

Performance-based Funding Data Integrity

Audit of Internal Controls and Compliance as of September 30, 2025



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

University Audit

Audit #382

November 4, 2025

This work product was prepared in conformance with the Global Internal Audit Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, as published by the Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc.



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

University Audit

Phone: 407-823-2889

P.O. Box 160080

Orlando, FL 32816-0080

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alexander Cartwright
President

FROM: Robert J. Taft
Chief Audit Executive

DATE: November 4, 2025

SUBJECT: Audit of Performance-based Funding Data Integrity

The enclosed report represents the results of our audit of Performance-based Funding Data Integrity.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided to our office by personnel at Analytics and Integrated Planning, Student Financial Aid, Office of Research, and Registrar's Office during the audit

cc: Danae Barulich
Rhonda Bishop
M. Paige Borden
John Buckwalter
Kathy Giron
Mike Kilbride
Amanda Miller
Winston Schoenfeld
Board of Trustees
State University System of Florida Inspector General
UCF Board Office

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Executive Summary

Based on our audit, we have concluded that UCF's controls and processes are adequate to ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submitted to the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) in support of performance-based funding metrics, as well as emerging preeminence metrics. All files used in our testing were submitted to the BOG timely.

We believe that our audit can be relied upon by the university president and the UCF Board of Trustees (BOT) as a basis for certifying the representations made to the BOG related to the integrity of data required for the BOG performance-based funding (PBF) model and emerging-preeminence status.

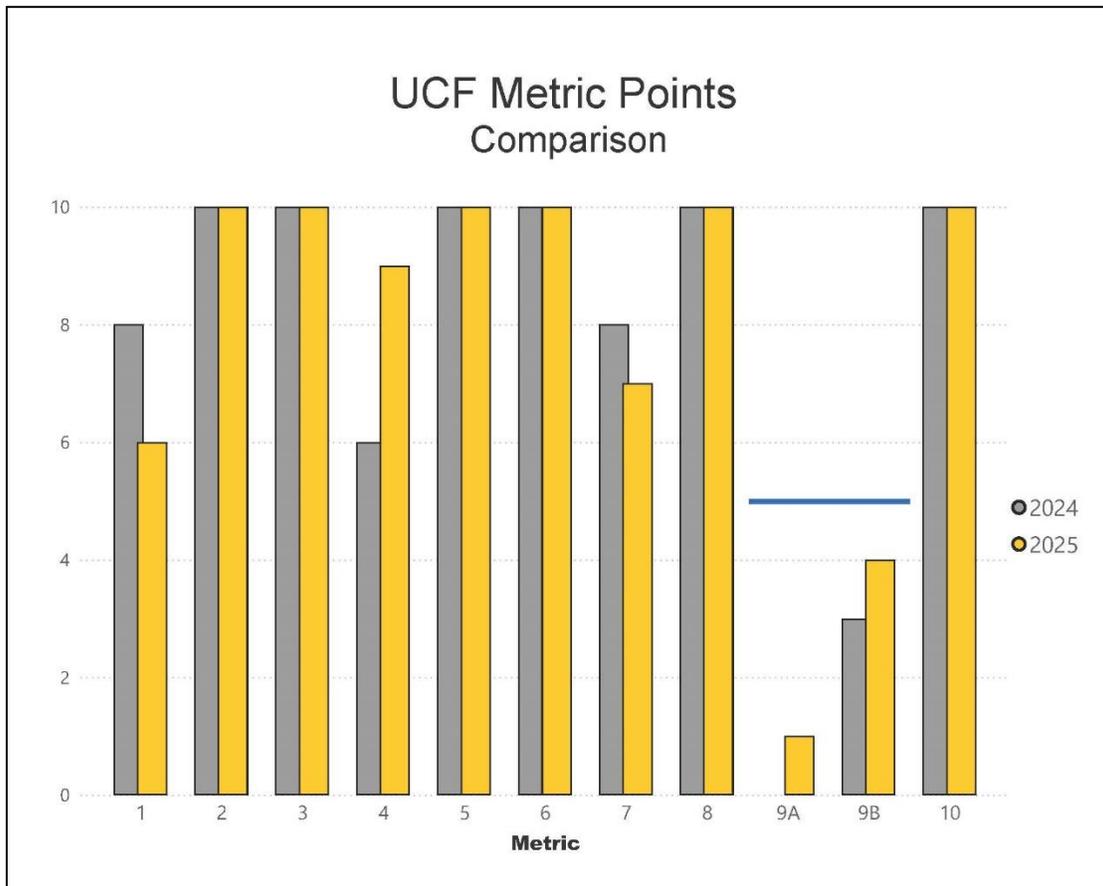
No reportable issues were identified.

(See Appendices for specific background and audit scope information.)

UCF 2025-26 Results

Performance-based Funding Metrics

For 2025-26, UCF ranked 6th amongst the state’s universities with 87 points, behind Florida International University with 96 points, University of Florida with 94 points, Florida State University and University of West Florida, both with 91 points, and University of South Florida with 89 points.



