

# World Class Faculty & Scholar Program Report

January 2020

**PENDING BOG APPROVAL**



# SUMMARY OF STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM of FLORIDA WORLD CLASS FACULTY AND SCHOLAR PROGRAM REPORT

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## Introduction

The Legislature established the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to fund and support the efforts of the State University System (SUS) institutions to recruit and retain exemplary faculty and secure additional research funding. The intent of this program is to elevate the national competitiveness of Florida's state universities through faculty and scholar recruitment and retention. Section 1004.6497, Florida Statutes, requires the Florida Board of Governors to summarize information from the SUS institutions on the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program. The statute requires that the report include information on program expenditures, success in recruiting research faculty, the four-year graduation rate, the number of undergraduate courses offered with fewer than 50 students, and the increase in national academic standing of targeted programs.

The Legislature provided funds to SUS institutions for the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program in fiscal years 2017-18 and 2018-19.<sup>1</sup> However, section 1004.6497, Florida Statutes, which establishes the program and the reporting requirements, was signed into law in March of 2018. Therefore, the program is still relatively new, and recruiting faculty and/or research scholars can often take a considerable amount of time. The timing of hiring individuals depends on a variety of factors. In addition, unless individuals bring existing research contracts with them, it could take several years to realize the full potential of research dollars awarded to individuals who are recruited to the SUS through this program. Other metrics such as four-year graduation rates and academic program rankings may also take several years before any advancements related to this program are realized.

The State University System continues to make great strides to elevate its national research profile to the top echelon. With support from the Legislature and Governor, the SUS has risen to 4<sup>th</sup> in the country for public institution research expenditures, and since 2013, system-wide research expenditures have increased by 30%. The Board of Governors recently increased the system's goal for annual research expenditures in its strategic plan to \$3 billion by 2025. The World Class Faculty and Scholar Program is one mechanism that provides resources for the System to continue to elevate its research.

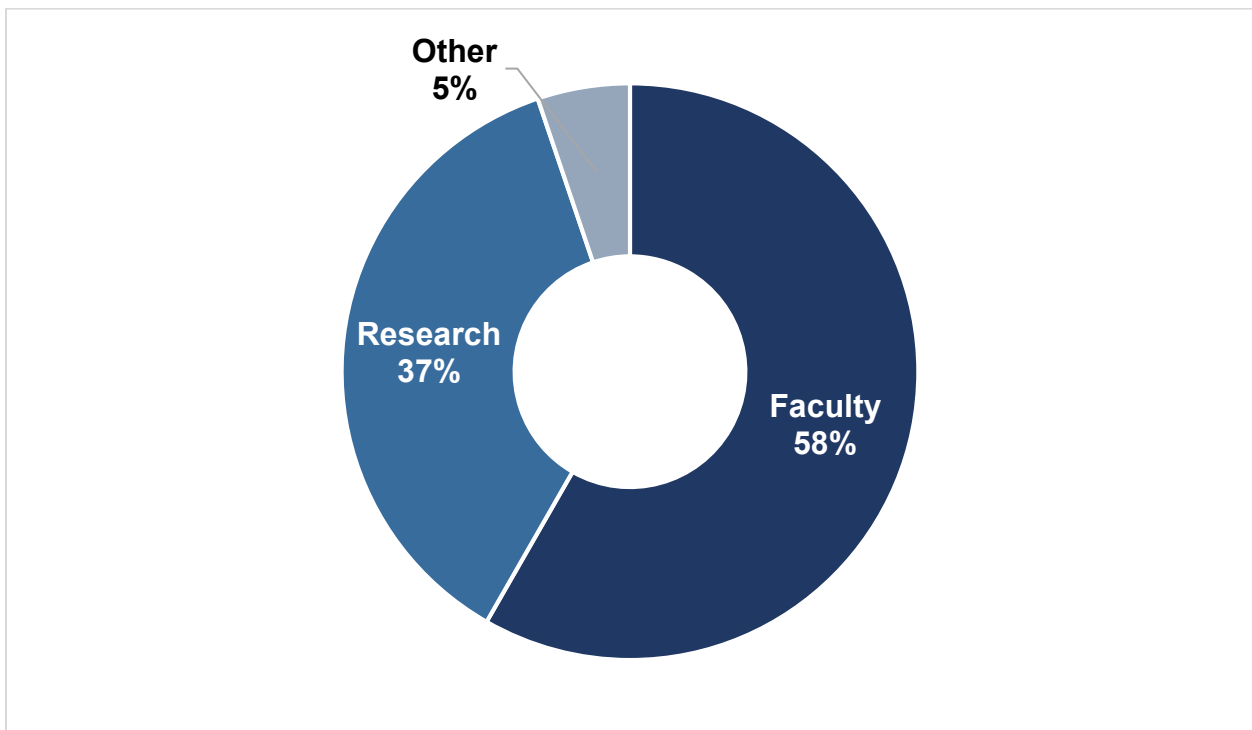
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<sup>1</sup> Funding was also provided in the 2019-20 fiscal year, and information related to that year will be included in the 2021 report.

