

**State University System  
Education and General  
2020-2021 Legislative Budget Request  
Form I**

<b>University(s):</b>	<b>Florida Atlantic University</b>
<b>Issue Title:</b>	<b>FAU100, Continuing to Accelerate</b>
<b>Date Issue Approved by University Board of Trustees:</b>	<b>September 17, 2019 (pending)</b>
<b>Recurring Funds Requested:</b>	<b>\$12.8M</b>
<b>Non-Recurring Funds Requested:</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Funds Requested:</b>	<b>\$12.8M</b>
<b>Please check the issue type below:</b>	
<b>Shared Services/System-Wide Issue for Fiscal Year 2020-2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Unique Issue for Fiscal Year 2020-2021</b>	<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 2019 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.

**Building on initial success in the 2019 Legislative session, Florida Atlantic University seeks \$12.8M to continue 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 follows 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 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 2019 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.

In 2015, with a new president and new strategic plan in place, FAU launched a remarkable turnaround story. Under the guidance of transformational leadership and enhanced accountability systems, the university launched a series of initiatives and programs. FAU established analytics teams to deliver personalized support to students.

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

- increasing the four-year graduation rate by 14.6%
- increasing the retention of freshmen with a GPA above 2.0 by 14.5%
- doubling research expenditures to an estimated \$70M (FY19)
- 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

Two years in a row, FAU jumped 12 spots on the *US News* list. At that rate, the university is on the trajectory to enter the Top 100 within four years. The prior year's allocation of \$12M will further increase the rate of acceleration.



Entering the Top 100 is an important milestone in FAU's *Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025*. Beyond the *US News* ranking, our next steps will be to leverage investments and to pursue its long-term vision of joining 1) the nation's top tier Carnegie R1 research universities and 2) the state's growing list of emerging preeminent universities.



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 (53.4%) and Hispanic students (52.9%) have been higher than the overall university graduation rates (51.7%). 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 2019. 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 2019 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:

<b>Boldness</b> - a uniquely competitive and globalized student body	<b>Synergy</b> - prominent teams of researchers and scholars	<b>Brand</b> - a national reputation for excellence and accountability
<p><i>Launch scholarships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentivize retention and timely graduation, covering costs to get students to 15+ credits per term and finish strong</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$3.2M</b></p>	<p><i>Graduate teaching/research assistants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract finest graduate instructors and researchers with competitive stipends</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$3M</b></p>	<p><i>"Race to Excellence" emerging degree programs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review academic program inventory and establish first-</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$1.6M</b></p>

<p><i>Success networks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand academic coaching, add care managers, and introduce graduation support specialists</li> </ul> <p><b>\$1M</b></p>	<p><i>Instructional/ research faculty</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support faculty to grow research and enhance academic offerings</li> </ul> <p><b>\$4M</b></p>	<p>in-nation programs that align with strategic areas of emphasis</p>
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**Total Request: \$12.8 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.

The request for this year builds off last year’s FAU100 request, which was ultimately funded by the Legislature at \$12M:

- Last year’s request aimed to rapidly work towards the university’s strategic goal of building a uniquely-competitive and globalized student body. More specifically, FAU aims to position itself as a forward-thinking institution that caters to high-ability students. In order to accomplish this broad goal, the university will use prior and future FAU100 funding to sustain its many cutting-edge student support systems that it created in the past five years.
- In terms of faculty, last year’s request specifically aimed to fund new hires for instructional and research faculty members. The searches are underway, but additional personnel is only part of a comprehensive plan for transforming the institution through its faculty. Importantly, funding in the future will likely focus on retention and other support for existing faculty members.

Expenditures will generally fall under the following categories:

**Boldness – a uniquely competitive and globalized student body**

*\$3.2M / Launch scholarships*

The university seeks to expand its retention/graduation incentive program, called the Launch scholarship, which covers variable costs for freshmen to return so they can be retained in the second year – or for other students from a number of cohorts to enroll in courses to get back on track to graduate on time. Launch was designed to push students over the finish line. Enhancing scholarship packages will also positively impact a number of measures in the US News methodology. These indicators include 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 funding are also the

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

*\$1M / Success networks*

Academic coaches provide personalized advising and intensive outreach. They bridge the gap to the classroom, monitoring progress and intervening. In addition to expanded coaching, care managers would triage cases and connect students to resources. Moving forward, graduation specialists will monitor rising seniors, so that they can accelerate towards timely graduation. All of these individuals work in concert with FAU's student success networks, which for each student comprises, at a minimum, an academic advisor, career coach, and financial aid counselor. When students arrive at the university, they are assigned a success network, which then follows them within the Success Network advising system (powered by Starfish Solutions). This technological solution provides the success network team members with live course data for students, advising history and notes, early warning/flagging notification capability, and predictive analytics scores.

**Synergy - prominent teams of researchers and scholars**

*\$3M / Graduate teaching and research assistants*

Graduate education is competitive and one of FAU's most important investments. Not only do the finest graduate students contribute to a robust research enterprise by working in labs and facilitating projects - but they will also play an integral role in the engagement of undergraduates 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.