Metric	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9A	9B	10	Total
Points Earned 2025	6	10	10	9	10	10	7	10	1	4	10	87
Points Earned 2024	8	10	10	6	10	10	8	10	0	3	10	85

PBF metrics are:

1. percent of bachelor’s graduates employed (earning \$40,000+) and/or continuing their education (one year after graduation) (max 10 points)

2. median wages of bachelor's graduates employed full-time one year after graduation (max 10 points)
3. cost to the student (net tuition & fees per 120 credit hours) for a bachelor's degree (max 10 points)
4. four-year graduation rate (includes full-time, first time in college students) (max 10 points)
5. academic progress rate (second year retention with a GPA greater than 2.0) (max 10 points)
6. bachelor's degrees awarded within programs of strategic emphasis (max 10 points)
7. university access rate (percent of fall undergraduates with a Pell Grant) (max 10 points)
8. graduate degrees awarded within programs of strategic emphasis (not applicable to New College) (max 10 points)
- 9A. three-year graduation rate for Florida College System (FCS) associate in arts transfer students (max 5 points)
- 9B. six-year graduation rate for students who are awarded a Pell Grant in their first year (not applicable to Florida Poly) (max 5 points)
10. percent of bachelor's degrees awarded to African American and Hispanic Students (max 10 points)

This year's testing included data files submitted as of September 30, 2025, related to the following three metrics:

- Metric 3: average cost to the student (net tuition & fees for resident undergraduates per 120 credit hours)
- Metric 4: four-year graduation rate (includes full-time, first-time-in-college students)
- Metric 5: academic progress rate [second year retention with GPA above 2.0]

Our 2015-16 audit included a comprehensive review of the controls and processes established by the university to ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submissions to the BOG which supported the PBF metrics. As part of our annual audit process, we review any changes to these controls and processes with Analytics and Integrated Planning (AIP) and determine if these changes will have any impact on our audit approach.

In addition, we verified the completeness and accuracy of the Student Instruction File (SIF), Degrees Awarded (SIFD), and Student Financial Aid (SFA) files submitted to the BOG in support of the measures listed above. By developing queries in PeopleSoft Campus Solutions independently and then comparing those results to the files submitted to BOG, we were able to test 100 percent of the student data submitted for these files with the exception of the Hours to Degree (HTD) file. Because of methodology and source system complexities, a comprehensive query could not be developed; therefore, we tested a judgmental sample of students to ensure accuracy of the HTD file.

Preeminent Metrics

As an Emerging Preeminence university, we began auditing the Preeminent Metrics in 2019, as defined by Florida Statute 1001.7065. The Preeminent Metrics selected for this year’s audit include:

Metric	Title and Period Reviewed	Excellence Standards^[1]	UCF’s Result
C	Freshman Retention Rate (2023-24)	90%	93% (achieved)
D	Four-year Graduation Rate (includes full-time, first time in college students) (2020-24)	60%	59% (not achieved)
I	Patents Awarded (2022-24)	100	189 (achieved)
J	Doctoral Degrees Awarded (2023-24)	400	510 (achieved)
K	Post-Doctoral Appointees (2023)	200	218 (achieved)

See Appendix A for a full list of these metrics.

¹ S. 1001.7065, Florida Statute, Preeminent State Research University Program

Appendix A

Preeminent Metrics

- A. Average GPA and SAT/ACT/CLT Score
- B. National University Rankings
- C. Freshman Retention Rate
- D. Four-year Graduation Rate
- E. National Academy Memberships
- F. Total Research Expenditures
- G. Research Expenditures in Non-Health Sciences
- H. National Ranking in Research Expenditures
- I. Patents Awarded
- J. Doctoral Degrees Awarded
- K. Post-Doctoral Appointees
- L. Endowment Size
- M. Science & Engineering Research Expenditures

Appendix B

Background

Beginning in 2013-14, the BOG implemented a PBF model which utilizes a set of performance metrics to evaluate universities on a range of issues, including graduation rates, job placement, cost per degree, and retention rates.

The model has four guiding principles:

1. use metrics that align with SUS Strategic Plan goals,
2. reward Excellence or Improvement,
3. have a few clear, simple metrics, and
4. acknowledge the unique mission of the different institutions.

For the 2024-25 funding year, each university was evaluated on nine common metrics, with the two exceptions being New College of Florida (New College) and Florida Polytechnic University (Florida Poly).

On June 30, 2020, Florida Senate Bill 72 added two new metrics, which replaced the ninth metric chosen by the BOG that focused on specific areas of improvement and the distinct mission of each university. Each university BOT selects its own metric number 10.

Certification

The BOG's Performance-based Funding Data Integrity Certification form provides assurances that the data submitted by universities is reliable, accurate, and complete. This certification form is to be approved by the university Board of Trustees affirmatively certifying each of the nine stated representations or providing an explanation as to why the representation cannot be made as written. The certification form is signed by the university president and the BOT chair.

To make such certifications meaningful, during the 2019 Legislative Session, lawmakers approved Senate Bill 190 that contains language amending section 1001.706. Florida Statutes. It states:

“Each university shall conduct an annual audit to verify that the data submitted pursuant to ss. 1001.7065^[2] and 1001.92^[3] complies with the data definitions established by the board and submit the audits to the Board of Governors Office of Inspector General as part of the annual certification process required by the Board of Governors.”

² S. 1001.7065, Florida Statute, Preeminent State Research University Program

³ S. 1001.92, Florida Statute, State University System Performance-based Incentive

Appendix C

Audit Objectives and Scope

The primary objective of this audit is to determine the adequacy of university controls in place to promote the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submissions to the BOG, particularly as they relate to PBF metrics and preeminent metrics. This audit also provides an objective basis of support for the president and BOT chair to certify the required representations on the data integrity certification form.

Performance-based Funding Metrics

Our approach is to audit supporting data files related to the PBF measures so that all PBF measures are tested at least twice within a five-year cycle.

Preeminent Metrics

Our approach is to audit supporting data for at least four Preeminent Metrics each year.

Appendix D

Audit Timeline

Beginning of audit: August 11, 2025
End of fieldwork: October 31, 2025

Audit Team Members

Vicky Sharp, Auditor III, Auditor In-Charge
Vallery Morton, Associate Director, Level I Reviewer
Robert Taft, Chief Audit Executive, Level II Reviewer