## Expenditure Information

While expenditures of the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program varied in how these funds were utilized, most of the funds (95%) were used to recruit and retain faculty and increase research efforts. The Legislature provided funding of \$90.5 million in 2018-19 to the SUS institutions to support the program. Some examples of faculty recruitment and retention efforts include: research-centric cluster hires, awards for outstanding performance, professional development, and overall hiring/retention of faculty. Examples of research efforts include: commercialization efforts, instruction and research infrastructure enhancements, student research initiatives, and postdoctoral fellowships. Exhibit 1 provides an overview of how SUS institutions spent or allocated the funds for the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program in FY 2018-19.

### Exhibit 1 Most World Class Faculty and Scholar Funds Supported Faculty and Research



*Source:* Florida Board of Governors staff analysis of data provided by SUS institutions on the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program, fall 2019.

In a short amount of time, this program has enhanced and improved SUS institutions' efforts to recruit and retain faculty. As of fall 2019, institutions reported recruiting approximately 310 faculty (FTE) and retaining over 1,600 faculty (FTE) as a result of this program. These faculty transferred roughly \$92.9 million in research funding to the institutions and have more than \$299 million in research proposals under development or review. If this trend continues, this program will continue to increase the research profile and national ranking of the SUS. The System includes many universities that are

relatively young in terms of research and that will only continue to grow over the next several years.

## **Elevating the National Competitiveness of the State University System**

The intent of the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program is to elevate the overall national competitiveness of the System through faculty and scholar recruitment and retention. While it is still too early to see how this program has impacted metrics such as a four-year graduation rate, the number of undergraduate courses offered with fewer than 50 students, and academic rankings, baseline information for each of these metrics is provided below.

- In the last five years, the system four-year graduation rate has improved from 43% to 53%. Exhibit 2 provides details by institution. It should be noted that the four-year graduation rate is not yet available for students who enrolled at state universities when the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program funding was first received.
- Increasing the number of faculty should also help to reduce class size. Again, it is not yet known how hires from the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program have affected this metric. However, in fall 2018, 84% of undergraduate courses in the system had fewer than 50 students, an increase from 82% in the prior year. Exhibit 2 provides details by institution.

## Exhibit 2

### Summary of Four-Year Graduation Rates and Undergraduate Courses with Fewer than 50 Students

Institution	Four-Year Graduation Rate		% of Undergraduate Courses with Fewer than 50 Students
	2013-17	2014-18	Fall 2018
FAMU	21.6%	22.5%	86%
FAU	27.5%	33.9%	84%
FGCU	22.9%	28.8%	85%
FIU	33.8%	38.9%	74%
Poly	n/a	36.6%	100%
FSU	68.4%	71.5%	88%
NCF	53.6%	55.7%	100%
UCF	43.7%	45.7%	75%
UF	66.7%	67.1%	86%
UNF	34.7%	38.5%	88%
USF	57.4%	58.6%	88%*
UWF	25.2%	31.3%	91%
<b>System</b>	<b>49.6%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>	<b>84%</b>

\* This data only represents the USF-Tampa campus.

Source: Florida Board of Governors, Office of Data Analytics, 2019 System Accountability Plan and institutional responses to the 2018-19 Common Data Set (CDS) survey.

In national rankings, the System continues to be recognized by U.S. News & World Report for excellence in higher education. For the third year in a row, the publication recognized Florida as the best state for higher education. U.S. News & World Report also ranked four SUS institutions in the top 100 public schools in the 2020 rankings, with University of Florida ranked 7<sup>th</sup> (up from 8<sup>th</sup> the prior year), Florida State University ranked 18<sup>th</sup> (up from 26<sup>th</sup>), USF ranked 44<sup>th</sup> (up from 58<sup>th</sup>), and UCF ranked 79<sup>th</sup> (up from 87<sup>th</sup>). In addition, New College of Florida is ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> best public liberal arts institution in the country and Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University is ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best public historically black college and university in the country. Exhibit 3 provides a list of SUS institutions on the U.S. News & World Report top 100 national public university rankings for both 2019 and 2020.

**Exhibit 3**  
**U.S. News & World Report Public University Rankings**

SUS Institution	U.S. News & World Report Ranking (Public)		
	2019	2020	1-Year Change
UF	8	7	+1
FSU	26	18	+8
USF	58	44	+14
UCF	87	79	+8

Source: U.S. News & World Report Rankings of National Universities, Top Public Schools, 2019 and 2020.

Specific to research, the System is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest public system in terms of research expenditures, and the System has five institutions ranked in the top 100 public institutions for research.<sup>2</sup> The System is also the leading producer of utility patents in the state and has the most universities ranked in the top 100 in the country for patents.<sup>3</sup> In 2017, the Milken Institute ranked three SUS institutions in the Top 25 for technology transfer and commercialization - the second most of any state.

## Conclusion

While the full effects of the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program are not yet known, the program has enhanced the ability of SUS institutions to successfully recruit and retain high-quality faculty and support research efforts in a short amount of time. As a result, institutions have recruited more than 310 faculty who have transferred more than \$92.9 million in research funding to the State of Florida. These early successes put the System on a trajectory to increase national competitiveness relative to both quality postsecondary education and research.

<sup>2</sup> National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development Survey (HERD), November 13, 2019, Table 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Top 100 Worldwide Universities Granted U.S. Utility Patents 2018*, The National Academy of Inventors.



# STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA





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