



July 9, 2020

FSU Adjusted Plan for National Rankings Enhancement Funding

Florida State University is incredibly grateful for the continued support and investment of the Legislature, Governor, and Board of Governors, particularly during these difficult times. Their support over recent years has propelled the upward trajectory of FSU and the entire State University System, advancing the quality of our universities to new heights.

FSU plans to invest the National Rankings Enhancement funding in three core pillars that will help elevate the university's performance and national rankings: (1) Undergraduate Student Success, (2) Graduate Student Success, and (3) Faculty Success. Considering FSU's initial \$50M request in National Rankings Enhancement/Preeminence has been reduced to \$15M, we needed to make major adjustments to our goals. We have prioritized the most strategic investments based on projections of potential impact in collaboration with our deans. Without the full LBR request, the university will be challenged to retain or advance its *U.S. News* ranking and will be delayed in making needed investments in faculty and graduate research that also affect institutional recognition. Furthermore, given the expenses and losses associated with the coronavirus pandemic, the university is not in a position to supplement the National Rankings funding in any significant way. Future budget reductions from the Legislature would alter the ability of the university to enact the plan outlined below.

1. Undergraduate Student Success

National Rankings Enhancement funding will be invested to further advance student graduation rates and post-graduation success through increased student support and engagement. Specifically:

- The university plans to hire and retain additional academic advisors and student services staff to help bring student support levels to the national average and provide needed guidance for our student population. Florida State also uses College Life Coaches (CLC) to provide “high-touch” academic support to at-risk students who demonstrate the greatest need. While the CLC program has been enormously successful, it lacks a sufficient number of coaches and can thereby not adequately attend to the students who would benefit most from this level of support. FSU plans to hire additional College Life Coaches to support these at-risk students. FSU also plans to expand its Graduation Specialists initiative. This initiative brings together a team of specialized staff members who guide and assist 1,500+ students with high credit hours to a clear and timely path to graduation, as well as students who have stopped out of FSU and need to re-enroll to graduate.

- The university plans to expand support for enhanced teaching of undergraduates to allow for more engaged, active learning that advances student success, particularly in STEM courses. National Rankings funding will allow for more courses to be redesigned for maximum student learning across our diverse student body, and to expand our Learning Assistants initiative coordinated by our Center for the Advancement of Teaching.
- The university also plans to invest in expanding student engagement programming, such as FSU's new Engage 100 effort, which aims to scale engaged-learning experiences, peer mentorship, and community-building activities that bolster student success, starting in their first year. In addition, FSU plans to invest in supporting student participation in career-building experiential learning, such as internships and undergraduate research, which provide students with the knowledge and skills needed in today's workforce.
- The university plans to invest in financial aid to expand student access and recruitment, particularly to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

2. Graduate Student Success:

- Exceptional students in doctoral and graduate programs support FSU's movement in the national rankings and its instruction and research portfolio. These students and scholars are key components of a competitive Research I University, and they are a core part of our Top 15 plan.
- FSU plans to invest in expanding our graduate student stipend support to help us move closer to market levels. A final cost for these investments will be negotiated as part of the collective bargaining process. Furthermore, to help accommodate the needs in undergraduate teaching, mentoring, and research, FSU will plan on investing remaining funds in this category to expand the number of graduate student assistantships.

3. Faculty Success:

- Florida State will further enhance the quality of its instruction and student learning through the hiring of additional faculty to allow us to continue to improve undergraduate teaching and mentoring while addressing course availability challenges.
- As outlined in the original LBR, the top priority will be to support departments and courses in which student success challenges remain most critical. Additional faculty will be charged with advancing the quality of the learning environment for students and to elevate course completion rates, particularly for students from underrepresented backgrounds and in lower-division STEM pathway courses (e.g., mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics, and computer science). These faculty will not only reduce the size of classes, but they will also redesign classes to leverage the latest evidence-based teaching and learning approaches, including active learning strategies, to improve course completion rates. Key gateway courses that have been redesigned to use active learning and learning assistants (undergraduate students who help facilitate learning) have

produced significant reductions in the number of course withdrawals and D and F grades at FSU. New faculty will also help to meet growing course demands and/or enrollment changes have hindered the ability of academic departments to offer sufficient course seats in a given semester. These limitations in course offerings are impediments to students' on-time progress to graduation, especially in the following program offerings: biology and biology lab courses; chemistry and chemistry lab courses; economics; political science; nutrition, food and exercise sciences; human development and family science; engineering; and criminology. Additional faculty will also advance student learning through reductions of the size of some of the large lecture-based courses to facilitate more active learning approaches.

- FSU will also continue to invest in faculty retention efforts designed to address the challenge of retaining highly regarded faculty through competitive salaries. For purposes of retention and recruitment, as well as the standards and metrics that will move FSU into the Top 15 among public universities, Florida State's faculty salaries must be in line with national norms to dissuade faculty from seeking positions at other institutions. This is critical for fending off attempts by other universities, particularly private institutions with large endowments, from luring our top faculty away. Funding will allow FSU to move closer to market-level salaries for faculty and facilitate counteroffers to productive faculty who have received offers from other institutions.

**2020-2021 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II**

**University: Florida State University
Issue Title: National Rankings Enhancement**

	RECURRING	NON-RECURRING	TOTAL
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	35.00	0.00	35.00
Other (A&P/USPS)	18.00	0.00	18.00
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Total	53.00	0.00	53.00
	=====	=====	=====
<u>Salary Rate (for all positions noted above)</u>			
Faculty	\$3,850,000	\$0	\$3,850,000
Other (A&P/USPS)	\$900,000	\$0	\$900,000
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Total	\$4,750,000	\$0	\$4,750,000
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$6,317,500	\$0	\$6,317,500
Other Personal Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
6% Budget Reduction*	\$900,000	\$0	\$900,000
Faculty Retention	\$3,200,000	\$0	\$3,200,000
Student Success	\$2,750,000	\$0	\$2,750,000
Graduate Student Support	\$1,832,500	\$0	\$1,832,500
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Total All Categories	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$15,000,000
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*If the 6% is returned to the university, it will be allocated according to needs of the institution at the time across faculty and student success. The above plans are made with the assumptions of today and are subject to change due to the coronavirus pandemic.