



Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President

235 Tigert Hall
PO Box 113175
Gainesville, FL 32611-3175
352-392-2404 Tel
352-392-8735 Fax

July 18, 2020

Chancellor Marshall M. Criser, III
Board of Governors
State University System of Florida
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Dear Chancellor Criser:

This letter is a supplement to the materials we submitted on July 13 regarding our plans to implement the plan described in our 2020 “UF-Top 5 National Ranking Operating Support” legislative budget request. I understand that there has been a request for additional explanation of our path forward.

UF is grateful to the Florida Legislature and Governor DeSantis for their support this legislative session. As promised in our LBR, answers to subsequent questions from the BOG office, and discussions with the legislature, we intend to use the new resources to further enhance student success, earn sustained recognition as a top 5 public university, hire and compensate faculty and staff to reduce student-faculty ratios and build our research portfolio, and invest in the necessary infrastructure to enable all of that to happen.

We expect that the precise emphasis for these recurring funds will vary from year to year, based on conditions inside and outside the university. We address each of these areas below:

Further enhance student success

Among the areas we expect to fund are:

- Staff to assist students on the verge of graduating to avoid any obstacles and enable them to do so within four years. This is a labor intensive, high-touch process.
- Adequate resources for the Aid-A-Gator emergency financial aid program. This tool retains students, helps reduce financial barriers to completion for some of our most vulnerable students, and accelerates their progress to graduation.
- A new bachelor’s degree in data science, to be followed shortly by new credentials in artificial intelligence. These enhancements to UF’s curriculum will make our graduates more desirable and more competitive in the workplace, helping them find jobs and earn more.

Earn sustained recognition as a top 5 public university

Among the areas we expect to fund are:

- Compensation to retain the outstanding faculty we have recruited. Faculty compensation is an element that US News & World Report (USNWR) considers in its rankings of universities. According to those metrics, UF's average salary is 12% lower than the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill's, the next lowest among our peers in the top 10 public universities.
- Building out our Honors program. Honors programs are a key tool to recruit the very best students and to keep Florida's most successful high school seniors in our state after graduation. We expect that this would improve average metrics regarding SAT/ACT scores, students graduating in the top 10% of their high school class, 4-year graduation rates, and other measures of student excellence and student performance.

Hire and compensate faculty and staff to reduce student-faculty ratios and build our research portfolio

Among the areas we expect to fund are:

- Competitive compensation for our world-class faculty, as described above, and compensation to remain competitive in attracting the nation's best graduate students. Strong faculty and strong graduate students strengthen the educational experience for our undergraduates and will help us build the \$1 billion annual research portfolio that we seek.
- Investment in our moonshot program to sustain what we have already started and to expand the program.
- Hire technical assistants to help faculty move their scientific problems onto the new HiPerGator AI machine. Physicians, biologists, engineers, and other domain experts should not have to become "programmers" to get their scientific problems onto the machine. We will hire experts to help them do that so they can concentrate on the science and not on programming.

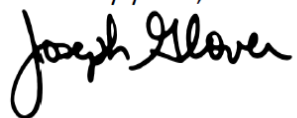
Invest in the necessary infrastructure

UF will incur annual startup and renovation needs for new faculty hires. Those new faculty hires happen every year to replace those who retire or otherwise leave the university, even when we are not growing the faculty as we have been in recent years.

As I noted in our July 13 submission, we believe that we can still largely achieve the goals and the return on investment outlined in the LBR by managing the investment emphases from year to year. Of course, all of these plans assume that the recent 6% holdback is restored to the university budget. If the 6% holdback were to remain in effect for several years, or if UF were faced with even greater cuts in state appropriations, then we would have a substantial recurring budget deficit that will impede progress in achieving the indicated return on investment and may jeopardize the success we have seen in improving student success, faculty effectiveness, and national rankings.

Please let us know if you have additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Glover". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "J".

Joseph Glover

Provost and Senior Vice President

Xc: President Fuchs, Mark Kaplan