definition of academic progress rate as opposed to the IPEDS/*US News* definition of retention, the 4-year graduation rate that the Board of Governors uses rather than the 6-year graduation rate).

Retention 2.0+ GPA	4-year graduation rate	Research expenditures	Alumni giving rate
2014: 66%	2014: 20%	2014: \$28M	2014: 5%

→ 2017: 78%
→ 2025: 90%

→ 2017: 27%
→ 2025: 48%

→ 2017: \$46M
→ 2025: \$200M

→ 2017: 5%
→ 2025: 13%

Access to excellence – minority student success

FAU is already nationally recognized as a Top 100 university in terms of producing undergraduate and graduate degrees for minority students, according to *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. In 2017, FAU ranked:

- #10 in bachelor’s degrees awarded to African American students
- #32 in bachelor’s degrees awarded to Hispanic students
- #33 in bachelor’s degrees awarded to all minority students

Additionally, the university ranked in the Top 100 in terms of master’s degrees and total graduate degrees awarded to African American, Hispanic, and all minority students, as well as doctorates awarded to Hispanics.

These rankings all improved over prior years, which is reflective of the overall growth in proportion of undergraduate degrees that FAU produces. In 2014, only 44% of bachelor’s degrees were awarded to minority students (using the Board of Governors’ definition that only includes Hispanic and African American students). That number is now at 47%, and the FAU100 plan calls for 50% of all undergraduate degrees to be awarded to minorities. The university has built sustainable enrollment pipelines of historically underrepresented minority students through targeted recruitment efforts.

The intent is to build on this continued success, particularly in terms of time-to-degree. Already at FAU, minorities graduate at faster rates than all other students within six years. This plan calls for directing academic support to minority students to make the same claim for the 4-year rate.

Enhancing the State of Florida’s reputation for research and excellence

Despite the fact that Florida is the third most populous state in the country, according to the National Science Foundation (NSF), the state only ranks 8th in federal research expenditures and 19th in industry R&D expenditures (<https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2018/nsb20181/data>). The responsibility for positively impacting this figure has fallen on the backs of a select few preeminent institutions, as well as those that are designated as very-high research institutions in terms of their Carnegie Classifications by the Center for Postsecondary Research. This plan thrusts FAU forward from its current designation as a high research institution, helping the state with its standing in research funding, and stimulating the economy as it does so.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) estimate that every “\$1.00 increase in public basic research stimulates an additional \$8.35 of industry R&D

investment after 8 years” (<https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/what-we-do/impact-nih-research/our-society>). With the 2025 target of FAU reaching \$200M in research expenditures, which is \$172M increase from the baseline, the university projects that its efforts to expand its research enterprise will result in approximately \$1.4 billion impact in private sector R&D by 2033.

This particular formula does not take into account the economic impact of the increased numbers of degrees awarded at a more efficient pace, or the likewise precipitous rise in the region’s tertiary economy that supports the university, its employees, and its students. The exponential impacts of building a national university in the region are much more difficult to quantify. As the state builds yet another nationally-recognized university, its residents will also feel the impact with ancillary industries and high-paying jobs that co-locate with such institutions.

III. Facilities *(If this issue requires an expansion or construction of a facility, please complete the following table.):*

	Facility Project Title	Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	Priority Number
1.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