*\$4M / Instructional and research faculty*

The university will continue to support the instructional/research faculty in order to enhance a number of key measures for US News, including the total resources per faculty member and the student-faculty ratio. This will always be a priority of building research and improving education. By focusing faculty support and retention 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.

**Brand - a national reputation for excellence and accountability**

*\$1.6M / "Race to Excellence" emerging degree programs*

The academic program inventory is what differentiates institutions. To rapidly gain national recognition for FAU and the state, the university will identify opportunities to launch first-of-their-kind degree programs. The most impactful way to boost reputation is through innovative academic

offerings. To do so, FAU proposes an internal competition (comparable to the USDOE's *Race to the Top* program) to create interdisciplinary degrees that will break silos and make national headlines for their innovation. In 1965, FAU launched the country's first ocean engineering program. We would like to once again attract national acclaim by establishing novel degree programs.

**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:

- #23 (tie) Online Graduate Nursing
- #37 Graduate Rehabilitation Counseling
- #49 (tie) Masters of Science in Nursing
- #51 (tie) Online MBA
- #43 (tie) Online Non-MBA Graduate Business
- #60 (tie) Doctor of Nursing Practice
- #77 (tie) Online Graduate Education
- #82 Graduate Public Affairs
- #96 (tie) Social Work, and
- #91-120 in Best Medical Schools (Primary Care)

Additionally, *US News* issued the following national rankings for FAU's service to veteran students:

- #11 (tie) Online Graduate Nursing for Veterans
- #24 (tie) Online MBA for Veterans
- #29 (tie) Online Non-MBA Graduate Business for Veterans

**According to *US News*, FAU is the SUS' most ethnically diverse school**

- The university is the highest-scoring public university in the state of Florida on the *US News Campus Ethnic Diversity Index* (.69 out of 1.0, which ties for #29 in the nation).
- FAU boasts the same score in this ranking as Harvard University, UC Berkeley, and the University of Southern California.

**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.

In 2019, Florida boasted 5 institutions ranked in the Top 100 (tied with Texas and New York as the states with the second-greatest number in the nation).

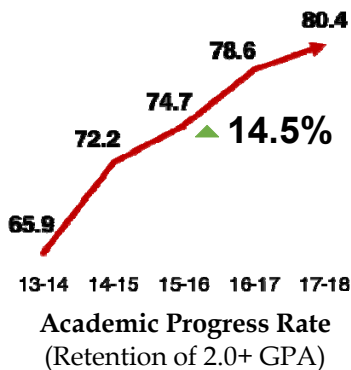
**FAU's entrance into these rankings will mark a historical moment for the state, placing it above these other two states.**

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).

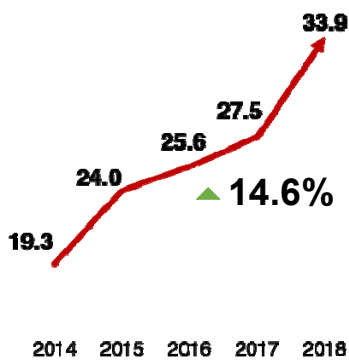
To operationalize this proposal, the university will use its existing institutional performance indicators from the 2025 strategic plan to monitor progress. In this plan, the institution has adopted a number of key performance indicators that provide insights regarding the direction of the university's 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 in which the university is quickly increasing its achievement. While there is more than ample room for improvement in the below indicators, already there has been marked success in most cases.

The 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 full-time, first-time-in-college 4-year graduation rate that the Board of Governors uses rather than *US News's* four years of averages of the 6-year graduation rate).



**Academic progress rate** reflects student excellence, as well as how a university successfully engages and supports its students. FAU launched numerous programs and interventions to bolster student persistence, including innovative financial aid packages that incentivize persistence and academic coaching for students who are at-risk of struggling in their classes. By expanding these best practices and recruiting the nation's best faculty and graduate instructors, we will continue to accelerate these rapid improvements in this important measure.



**Four-year graduation rate** is a particularly difficult metric to move, as it relies on institutional culture. FAU has greatly enhanced the expectations it has for its students, who must attend full-time and earn 30 credits or more per year. To keep students tracking towards timely graduation, the university required its students to have formal plans of study, revised its curricula, bolstered its advisor numbers, and expanded its summer offerings. Additionally, FAU relies on predictive analytics and next-generating student support platforms, so that we can track and proactively intervene with students in need.

**Four-Year Graduation Rate**  
Over the past academic year,  
(Full-time, First-Time-In-College) performance indicators that f

notes FAU’s 2019 baseline ranking data, the average scores for the Top 75-100 public institutions on the list, and FAU’s estimated 2020 submission data.

First-Year Retention	Student-to-Faculty Ratio	Research expenditures
FAU (2019) 77%	FAU (2019) 24	FAU (2019) \$50M
Avg. US News Top 75-100 (2019) 81%	Avg. US News Top 75-100 (2019) 20	Avg. US News Top 75-100 (2019) \$120M
FAU (2020) → estimated 82%	FAU (2020) → estimated 21	FAU (2020) → estimated \$62M

**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:

- #12 in bachelor’s degrees awarded to African American students
- #32 in bachelor’s degrees awarded to Hispanic students
- #35 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 48%, 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, minority students graduate at faster rates than all other students within four and six years.

**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.):*

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

